



Strasbourg, 16 March 2012  
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**T-PVS/DE (2012) 15**

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE AND NATURAL  
HABITATS

**GROUP OF SPECIALISTS –EUROPEAN DIPLOMA OF PROTECTED AREAS  
9-10 FEBRUARY 2012, STRASBOURG  
ROOM 14, PALAIS DE L'EUROPE**

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**REPORT**

*Document prepared by the Directorate of Democratic Governance,  
Culture and Diversity*

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The Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas met in Strasbourg on 9 and 10 February 2012.

The competent Committee is invited to:

- Take note of the meeting report
- 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 IV**

- Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine)
  - Muddus National Park (Sweden)
  - Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks (Sweden)
  - Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve (Portugal)
  - Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve (Austria)
  - Swiss National Park (Switzerland)
  - Krimml Falls Natural Site (Austria)
  - Port Cros National Park (France)
  - Maremma Nature Park (Italy)
  - Abruzzi National Park (Italy)
- To consider, for transmission to the Committee of Ministers for adoption, the draft resolutions to extend the validity of the European Diploma of Protected Areas until 2018, to the following awarded areas:

#### **Appendix V**

- Dobročský National Nature Reserve (Slovakia)
- Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)
- Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve (Russian Federation)
- Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park (Germany/Luxembourg)
- Tihany Peninsula (Hungary)
- Matsalu National Park (Estonia)
- Thayatal National Park (Austria)
- Bieszczady National Park (Poland)
- Poloniny National Park (Slovakia)
- Maritime Alps Nature Park (Italy)

## **1. Opening of the meeting**

The meeting was opened on Thursday 9 February by the Chair, Michael Usher (United Kingdom). He welcomed the participants, listed in Appendix I, in particular the new members of the Group who, in keeping with the principle of rotation, had been appointed to replace the representatives of Italy, Germany and the Netherlands.

## **2. Adoption of the agenda**

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE(2012)1

The Group adopted the draft agenda, as set out in Appendix II.

## **3. General information**

Mr Eladio Fernandez-Galiano, Head of the Biological Diversity Unit, outlined the reforms under way at the Council of Europe. The restructuring of the Secretariat had resulted in the merger of the four main operational administrative entities into two Directorates General, namely DG-I responsible for programmes on human rights and the rule of law, and DG II dealing with democracy. The Biological Diversity Unit now came under DG-II, the Directorate of Democratic Governance, Culture and Diversity.

He informed the Group that Françoise Bauer, who was in charge of the European Diploma, was retiring and that she would not be replaced. The Chair together with the other participants thanked Ms Bauer for all her hard work over the years.

He informed the Group of the adoption by the Committee of Ministers on 6 July 2011 of the Resolutions examined at its meeting on 14 and 15 March 2011 concerning the renewal of the European Diploma for ten areas.

## **4. Short presentation by the Chair of the 2011 meeting report**

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE(2011)16

The Chair briefly described the outcomes of the previous meeting and said that over the past year, as well as visits related to the renewal and suspension of the Diploma, attention had focused on the issue of the future of the European Diploma, which would be dealt with under agenda item 11.

## **5. Applications for the European Diploma of Protected Areas**

### **5.1 The Khosrov Forest State Reserve (Armenia)**

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE(2012)5

Mrs Hasmik Ghalachyan presented the application. The reserve lay south-east of Yerevan, in the Azat valley. It was one of the oldest protected areas in the world, having been created in 334 AD by King Khosrov II Kotack. The nature reserve had been officially established in 1958. It was especially notable for the wealth and variety of its flora and fauna (1,849 species of vascular plants, at least 1,500 species of invertebrates) as well as for its geology and history. Among the emblematic species found in the reserve were the leopard (*Panthera pardus*), the mouflon (*Ovis gmelini*) and the Black Vulture (*Aegypius monachus*).

The reserve contained a wide variety of landscapes: semi-desert, mountainous and alpine meadows. There was an extensive network of rivers and the unusually natural state of the park was due to the fact that it was very isolated from the main roads and almost inaccessible. One of nine Emerald sites in

Armenia, its importance had been recognised by numerous Conventions (including the World Heritage Convention).

