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T-PVS/DE (2011) 16

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE AND NATURAL
HABITATS

**GROUP OF SPECIALISTS – EUROPEAN DIPLOMA OF PROTECTED AREAS
14-15 MARCH 2011, STRASBOURG
ROOM 14, PALAIS DE L'EUROPE**

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Report

*Document prepared by
the Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage*

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The Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas met in Strasbourg on 14 and 15 March 2011.

The competent Committee is invited to:

1. Take note of the meeting report;
2. Take note of the postponement of discussion on the application of Sumava National Park (Czech Republic);
3. Consider, with a view to forwarding them to the Committee of Ministers for adoption the draft Resolutions on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas for the following areas:

Appendix I	Piatra Craiului National Park, Romania
Appendix II	Gran Paradiso National Park, Italy and Vanoise National Park, France
Appendix III	Bayerischer Wald National Park, Germany
Appendix IV	Camargue National Reserve, France
Appendix V	Kuşçenneti National Park, Turkey
Appendix VI	Ekenäs Archipelago National Park, Finland
Appendix VII	Seitsemien National Park, Finland
Appendix VIII	Hautes Fagnes Nature Reserve, Belgium
Appendix IX	Siebengebirge Nature Reserve, Germany
Appendix X	Peak District National Park, United Kingdom

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened on Monday 14 March by the Chair, Michael Usher (United Kingdom), who welcomed the participants, listed in appendix I.

2. Adoption of the agenda

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The Group adopted the agenda, set out in appendix II.

3. General information

Mr Eladio Fernandez-Galiano, Head of the Biological Diversity Unit, informed the Group of:

- The outcome of the Nagoya Conference; the setting up of a network of protected areas covering 17% of land habitats and 10% of marine and coastal habitats was one of the 20 strategic objectives adopted. He stressed the key role of the Bern Convention and particularly the European Diploma in this connection;
- The reforms embarked upon at the Council of Europe: refocusing of activities, with the priority remaining human rights, and rationalisation of intergovernmental structures;
- Budget cutbacks.

Other information:

- The draft Resolutions examined by the Group in 2010 had been adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 September, except for the Resolution on Bílé Karpaty protected landscape area (Czech Republic), due to be adopted on 16 March 2011;
- The Chair of the Group had awarded the European Diploma to the first Bulgarian site, Central Balkans National Park, at a ceremony on 22 May 2010 in Gabrovo attended by the State Secretary for nature conservation;
- A ceremony had been held on 13 October to celebrate the renewal of the European Diploma awarded to the Weerribben nature reserve, recently extended through the addition of the neighbouring "De Wieden" reserve;
- An international conference in which Mr Hervé Lethier had participated as representative of the Secretary General had taken place in Tulcea (Romania) from 1 to 3 September to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Danube Delta Biosphere reserve.

4. Application for the European Diploma of protected areas: presentation of appraisal report, discussion

The Secretariat informed the Group that it had received a letter from the Czech authorities requesting that discussion of the visit report prepared by Mr Pierre Galland be postponed following recent changes in the park's administration (cf letter Appendix IV).

The Group took note of the information and invited the Czech authorities to send a report on developments at the Park to the Secretariat before its next meeting.

The Chair thanked the expert for the work carried out and asked him to explore the possibility of preparing an updated report on the basis of information supplied by the Czech authorities for the next meeting in 2012.

5. Renewal of the European Diploma

5.1 Renewals for areas where an on-the-spot appraisal had been carried out

a) Piatra Craiului National Park, (Romania)

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Mr Hervé Lethier (Switzerland) presented the findings of the first expert appraisal for Diploma renewal.

The park was located in the Southern Carpathians, 25 km from Brasov. It presented remarkable features: limestone ridges, built heritage, traditional local architecture, presence of large carnivores, high-quality landscapes, and a wealth of sub-alpine habitats.

The situation had distinctly improved since the previous visit: additional protection following the designation of special protection areas under the Habitats Directive, discovery of new species through monitoring, modification of the forestry regulations granting greater powers to the Park in this area, improvements in the collection and processing of waste. The requirements of the Diploma had been largely taken into account.

However, the expert emphasised certain problems that might affect the Park's integrity: illegal constructions and growing pressure observed in the Park's development zone.

In view of the quality of the area and its management, he was in favour of renewal.

The Park manager, Mr Mircea Verghelet, stressed the beneficial role of the Diploma, particularly in controlling forestry activities within the Park, and provided further information: recruitment of a new biologist, late payment of salaries, work with new partners in the area of ecological connectivity in the Carpathians, a key role in the GEF/UNDP project on "improvement of the financial management of the Carpathian Network of protected areas".

b) Gran Paradiso National Park, (Italy)

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Mr Pierre Hunkeler (Switzerland) informed the Group of the findings of the first renewal visit. He described the characteristics of the Park, located on the territory of 2 regions, the Valle d'Aosta and Piedmont, notably its transfrontier connection with the adjacent Vanoise National Park in France. The two parks had been twinned since 1972 and formed the largest protected area in the Western Alps.

Protection of the last populations of Ibex, which had been the reason for creating the park, had largely been achieved. Scientific monitoring had shown a strong decline in populations probably linked to climate change, impacting on food resources.

Information and education work had considerably expanded. Relations with the municipalities were good, following a long period of major friction in the past. Cooperation with the neighbouring park had been stepped up considerably in recent years. The expert emphasised the issue of funding, stressing the need to obtain guarantees of financial support on a regular basis from the State.