The reserve contained numerous historic sites (archaeological remains and religious monuments, some of them in caves) which were important expressions of Armenian culture. There were numerous educational activities and the reserve also had a management plan.

The Group welcomed this new application from an area in the Caucasus. It felt that it was of European importance and asked that a visit be carried out to confirm the outstanding nature of the area and ensure that it met the other criteria laid down in the rules.

It asked the expert to give special attention to the following points: poaching, tree felling, staff qualifications, preservation of the historic heritage, public awareness and development for leisure purposes.

## **5.2 Application from the Burren region**

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE (2012)6

Mr Andy Bleasdale presented the application. A vast limestone plateau on the west coast of Ireland, the Burren was considered a natural wonder. Its uniqueness lay in its flora, of which there were more than 600 Arctic, Alpine and Mediterranean species. Other remarkable features included 1,500 ha of orchid rich grasslands and turloughs (disappearing lakes, petrifying springs). Its geological importance had been recognised and it was a member of the Geoparks network. The region was home to numerous remains (Stone Age tombs), ancient fortified farms, churches and castles.

The Burren was a living landscape and farmers played a key role. One of the main concerns was to encourage farmers to adopt practices that were compatible with the preservation of biodiversity. A number of innovative schemes had been introduced in partnership with local farmers, such as the Burren Farming for Conservation Programme (BFCP) and the Burren Charter. There was no single protection mechanism. The various areas that made up the reserve had different types of status. Much of the region had been designated as part of the Natura 2000 network and part of the central Burren was a national park. The Burren also appeared on Ireland's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites as a cultural landscape.

The Group thanked Mr Bleasdale for his presentation and welcomed this first-time application from Ireland. It instructed the Secretariat to organise a visit to the region and asked the expert to examine in greater depth the arrangements governing the different areas that made up the Burren. In its view, the site was an interesting example of a comprehensively managed area that enjoyed different levels of protection, and could serve as a model for promoting sustainable agriculture whilst conserving biodiversity and the heritage of the area.

## **6. Information regarding Sumava National Park (Czech Republic)**

The Secretariat informed the Group that the Czech authorities had once again asked for the discussion on Sumava national park's application to be postponed as the process of preparing the long-term policy documents, including notably the management plan and the zoning regulations, was not finished and was still being discussed with the various partners.

The Chair instructed the Secretariat to ask the authorities whether they really wished to proceed with this application. Some participants were concerned about the future of protected areas in the Czech Republic and the ramifications for neighbouring countries, in particular the Bayerischer Wald National Park in Germany.

## 7. Renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas for 10 areas

### 7.1 Areas where a prior expert appraisal had been carried out

#### *a) Abruzzi National Park (Italy)*

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE(2012)10

The expert, Hervé Lethier (Switzerland), presented the findings of his visit. The park was still of European importance on account of its landscapes which were remarkable, magnificent even, and the numerous natural habitats containing species protected under the Bern Convention (ancient beech forests, brown bear, chamois, wolf). He noted all of the improvements that had been made since the previous renewal: institutional stability (a Chair had been appointed), improved local credibility, closer co-operation with the forestry services, better knowledge of species, greater biodiversity protection (the integral reserve zone had been significantly extended) and the major efforts put into planning. The plans to develop tourism infrastructure (Mont Greco) and build a wind farm had been scrapped.

There was still some room for improvement in terms of land use management, traffic on forest roads, the regulation of hunting and both financial and human capacity building.

The trend was very positive but because the diploma was now being renewed for ten years during which no further appraisals would be carried out until the end of that long period<sup>1</sup>, firm guarantees must be obtained from all the national authorities involved in one way or another in the management of the area. He therefore proposed that the Diploma be renewed with 2 conditions and 8 recommendations.

The Secretariat informed the Group that the head of the park's science department, Cinzia Sulli, who had been unable to come to Strasbourg as planned, had sent some information which appeared in Appendix III.

The Group approved the expert's conclusions and acknowledged the great strides made since the previous visit.

#### *b) Maremma Nature Park (Italy)*

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE(2012)4

The expert, Hervé Lethier, reported on his second field visit. The park, which was in Tuscany, was still an area of outstanding European value, mainly because of the following: the fact that the landscapes were in a very natural state, to a degree almost unique on the Tyrrhenian coast, the presence of rare Mediterranean species (some of which were protected under the Bern Convention), and the fact that the region was a major stopover site for certain species of migrating birds. Added to this was the park's historic and cultural heritage.

The expert spoke about the running of the Park, the pressure from agriculture, tourism and forest fires, the effort to adopt a strategic approach and the reduction in funding. Among the important points to note since the previous visit were the creation of 5 new reserves following approval of the new management plan in 2008, the first successful mating of ospreys, the setting-up of a consortium with socio-economic partners, stable human resources, the inclusion of the scientific committee's suggestions when preparing the park's plan (which had been stipulated as a condition), and the fact that the park was home to a hybrid wolf population (part wolf, part domestic dog).

The conservation situation had improved, particularly in terms of coastal erosion, and major works had been carried out. The changes observed were broadly positive. Some projects were still under way.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless particular problems arose.

The head of the park, Giampiero Sammuri, provided some information about the situation in the park and the sinking of the Costa Concordia 10 km away.

The expert proposed that the diploma be renewed for a further period of ten years, with 7 recommendations.

The Group approved the expert's conclusions.

**c) *Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve (Germany)***

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE(2012)12

The expert, Michael Fasel (Liechtenstein), confirmed the European importance of this reserve in Lower Saxony, saying that it was made up of semi-natural ecosystems in the form of dry and wet heathlands, peatlands and brooks and supported a rich birdlife and numerous species of insects. He spoke of the key role played by the private association, Verein Naturschutzpark, the work to restore the red zones (former British tank manoeuvres area), the competition between heathlands and forest and the role played by the unemployed in maintaining the heath, underfunding and the scientific merit of the recently updated management plan.

He also mentioned the external and internal threats arising from the extraction of water by the city of Hamburg and farmers, isolation of biotopes, the expansion of maize as an energy crop, waste management and the construction of wind power plants.

In view of its well-preserved condition and the commitment, dedication and skills of its managers, he recommended that the Diploma be renewed for 10 years, with 13 recommendations.

The Group approved the expert's proposals.

**d) *Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine)***

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE(2012)7

Mr Hervé Lethier presented the findings of his visit. Situated at the geographical centre of Europe, this reserve was of exceptional European importance, mainly due to the vast expanses of primary and secondary beech groves, which were in a very good state. The forest complex was made up of eight distinct cores, which were relatively far apart. Scientific research played a major role. He described the zoning arrangements and the different uses made of the area.

The central areas of the eight separate cores that made up the reserve had been classed as World Heritage. The reserve had been expanded on several occasions, most recently in 2010.

He noted the increase in the budget (unusual in these financially straitened times), the international scientific co-operation with Switzerland and the Maramures park in Romania. He mentioned the need to better integrate conservation and socio-economic activities in the management of the park, the situation with regard to the wolf population, which had shown sharp fluctuations, and the threats to the integrity of the area (from tree felling, poaching and habitat fragmentation). In view of the satisfactory state of conservation and management and the progress made in implementing the latest recommendations, he was in favour of renewing the European Diploma, with 7 recommendations.

The Group approved the expert's conclusions and asked the managers to provide an updated map of the reserve.

**e) Muddus, Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks (Sweden)**

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE(2012)3

Mr Pierre Galland (Switzerland) presented the findings of his visit to the two diploma-holding areas. Muddus Park was a vast expanse of practically virgin woodland and marshland in Lapland. The Sarek and Padjelanta parks together formed a large protected area in a wilderness of mountains, deep valleys, tundra and heathland.

He explained that the three parks (two Diploma areas) formed part of the same unit. They were inscribed on the World Heritage List under the name "Laponian area". He mentioned two important developments: the new management plan and a new management board, which included representatives of the Sami people (Saami, Sámi), reindeer herders and fishermen who spent some of the year in the parks. This new participatory structure could serve as a role model in future for other protected areas.