The expert concluded that the Park deserved to have its European Diploma renewed: it gave effective protection to alpine ecosystems of great value and magnificent landscapes and interestingly combined the conservation of natural assets and sustainable development. Its management was dynamic and the municipalities had become constructive partners.

c) Vanoise National Park, (France)

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The national park protected high mountain habitats. Its position as a climatic, geological and ecological crossroads gave the park a remarkable wealth of natural assets and a great variety of landscapes.

Mr Pierre Hunkeler presented several aspects which had been examined in detail:

- The changes resulting from the new law of 2006: setting up of an optimum area of subscriber municipalities to replace the old peripheral zone, drawing up of a charter establishing the partnership between the State, local authorities and stakeholders, a real regional project;
- The very heavy demands made on water resources, particularly for snow-making machines;
- public facilities;
- Farming practices promoting biodiversity and the framing of a management plan for upland meadows;
- Good relations with the adjacent Gran Paradiso Park.

The expert took a favourable view of the situation in the Park. Many longstanding problems such as the Orgères forest issue had been resolved. The Park's management was active and highly professional. The solutions and models devised provided interesting examples for the management of other protected areas. Activities were well organised, with a well-staffed, high-quality team. Striking a balance and consensus with local communities would take a little more patience and effort.

The expert recommended that the European Diploma be renewed.

The Secretariat informed the Group that it had received a request from the French and Italian authorities that a single diploma be awarded to the two parks, marking their desire for a strengthened partnership and demonstrating the longstanding links between them: a neighbourhood charter signed in 1999, joint initiatives, the old project to set up a Franco-Italian transfrontier park (1969). A single diploma would commit them jointly in respect of the Council of Europe (cf letter in Appendix III).

Following lengthy discussion on the expediency of and arrangements for awarding a single diploma, the Group declared itself favourable to a single renewal for the two parks.

In addition, it invited their managers to organise a joint Diploma renewal ceremony to symbolise the strengthened links of cooperation between them.

d) Bayerischer Wald National Park, (Germany)

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Mr Pierre Galland (Switzerland) presented the findings of the expert appraisal visit to Bayerischer Wald National Park which, together with Sumava National Park, played a key role in protecting the natural forests of Bohemia.

The situation had evolved favourably: the park had been extended by 11,000 ha in 1997; the managers had been able to pursue their policy of non-intervention in 75% of the natural forests in the old part, their objective being to gradually apply that percentage to the new part.

Although it still had no formal management plan, the park was well managed; research work and educational facilities were of high quality. The question of the bark beetle had been a special focus of attention, as had cooperation with Sumava National Park; there had been several drives against the bark beetle in the buffer zone.

There were numerous arguments in favour of renewing the European Diploma, in particular the great dynamism of the Park and its determination to emphasise the concept of wildlife. The expert expressed concern over potential developments in Sumava, notably with the new regulations on visitor access, which would have an impact on the German side of the border.

Mr Hans Kiener, representing the Park, informed the Group that the management plan had been completed. Twelve local authorities had joined forces to guarantee the viability of local transport. Cooperation with Sumava Park was a central element: various agreements had been signed and he wondered how they would be implemented.

e) Kuşçenneti National Park, (Turkey)

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The expert, Mr Joe Sultana (Malta), reported on the findings of the visit. The Diploma had been awarded in 1976 to the Park, which was located on the northern shore of Lake Manyas. The disruption of the water system of Lake Manyas in 2001 had resulted in the dying out of willows and an inexorable decline in the bird colonies which had made the Park famous. At that stage, it had been decided to suspend renewal of the Diploma. The authorities had subsequently taken numerous measures to restore the Park's ornithological assets. Extending the Park to the whole of Lake Manyas had been beneficial. The expert raised the question as to whether the European Diploma should be renewed for the initial area (65 ha) or the extended area (16400 ha). He believed that the entire Park met the Diploma criteria.

In view of the value of the area, the quality of its management and the improvements observed since the previous visit, the expert proposed that the Diploma be renewed.

The Park's manager, Mrs Ferral Cakir, informed the Group that the revised version of the management plan would be ready within 2 months. She believed that the entire area should be taken into account. The information sheet on the diploma-holding area would be updated to incorporate the new boundaries and data.

f) Camargue National Reserve, (France)

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Mr Bernard Jacquat (Switzerland) presented the findings of the visit. He stressed the international importance of this wetland, which had received numerous awards. He highlighted the policy of purchasing land bordering the reserve through the coast conservation trust. The regional nature park charter had been adopted. There had been a steady decrease in the number of hunters and there had also been regular consultations with all the stakeholders in the Camargue water system to avoid contamination of it; the rice-growers had undertaken to change their growing methods and use fewer inputs and less water.

The main threats came from nature, with rising sea levels, global warming and invasive species. He pointed out that the European Diploma was not displayed prominently enough.

Mr Henri Jaffeux (France) emphasised the great uncertainties over the future and the need to carry out studies and set up an observatory for global change.

Decisions taken by the Group concerning the expert appraisal reports:

For each case presented, the Group approved the experts' conclusions. It congratulated them on the quality of their reports and warmly thanked the representatives of the diploma-holding areas for their participation. It noted with satisfaction the results achieved in certain cases thanks to the requirements of the European Diploma.

It made several amendments to different draft Resolutions. Given the importance of the management plan, which was an essential criterion for the European Diploma, it decided to transform the recommendations on this point into conditions.

The Group proposed that the competent Committee should recommend that the Committee of Ministers renew the European Diploma of Protected Areas for a further period of 10 years in respect of the different areas concerned and addressed to it for that purpose the draft Resolutions set out in Appendix V, sections I to V.

5.2 Renewal for areas where no prior expert appraisal had been carried out

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- Ekenäs Archipelago National Park, Finland
- Seitsemien National Park, Finland
- Hautes Fagnes Nature Reserve, Belgium
- Siebengebirge Nature Reserve, Germany
- Peak District National Park, United Kingdom.

The Secretariat presented the draft resolutions drawn up in consultation with the managers of the areas concerned on the basis of the previous expert appraisal reports and the annual reports of the past 4 years.

The Chair thanked the representatives of Siebengebirge Nature Reserve for their participation.

Mr Breuer stressed that the management plan should be ready by the end of 2013. The national park project had been rejected. The most important development had been the signature in April 2010 of a 20-year agreement between the management body (VVS) and North Rhine Westphalia *Land* removing 523 ha of old beech forests from any exploitation, thus creating Germany's first natural wilderness area outside the national parks.

The Group approved the 5 draft resolutions and proposed that the competent Committee should recommend that the Committee of Ministers renew the European Diploma of Protected Areas for a further period of 10 years. It addressed to it for that purpose the draft Resolutions set out in appendix V, sections VI to X.

5.3 Situation of the Białowieża National Park (Poland) and of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park (Belarus)

The Secretariat informed the Group that the Standing Committee had approved the organisation of a visit in principle and instructed the Secretariat to arrange it in conjunction with the authorities concerned.

The deputy representative of the Republic of Belarus, Mr Dimitry Krivosheev, informed the Group that a report had been drawn up on implementation of the recommendations made by UNESCO. He listed some of the measures taken, including the framing of a concept of joint transfrontier management providing for a set of joint initiatives, restriction of economic activities in the territories located in the peripheral zone, reduction of the number of roads following the adoption of the new functional zoning in 2010, scientific research aimed at

restoring the hydraulic system of peat bogs and creating migration corridors for wild fauna between the two parks.

The Chair thanked Mr Krivosheev for all this information. The Secretariat reiterated the importance of having a translation of the management plans before the appraisal visit.

6. Annual reports

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The Secretariat informed the Group that most of the annual reports had been sent in. The park managers had more closely complied with the requirements concerning the volume and content of reports. Some reports contained only very brief information on point III regarding implementation of the previous Resolution granting or renewing the Diploma.

The Secretariat presented the summary of annual reports and thanked the Group members who had dealt with the reports on diploma-holding areas in their respective countries. It drew the Group's attention to:

- The situation of Poloniny Park (Slovakia), whose managers were encountering serious difficulties in fulfilling the conditions.
- The annual report on Białowieża: the management plan had been submitted to the Minister of the Environment, who had six months to validate it;
- The report on Belovezhskaya Pushcha which contained information on implementation of the management plan and answered the questions put by the Group at its last meeting
- The report on the Danube Delta biosphere reserve, which replied to the concerns of the Secretariat: presence of wild horses in Letea forest, construction of wind farms close to the diploma-holding area, tourism development project in Sulina, consequences of the accident at an aluminium plant in Hungary in October 2010.

The Group asked the Secretariat:

- To send reminders to the managers who had not yet sent in their reports;
- To complete the document setting out the comments and send it to the park managers, asking them where applicable to clarify or supplement certain points, particularly with regard to point III;
- To seek any kind of solution that might be of assistance to the managers of Poloniny National Park.

The Group also thought that the annual reports should be posted on the site. It asked the Secretariat to ensure beforehand that they did not contain any confidential information.

The Group thought it expedient to:

- Capitalise more on annual reports, which contained interesting information on the role of model and experimental areas in the field of conservation and sustainable development that might be of use to other areas;
- Insist on a brief report each year and a fuller report for the year preceding renewal year;
- Possibly develop certain aspects regarding relations with other networks, the landscape dimension, services provided by ecosystems, public participation;
- Prepare an evaluation template for reports to more closely pinpoint the measures taken to satisfy the Diploma's requirements.

7. Renewals foreseen in 2012

In line with the procedure for simplified visits prior to European Diploma renewal and in the light of the information set out in the annual reports available, the Group approved the Secretariat proposals to organise on-the-spot appraisals in 2011 in the following areas:

- Abruzzi National Park (Italy)
- Maremma Nature Park (Italy)
- Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine)
- Luneburg Heath Nature Reserve (Germany)
- Muddus National Park (Sweden)
- Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks (Sweden)
- Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve (Portugal)
- Port Cros National Park (France)

8. Future work of the Group of Specialists: future of the Diploma

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Following the Group's decision in 2010 to discuss the development of the European Diploma, the Secretariat had prepared a working paper setting out:

- The thoughts of the Secretariat
- The final declaration of the last Seminar of managers of diploma-holding areas held in September 2005 in Thayatal National Park in Austria
- An excerpt from the report by Mr Hervé Lethier on the prospects for developing the European Diploma
- The comments of Group members

In the ensuing discussion the members of the Group and the experts emphasised:

- The role of the Diploma, which was useful not only in helping managers improve park management but also in bringing pressure to bear on governments; moreover, by helping to preserve natural, cultural and landscape heritage of exceptional European interest, the Diploma contributed to preserving European identity and served as a vector for the values upheld by the Council of Europe;
- The need to maintain the high level of requirements, highlight the unique features of the Diploma and closely consider whether candidate areas were truly suited to be diploma-holding areas;
- The need to substantially increase the number of diploma-holding areas to ensure better geographical coverage;
- The importance of on-the-spot appraisal visits, which were both appreciated and effective; the possibility of the cost of visits being covered by host governments might be explored;
- The importance of ensuring better coordination between the different labels held by certain diploma-holding areas, more strongly highlighting the role of the diploma-holding areas in the pan-European ecological network and generating closer synergy with the Emerald and Natura 2000 networks and other conventions;

The Group made the following proposals:

- Task a consultant with a study identifying the biological, geological and landscape diversity already represented and the habitats not yet present in the network;

- Launch targeted calls for applications in the light of the study's findings with a view to making the network more diverse in terms of both the countries represented and the biogeographical regions and types of species protected;
- Encourage countries to set up national Diploma Committees which would provide interfaces with the Council of Europe;
- Envisage the setting up of a financial mechanism to mobilise private contributions, among others, which might serve *inter alia* to sponsor diploma-holding areas;
- Explore the possibility of creating a European Heritage foundation open to private donors in particular as well as multilateral donors;
- Envisage certification of services and products linked to the diploma-holding area;
- Have the appropriate resources at the level of the Secretariat;
- Give fresh impetus to cooperation between managers through more regular meetings; envisage celebrating the Diploma's 50-year anniversary in 2015 and producing a prestigious publication for the occasion;
- Heighten the visibility of the Diploma, which was still little known among other national networks of protected areas and national authorities; to that end, improve the website and update the map of diploma-holding areas.

The Group also raised the following issues: a change in the title of the Diploma, submitting of hitherto annual reports every two years and possible adjustment of the award criteria to better reflect the challenges and issues of the new decade.

9. Other business

In keeping with the principle of rotation, the Group's current membership would be modified; the representatives of Germany, Italy and the Netherlands would leave the Group. The term of office of the other 3 specialists (France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom) was renewable for 2 years. The Chair thanked the members of the Group for all their work in recent years.

10. Date of the next meeting

The Secretariat would notify members of the dates of the next meeting, to be held at the beginning of 2012, in due course.

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Appendix II - Agenda

MONDAY 14 MARCH
CANDIDATURE AND 2011 RENEWALS

1. Opening of the meeting by the Chair, Mr Michael Usher (United Kingdom)
2. Adoption of the agenda **T-PVS/DE(2011) 1**
3. General information on activities presenting an interest for the work of the Group
4. Candidature for the European Diploma of Protected Areas: presentation of appraisal report to the Sumava National Park (Czech Republic), discussion and proposals to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention **T-PVS/DE(2011) 10**
5. Renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas to 11 awarded areas: **T-PVS/DE(2011) 11**
 - 5.1 Areas in which an on-the-spot appraisal has been carried out: presentation of appraisal reports, discussion and proposals to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention
 - a) First renewal :
 - Piatra Craiului National Park (Romania) **T-PVS/DE(2011) 6**
 - Gran Paradiso National Park (Italy) **T-PVS/DE(2011) 4**
 - b) Others :
 - Vanoise National Park (France) **T-PVS/DE(2011) 5**
 - Bayerischer Wald National Park (Germany) **T-PVS/DE(2011) 7**
 - Camargue National Reserve (France) **T-PVS/DE(2011) 8**
 - Kusçenneti National Park (Turkey) **T-PVS/DE(2011) 3**
 - 5.2 Zones in which no on-the-spot appraisal has been carried out: presentation by the Secretariat of the draft Resolutions, discussion and proposals to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention **T-PVS/DE(2011) 11**
 - Ekenas National Park, (Finland)
 - Seitsemien National Park, (Finland)
 - Hautes Fagnes Nature Reserve, (Belgium)
 - Siebengebirge Nature Reserve, (Germany)
 - Peak District National Park. (United Kingdom)
 - 5.3 Situation of the Bialowieża National Park (Poland) and of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National (Belarus) since the non-renewal in 2007:

Presentation by the Secretariat of the state of progress and of the decision taken by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention

TUESDAY 15 MARCH ANNUAL REPORTS AND 2011 ACTIVITIES
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1. Annual reports:

Examination of the annual reports, presentation of a synthesis by the Secretariat

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Discussion of reports which need special attention

2. Renewals foreseen in 2012 and proposals of the Secretariat concerning on-the-spot appraisals to be undertaken in 2011:

- Abruzzi National Park (Italy)
- Maremma Nature Park (Italy)
- Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine)
- Krimml Waterfalls Natural Site (Austria)
- Luneburg Heath Nature Reserve (Germany)
- Muddus National Park (Sweden)
- Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks (Sweden)
- Swiss National Park (Switzerland)
- Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve (Portugal)
- Port Cros National Park (France)

3. Future work of the Group: discussion on the possible evolution of the European Diploma

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4. Other business

5. Date of the next meeting

Appendix III

Request for a sole European Diploma for the the national Parks of la Vanoise and Gran Paradiso presented by French and Italian authorities



*Ministero dell'Ambiente
e della Tutela del Territorio
e del Mare*

DIREZIONE PER LA PROTEZIONE DELLA NATURA



Ministero dell'Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio
e del Mare - DG Protezione della Natura e del Mare

U.prot PNM - 2011 - 0004954 del 03/03/2011

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OGGETTO: Sole European Diploma for National Parks of Gran Paradiso (Italy) and Vanoise (France)

Since 27 September 2006 the Gran Paradiso National Park has been awarded the European Diploma for Protected Areas, issued by Council of Europe in consideration of the remarkable scientific, cultural or aesthetic interest and of an appropriate protection system of the Area.