There were a number of issues common to all three parks: monitoring the exceptional bear, wolverine, lynx and wolf populations, striking a balance between the activities traditionally carried on by the Sami and conservation goals, the shortage of field staff and the fact that there was no centralised database for research.

The three parks were well run by highly competent teams. There were no major managerial problems but it was important to keep a close eye on climate change and changes in socio-economic conditions. He mentioned the possibility of merging the three parks into a single, diploma-holding site, and of the managers making better use of the various international designations. The expert said he was in favour of renewing the awards, with 7 recommendations for Muddus and 8 recommendations for Sarek and Padjelanta. The Group discussed the possibility of harmonising the designations, reporting and respective perimeters.

The Group approved the expert's conclusions and strongly recommended rationalisation of the Diploma areas with the World Heritage Site.

**f) Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve (Portugal)**

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE(2012)8

The expert, Joe Sultana (Malta), spoke about the special nature of these three remote islands in the Atlantic, owned by the autonomous region of Madeira. The islands were of considerable botanical interest and were a crucial nesting site for sea birds. He also drew attention to the islands' important geological heritage. Extensive scientific research was being carried out and active efforts made to eradicate and monitor invasive alien species.

The high standards of the European Diploma had been maintained thanks to effective action by the Parque Natural da Madeira and the outstanding efforts of the wardens, who were responsible for upkeep and monitoring, and of the Portuguese navy, which provided transport and supplies.

The expert proposed that the Diploma be renewed, with 1 condition and 6 recommendations.

The Group approved the expert's proposals.

**g) Port-Cros National Park (France)**

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE(2012)2

The expert, Pierre Hunkeler (Switzerland), presented his report. He pointed out that the park, Europe's first marine park created in 1963, was a microcosm of the Mediterranean coast. He spoke of



the tremendous importance of the park's terrestrial and aquatic heritage, whether in terms of its natural assets, landscapes or history, the fact that both the sea and the land had been generally well preserved, the quality of the management plan for 2010-2014 and the long-term protection and monitoring plan that was being implemented.

He noted a few specific points: protection of the island of Porquerolles, most of which was to become the second core area of the park, the pressure from visitors, the problem of pollution caused by pleasure craft, commercial and recreational fishing, information and awareness raising, monitoring invasive alien species, the managers' role as special intermediary for the island's inhabitants and the other tasks performed by the park under various international programmes (MEDPAN, PELAGOS sanctuary). He pointed out that the park was going through a major reform process and reported on developments in the park following the adoption of the Nationals Parks Act of 14 April 2006, which had 3 components:

- creation of a potential inclusion area which municipalities could elect to join, and drafting of a charter establishing the partnership between central government, local authorities and local stakeholders,
- creation of an adjacent marine area,
- expansion of the park's core, so that the island of Porquerolles would become the second core area. The introduction of these new arrangements would mean major changes for the Park, which had no peripheral zone and therefore no potential inclusion area.

Port Cros would go from being a park confined to one island and its immediate surroundings to an entity covering a region. The process would take a few more years, during which the European Diploma would still officially apply to the original area.

He proposed that Port Cros National Park's European Diploma be renewed for a period of 10 years, with 11 recommendations. He suggested that another field visit take place once the process of establishing the enlarged Park had been completed and the Charter adopted, in preparation for a fresh decision on whether or not to extend the diploma to the whole of the area concerned.

The Group approved the expert's conclusions and raised the possibility of a review of the boundaries of the diploma-holding area once the process of extending the park had been completed.

## **7.2 Areas where no prior expert appraisal had been carried out: Swiss National Park, Krimml Falls Natural Site (Austria)**

The Secretariat's representative presented the draft Resolutions that had been prepared in consultation with the managers because of the previous expert appraisal report and the latest annual reports. Series of 6 recommendations for the Swiss National Park and 8 recommendations for the Krimml Falls Natural Site were approved.

With regard to the Swiss National Park, the Group discussed the possibility of extending the Diploma to the biosphere reserve as a whole.