One of the recommendations mentioned in the Diploma was referred to "reactivate the steering committee of the co-operation agreement between the Vanoise and Gran Paradiso Parks".

Also the Vanoise National Park has been awarded the Diploma since 15 March 1976. The renewal of the Diploma for both areas is expected to be in the current year.

A lot of cooperation and common work has been carried out jointly by the two areas, that in 1999 signed also a "Charter of good neighbourhood", and many times during these years proposals for further strengthening ties have been expressed.

The joint renewal of a sole Diploma would be a fact of high symbolic value.

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According the new Regulation for Diploma, adopted by the Council of Ministers of CoE on 20 September 1998, awarding a sole Diploma in case of transfrontier areas is possible under condition of a favourable consent of the concerned National Authorities.

In this sense, a positive opinion was expressed by French Ministry of the Environment on 22 February.

We agree with and support the request for a sole renewal of the Diploma for Gran Paradiso and Vanoise Parks.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL
(Dott. Renato Grimaldi)





Copie
GP

MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉCOLOGIE, DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE,
DES TRANSPORTS ET DU LOGEMENT

Direction générale de l'aménagement
du logement et de la nature
Direction de l'eau et de la biodiversité

La Défense, le 22 FEV. 2011

Sous-direction des espaces naturels
Bureau des parcs nationaux et des réserves

La directrice de l'eau et de la biodiversité

au

Affaire suivie par : Guillaume POULIQUEN n°433
Tél. 01 40 81 29 78
Courriel : guillaume.pouliquen@developpement-durable.gouv.fr

Secrétariat Général du Conseil de l'Europe

Avenue de l'Europe
F-67075 Strasbourg cedex

Objet : Diplôme européen unique des espaces protégés Vanoise - Gran Paradiso

L'établissement public du parc national de la Vanoise bénéficie depuis le 15 mars 1976 du Diplôme européen des espaces protégés, délivré par le Conseil de l'Europe aux espaces protégés les plus remarquables par leur patrimoine et par la valeur de leur protection.

Dès cette attribution, la seconde des deux recommandations qui avaient été formulées stipulait que « les rapports entre les parcs nationaux de la Vanoise et le Gran Paradiso, actuellement jumelés, [soient] moins épisodiques, les deux entités ayant intérêt à comparer leurs méthodes de gestion et leurs problèmes de conservation, par des contacts épisodiques et des échanges d'information, notamment au niveau des conseils scientifiques et de la recherche ».

Le sujet du rapprochement entre les parcs nationaux de la Vanoise et du Gran Paradiso a depuis été régulièrement abordé dans les délibérations de renouvellement du Diplôme européen, formulées par le Comité des ministres du Conseil de l'Europe.

Le parc national du Gran Paradiso est également attributaire du Diplôme européen des espaces protégés depuis le 27 septembre 2006. Le renouvellement des diplômes de ces deux parcs jumelés interviendra au cours de cette année 2011. Ce sujet a été évoqué lors de la visite de M Pierre HUNKELER, expert nommé par le Conseil de l'Europe, en juillet 2010.

Tout au long de l'histoire des deux parcs, il a plusieurs fois été proposé que ce rapprochement puisse notablement progresser. Ainsi, l'attribution conjointe du Diplôme européen aux deux parcs, à l'occasion de la procédure de renouvellement en cours, m'apparaît ainsi qu'à M Philippe TRAUB directeur du parc de la Vanoise et M Michele OTTINO directeur du parc Gran Paradiso, comme étant d'une haute portée symbolique pour ces deux territoires voisins.

La résolution du Comité permanent, adoptée le 29 novembre 2007, concernant le règlement révisé du Diplôme européen des espaces protégés, permet l'attribution d'un diplôme unique dans le cas

Présent
pour
l'avenir

d'une zone transfrontalière à condition que le dossier soit transmis au Secrétariat général du Conseil de l'Europe après avoir été approuvé par tous les Etats intéressés¹.

J'approuve ainsi la demande de délivrance d'un diplôme unique aux espaces protégés des parcs nationaux de la Vanoise et du Gran Paradiso.

La Directrice de l'eau et de la biodiversité



Odile GAUTHIER

¹ Résolution du Comité permanent, adoptée le 29 novembre 2007, concernant le règlement révisé du Diplôme européen des espaces protégés — *Article 3 Dossier de candidature § 2*. Dans le cas d'une zone transfrontalière, pour laquelle un Diplôme unique est demandé, le dossier ne peut être soumis au Secrétariat qu'après avoir été approuvé par tous les Etats intéressés.

Appendix IV**Request by the Czech authorities to postpone the discussion about the application of the national Park of Sumava**

Ministry of the Environment
of the Czech Republic

Department for the International
Conservation of Biodiversity

Vršovická 65, 100 10 Prague 10
tel.: +420 267 122 038
fax: +420 267 310 328

veronika.vilimkova@mzp.cz

Mr.
Eladio Fernández – Galiano
Head of Biological Diversity Unit
Directorate of Culture and of
Cultural and Natural Heritage
Council of Europe
F - 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
France

Prague, 2nd March 2011

Ref. No. 18006/ENV/11
626/630/11

Dear Mr Fernández-Galiano,

I am contacting you in order to request postponing the discussion on the candidature of the Sumava National Park for awarding by the European Diploma of Protected Areas, which should take place at the meeting of the Group of Specialists - European Diploma of Protected Areas in Strasbourg on 14 - 15 March 2011.