After these presentations, the Group, having amended certain draft Resolutions on renewal, proposed that the competent committee recommend that the Committee of Ministers renew the European Diploma for 10 years for the areas concerned. To that end, it sent it the draft Resolutions set out in Appendix IV.

## **8. Non-renewal of the European Diploma for Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park (Belarus)**

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE(2012)14 and T-PVS/DE(2012)14 add

The expert, Eckhart Kuijken (Belgium), reported on the findings of the visit made in the company of Lyudmila Dimitrova (Bulgaria), who had helped draw up the management plan and Françoise Bauer from the Secretariat. He noted the decision not to renew the Diploma, which had been taken in 2007 and maintained pending submission of a peer-reviewed management plan translated into an official language.

The purpose of the visit had been to examine the action taken to implement the management plan. Much of the discussions had focused on zoning and there had also been a meeting with Renata Krzysciak-Kosinska to discuss the arrangements for co-operation with the neighbouring Bialowieza National Park (Poland).

Considerable progress had been achieved in recent years: the management plan had been improved, the chapter on functional zoning and the rules applicable to each zone had been completely rewritten with the invaluable assistance of Ms Dimitrova, the strictly protected zone had been extended and a new director appointed, Alexander Bury, who was on good terms with the various partners. There was also now more participation by NGOs in the management of the park. The meeting heard that a Presidential Decree had been issued that day (9 February 2012) regarding the National Park.

Mr Kuijken did, however, express concern about the bypass road, saying that it would put increased economic pressure on the park, and the drainage work with its impact on the peat bogs, which were one of the great assets of the park. He also expressed concern about the presence of "Father Frost Manor" on a 14 ha site in a bison breeding area, bison feeding and the issue of hunting. He felt that it was a question of unsustainable use of resources.

The expert suggested that the Diploma be renewed for a limited period with conditions and recommendations.

The deputy director of the Park, Dmitry Bernatsky, outlined the Park's position on the points raised by the expert. Generally speaking, the economic activities and forestry operations had been limited, Father Frost Manor was in the economic zone, the bypass was intended to compensate local residents for the fact that the strict protected zone had been extended and the drainage systems were being rebuilt.

After a lengthy discussion, the Group recognised the progress made and the authorities' commitment to meeting the requirements of the Diploma.

Before taking a decision on the renewal of the Diploma, however, the Group felt it would be best to wait until it had received all the finalised and adopted texts, as there were different versions of the documents and the map showing the functional zoning. It asked that the following documents be sent to it and proposed that the matter be referred to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention which was to meet in November:

- The decree recently signed by the President,
- The latest version of the regulations,
- The revised version of the management plan with the official approval date and the programme for implementation,
- The maps presented at the meeting, showing the new functional zoning including the buffer and game zones, the boundaries of the nature park and of the extended zone featured in the World Heritage document and the location of the bypass road,
- The map with the drainage projects and the restoration programmes, indicating the ecological/environmental effects, the timetable and the budget.

The Group supported the Chair's proposal to refer to the Standing Committee the decision concerning a possible renewal on the condition that all the documents requested are received. The Group instructed the Secretariat to stay in touch with the experts so that, if necessary, a revised draft Resolution could be submitted to the Standing Committee, taking account of the latest developments. The Chair thanked the Park representatives for their involvement.

The Group warmly thanked the experts who had carried out the on-the-spot visits for their commitment and the quality of their reports, and the managers of the sites concerned for the flawless manner in which they had organised the visits. It asked that clear mention be made in the expert reports of the progress achieved since the last renewal, indicating the level of satisfaction.

## **9. Annual reports on the 71 areas holding the Diploma in 2011**

The Secretariat said that most of the annual reports had been submitted and that there was no mention of any major problems.