Due to the personal and organisational changes in the National Park management during last months, which may imply also changes in strategic planning, I would like to kindly ask you to postpone this item to the next meeting of the Group of Specialist in order to have appropriate time to examine the on-the-spot appraisal report for the new NP management. The Ministry of the Environment and the NP administration agreed on the need to continue discussion on this issue. I will inform you about the conclusions as soon as possible.

I would like to apologise for our late response caused by significant organisational changes during last weeks. At the same time due to the above reasons no Czech representatives will participate in the forthcoming meeting. Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience caused by this.

Should you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact the responsible desk officer Alena Vacátková (alena.vacatkova@mzp.cz).

Thank you for your understanding.

Yours sincerely,



Veronika Vilimková
Director

Appendix V – Draft Resolutions

I. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Piatra Craiului National Park (Romania)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 on 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 of Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution ResDip(2006) 10 on the award of the European Diploma to the Piatra Craiului National Park;

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas on 14-15 March 2011;

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

Renews until 27 September 2021 the European Diploma of protected areas to Piatra Craiului National Park;

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

1. complete the process of preparing and approving the new management plan by the end of 2011.

Attaches the following 6 recommendations to the renewal:

1. secure the budget of the National Park so that the PCNP Administration is able to manage it appropriately and obtain all financial resources needed in order to pay the staff on a regular basis;

2. complete the construction and infrastructures of the headquarters, especially the exhibition room and other tourist accommodation, within three years and make particular efforts to raise the appropriate funds to achieve this;

3. elaborate and implement a specific high profile programme devoted to the promotion, preservation and restoration of the local landscape and architecture; this exemplary programme should be performed with the relevant specialists and contribute to making this region the paragon of the preservation of natural and cultural heritage;

4. pursue the scientific work and monitoring of biodiversity in the whole PCNP ; those activities should assess the status and trends of species and habitats, considering the National Park as part of a functional ecosystem and consequently use appropriate methods and indicators that keep the PCNP Administration aware of the global changes to this ecosystem;

5. pay more attention at both central and local forest service levels to the enforcement of the forest law on the National Park's fringe and in the surroundings of the PCNP; the measures taken and the results obtained should be reported to the Council of Europe on an annual basis;

6. pursue the efforts made by the PCNP Administration to address the litter and garbage issues and to engage a new phase of activities that could be facilitated by this Administration; a

detailed report on the results of those activities should be sent to the Council of Europe every two years.

II. Draft resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Gran Paradiso National Park (Italy) and the Vanoise National Park (France)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 instituting the European Diploma for certain protected landscapes, reserves and natural features, as amended by Resolution CM/ResDip (2008)1 on the Regulations for the European Diploma of Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution ResDip (2006) 9 on the award of the European Diploma to the Gran Paradiso National Park;

Having regard to Resolution ResDip (1976) 14 on the award of the European Diploma to the Vanoise National Park;

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

Taking into consideration the expert's reports presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas on 14 and 15 March 2011;

Taking into account the request made by the French and Italian authorities regarding the award of a joint Diploma for both areas

Welcoming the wish of the 2 parks to strengthen their cooperation in the field of biodiversity and landscape conservation and to consider both their European Diploma as a twined Diploma

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to to the Gran Paradiso National Park until 27 September 2021 and to the Vanoise National Park until 18 March 2021

Gran Paradiso National Park:

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

1. the park management plan must be formally approved before the end of 2012.

Attaches the following 7 recommendations to the renewal:

1. ensure that funding is chiefly provided by the state, the regions and the provinces, and that it is properly integrated with other resources;
2. provide the park with adequate staff at executive level to enable the director to deal with essential tasks, especially strategic issues;
3. actively defend the inclusion of measures to safeguard natural and landscape assets in town-planning proposals and decisions;
4. integrate the value of forests as ecosystems in the development of forest management plans;
5. continue to foster farming activities which are compatible and synergise with biodiversity preservation;
6. avoid all new projects for the catchment of water resources for electricity generation, apart from mini-hydroplants duly authorised by the National Park;

7. establish a scientific advisory council or other mechanism to provide input from the scientific community to the park management.

Vanoise National Park:

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

1. ensure that there is a buffer zone consistent with the conservation of natural assets, particularly those located in the core area of the park.

Attaches the following 6 recommendations to the renewal:

1. pay close attention to natural and landscape issues when development projects are carried out in the periphery of the park and avoid any direct or indirect impact on the central area;

2. co-ordinate the park's "core" and "optimal buffer zone" objectives with the green and blue infrastructure objectives;

3. ensure that nature and landscape protection interests are fully taken into account when making decisions concerning water resources and the renewal of hydro-power concessions;

4. actively pursue the diagnostic and management measures ensuring that the park's agricultural uses mesh harmoniously with, and are in synergy with, protection of its natural assets;

5. continue to strike a balance between the reception and service functions of refuges and refuge-gates on the one hand, and their information and awareness functions on the other hand, by pursuing the development of facilities for categories of visitors who require special attention, such as people with disabilities;

6. supervise and strictly regulate air sports so as to reduce their adverse impact on the fauna.

Both National Parks

Ask the 2 parks to consider submitting a joint annual report.

III. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Bayerischer Wald National Park (Germany)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 on 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 of Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution (86) 18 awarding the European Diploma to the Bayerischer Wald National Park;

Taking into consideration the expert's report submitted to the Group of Specialists for the European Diploma of Protected Areas at its meeting on 13 and 14 March 2011;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Bayerischer Wald National Park until 18 June 2021;

Attaches the following 6 recommendations to the renewal:

1. secure on a long-term basis the current policy of non intervention in large zones of the park and continue the corresponding scientific monitoring;
2. pursue consequently the non intervention policy for 75% of the forests in the old part of the park and progressively implement this policy in the new part, following the agreed objective of achieving the same proportion throughout the National Park by 2027;
3. continue targeted interventions to control the bark beetle development outside of the park, but limiting it strictly to the buffer zone (or "bark beetle management" zone);
4. pursue and develop the dialogue with the local communities; develop the synergies with the Bayerischer Wald Nature Park and assess together the potential for the reestablishment of the Biosphere Reserve according to the Sevilla strategy;
5. pursue the collaboration with the Sumava National Park and develop further synergies; work towards a joint document "Vision for the Bohemian Forest" including all the protected areas adjacent to, or included in, the National Parks as an umbrella document leading to a co-ordinated management and zoning system; secure together a large joint core zone on both sides of the border;
6. maintain the public transportation network "Igelbuss", secure its financial sustainability and possibly develop it across the border in cooperation with Sumava National Park.

IV. Draft resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Camargue National Reserve (France)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 instituting the European Diploma for certain protected landscapes, reserves and natural features, as amended by Resolution CM/ResDip (2008)1 on the Regulations for the European Diploma of Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution (66) 22 awarding the European Diploma to the Camargue National Reserve;

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas on 14 and 15 March 2011;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Camargue National Reserve until 28 March 2021;

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

1. guarantee the implementation of the management plan 2011-2016.

Attaches the following 6 recommendations to the renewal:

1. grant sufficient additional resources, both financial and human, in particular with a view to the setting up of a perimeter of protection as laid down in the law of 1976 on nature conservation, so as to guarantee management, surveillance and scientific monitoring;
2. ensure the strict application of limits on discharges of agricultural water into the reserve, particularly into the Vaccarès lagoon, and pursue co-operation with the rice growers in accordance with sustainable development principles, as well as to ensure the implementation of the 5 year action programme as agreed with the different stakeholders;
3. initiate studies for the biological control of invasive species, including plant species such as *Jussiaea repens* (= *Ludwigia peploides*) or *Baccharis halimifolia*, and provide the resources needed for their mechanical or manual control;
4. give a higher profile to the European Diploma and the work of the Council of Europe, particularly in information provided at public reception points and in leaflets on the Camargue National Reserve;
5. control the number of visitors at the periphery of the reserve,
6. prepare a plan for adaptation to climate change, including the rise in sea level.

V. Draft of Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Kuşçenneti National Park (Turkey)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 instituting the European Diploma, as amended by Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1 on the revised Regulations for the European Diploma of Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution (76) 15 awarding the European Diploma to Kuşçenneti National Park;

Taking into consideration the expert's report submitted to the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas at its meeting on 14-15 March 2011;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to Kuşçenneti National Park until 14 March 2021;

Attaches the following 4 conditions to the renewal:

1. finalise the revised management plan within 1 year and commence implementation of all actions and conditions found therein;
2. submit any development project regarding the lake, its shores and tributaries, or concerning agricultural or industrial facilities, to a rigorous environmental impact study, the conclusions of which should be communicated to the Council of Europe;
3. regularly and consistently monitor the breeding bird population of the park, and research their populations dynamics particularly at Siğirci Delta and Koçocay Delta;
4. continue the control of pollution caused by poultry and livestock farming and monitor continually the water quality of the Lake and of the streams flowing into it.

Attaches the following 3 recommendations to the renewal:

1. increase the number of staff to meet the exigencies of the park's enlargement;
2. ensure the well-being of the natural fluctuations in the lake's water level, including spring flooding and the drying up of the shoreline in summer;
3. set up a small unit on the southern shore of the lake (in the Koçocay Delta area) for the protection of the area.

VI. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Ekenäs Archipelago National Park (Tammisaari) (Finland)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 on 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 of Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution (96) 30 awarding the European Diploma to the Tammisaari Archipelago National Park;

Taking into consideration both the discussions held between the Secretariat and the site manager and the advice of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Ekenäs Archipelago National Park until 19 June 2021;

Attaches to the renewal the following condition:

1. within 1 year finalise and complete the approval process of the management plan (master plan), which itself will include the plan to enlarge of the National Park.

Attaches to the renewal the following 6 recommendations:

1. make efforts to implement all aspects of the new management plan;
2. inform the Secretariat of the results of the Management Effectiveness Evaluation (State of the Parks Reporting) which will be made on a regular period of 5 years;
3. continue the management of habitat types and species; particular attention should be paid to:
 - the inventory of marine habitats and the development of the methods involved, and
 - the restoration of damaged communities and the control of alien, invasive species;
4. continue to pay close attention to the recreational facilities and educational issues, in particular:
 - improve the safety, quality and quantity of the infrastructure,
 - further develop customer service and interpretation, and
 - raise the public awareness of nature conservation in Ekenäs Archipelago National Park;
5. review and where necessary renew the regulations of the National Park within 2 years;
6. deepen and promote the collaboration with local stakeholders, especially nature tourism operators.

VII. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Seitseminen National Park (Finland)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe;

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 on 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 of Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution (96) 29 awarding the European Diploma to the Seitseminen National Park;

Taking into consideration both the discussions held between the Secretariat and the site manager and the advice of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Seitseminen National Park until 19 June 2021;

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

1. implement the new master plan for the Seitseminen National Park; around the year 2014 evaluate if there is a need of a new updated management plan.

Attaches the following 5 recommendations to the renewal:

1. inform the Secretariat of the results of the Management Effectiveness Evaluation (State of the Parks Reporting) which will be made on a regular period of every 5 years;
2. continue the restoration plans for both mires and forests; continue appropriate grazing of meadows to encourage their biodiversity;
3. continue to bring together the community of people with interests in biodiversity so as to foster knowledge transfer and exchange; and scientific research should actively continue;
4. deepen the cooperation with local stakeholders, especially local nature tourism entrepreneurs;
5. provide the necessary funding to continue the refreshment of the recreational facilities; customer services and nature interpretation should be further developed.

VIII. Draft resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Hautes-Fagnes Nature Reserve (Belgium)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 instituting the European Diploma for certain protected landscapes, reserves and natural features, as amended by Resolution CM/ResDip (2008)1 on the Regulations for the European Diploma of Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution (66) 22 awarding the European Diploma to the Hautes-Fagnes Nature Reserve;

Taking into consideration the discussions held between the Secretariat and the site managers and the advice of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Hautes-Fagnes Nature Reserve until 28 March 2021;

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

1. finalise, by 2015, the updated management plan for the reserve as a whole and provide the human resources necessary to this end.

Attaches the following 5 recommendations to the renewal:

1. pursue the restoration of the peatland areas using the new techniques developed under the LIFE programme;
2. continue to acquire privately-owned plots of land inside the reserve and classify those of significant ecological value as publicly-owned nature reserves;
3. continue to raise awareness of the nature reserve's European significance among local inhabitants, peripheral municipalities and decision-makers;
4. continue and intensify the efforts to safeguard the black grouse population in co-operation with the relevant European partners;
5. ensure that the sustainability of the measures taken under the LIFE Programme, which have had a very positive effect, by providing the reserve with a guarantee of sufficient financial and human resources.

IX. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Siebengebirge Nature Reserve (Germany)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 on 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 of protected areas;

Having regard to Resolution (71) 21 awarding the European Diploma to the Siebengebirge Nature Reserve;

Taking into consideration the discussions held between the Secretariat and the site manager and the advice of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Siebengebirge Nature Reserve until 21 September 2021;

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

1. to draw up a management plan within 3 years in order to guarantee the preservation of the reserve and its cohesion within the larger unit of the nature park.

Attaches the following 7 recommendations to the renewal:

1. implement the management plan (in case of changes in the management of the area, the leading role of the VVS [Verschönerungsverein für das Siebengebirge], whose work to date has been fully satisfactory in the eyes of the Council of Europe, should be maintained);

2. develop a new financial plan together with the local communes and the Rhein-Sieg-District;

3. continue the provision of financial support by the North Rhine Westphalia government;

4. maintain great vigilance regarding the possible construction of new roads;

5. minimise disturbance caused by traffic on all roads crossing the Siebengebirge area and consider the setting up of a system of public transport for visitors;

6. continue investigating the possibility of extending the wilderness area so as to guarantee the preservation of the natural beauty, features, resources and biodiversity of the Siebengebirge as a protected area;

7. encourage the continuation and extension of the scientific research.

X. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Peak District National Park (United Kingdom)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 on 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 of Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution (66) 22 awarding the European Diploma to the Peak District National Park;

Taking into consideration the discussions held between the Secretariat and the site managers and the advice of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas ;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Peak District National Park until 28 March 2021;

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

Complete the review of the national park management plan and continue implementation of the plans and strategies which sit within it;

Attaches the following 11 recommendations to the renewal:

1. secure and enhance the management of existing important key conservation habitats in farmland, especially hay meadows, wetlands, limestone dales and remaining areas of lead mine rakes, particularly through advice and brokerage of agri-environment schemes in conjunction with appropriate partner organisations;
2. halt and reverse the past degradation of heather moorland and blanket bog through moorland management plans, agri-environment schemes and the Moors for the Future Partnership;
3. step up measures to address the decline in breeding populations of priority bird species, particularly lapwing, curlew and snipe on farmland;
4. negotiate agreements to secure appropriate management of ancient and semi-natural woodland sites;
5. with partners implement actions to achieve the targets and objectives set out in the Peak District Biodiversity Action Plan, 2011 – 2020;
6. maintain at least 95% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) land in favourable or recovering condition on National Park Authority owned land; in addition, implement measures on Authority-owned land to maximise its contribution towards nature conservation and cultural heritage objectives;
7. carry out conservation and community work at a landscape scale through an integrated area-based management approach;

8. implement the Cultural Heritage Strategy for the national park and continue to work with partner organisations, local communities and English Heritage to achieve targets;
9. continue to provide encouragement to small scale economic schemes linking conservation of the environment of the Peak District to economic benefit;
10. only authorize extensions of existing mineral workings to meet essential national needs (i.e. only if the minerals are not available elsewhere or are needed to provide traditional building materials in the park); seek restoration of mineral sites to enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the National Park;
11. continue to develop tourism activities in a way that protects and enhances both the interests of the community and environment and supports the local economy; ensure that the National Park Authority meets the requirements of an application for the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism; increase the proportion of visitors using sustainable methods of travel.