Some of the reports did not contain enough information on compliance with the conditions/recommendations attached to the previous renewal (cf. III of the annual report). Others, however, required special attention:

- Bialowieza National Park whose award had been suspended in 2007: the procedure for adopting the management plan had not yet been completed.
- Poloniny National Park: the managers were still having serious difficulties in meeting the conditions. The perimeter of the central zone had been reduced. A change in the legislation was needed and the director did not have sufficient authority.
- Retezat National Park: road-building project and illegal logging.
- Donana National Park: dredging of the Guadalquivir in connection with the plans to build a container port.
- Wurzacher Ried nature reserve: plan to build 30 wind turbines on the surrounding moraine hills.

Mr Michael Usher noted the use of Asulox in Minsmere nature reserve to stop the area from becoming overgrown with bracken.

With regard to diploma-holding areas in France, Henri Jaffeux said that all the national parks were in a period of transition which should lead to more supportive partnerships between the parties involved. He felt it was important to keep a watchful eye on the Vanoise where there was a risk of shelved projects being resurrected (link-up between Val d'Isère and Bonneval). The lingering problems in the Camargue were due mainly to rising sea levels. The Scandola nature reserve merited particular attention: the project to extend the marine area was progressing.

Mr Alexei Lotman said that the structure of conservation services had changed in Estonia and that this restructuring should be followed closely.

The Group took note of this information. It instructed the Secretariat to chase up those managers who had not yet sent in reports and to write to any who were concerned by a particular problem.

A discussion got under way on the case of Poloniny National Park.

Rather than proposing that the Diploma be withdrawn, the Group decided to hold a high-level meeting on the problems encountered by managers in meeting the conditions under Article 8 of the regulations. The preparations should be carried out in co-operation with UNESCO given that part of the site had World Heritage status. These preparations should include a short field visit to meet the various socio-economic players involved and NGOs, plus a high-level interministerial meeting in Bratislava.

## 10. Renewal 2013 and amendments to the 2008 Resolutions

### 10.1 Renewal

The Secretariat announced that since the validity period had been extended in 2008 to 10 years, there was only one renewal visit to be carried out in 2012 and that was to Retezat National Park in Romania.

### 10.2 Amendment to 2008 Resolutions

Relevant document: T-PVS/DE(2012)9

The Secretariat informed the Group that when the draft Resolutions on renewal of the European Diploma were adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 2 July 2008, a legal error had resulted in irregularities in the renewal procedure, for the following protected areas:

- Dobrocský National Nature Reserve (Slovakia)
- Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)
- Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve (Russian Federation)
- Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park (Germany/ Luxembourg)
- Tihany Peninsula (Hungary)
- Matsalu National Park (Estonia)
- Thayatal National Park (Austria)
- Bieszczady National Park (Poland)
- Poloniny National Park (Slovakia)
- Maritime Alps Nature Park (Italy)

In the case of the above-mentioned parks, the Diploma had been renewed for 5 years, meaning that the next renewal date was 2013, when in fact under the relevant rule; the validity period should have been 10 years. In order to rectify the matter, therefore, the period for which the Diploma was valid should be extended until 2018. To this end the Secretariat had prepared the draft Resolutions in question.

The Group of Specialists examined the texts set out in Appendix V with a view to forwarding them to the Committee of Ministers, and asked the Committee of Ministers to extend the duration of the Diploma until 2018 for each of the sites mentioned above

## 11. Future of the Diploma

Relevant documents: T-PVS/DE(2012)11 and T-PVS/DE(2012)12

The Secretariat informed the Group that, as decided at the previous meeting, Mr Marc Roekaerts (Belgium) had been tasked firstly with updating the information sheets on the various diploma-holding areas and also the map, and secondly with carrying out a study to look at the different types of habitat and geographical regions already represented in the network of diploma-holding areas so as to identify any gaps.

The consultant described the current state of the network, the breakdown by biogeographical region and by member state, the gaps that existed in 3 biogeographical regions in particular (Anatolia, Arctic, Steppe) and the links with the EEA's EUNIS Habitat classification system, which was already used for the Emerald network. He stressed the need for further information on habitats and suggested that, to this end, managers be asked to enter additional details in the information sheets.

The Group learnt that at the last meeting of the Standing Committee (29 November – 2 December), a side event had been held, during which a consolidated version of the document drawn up the previous year on the future of the Diploma had been presented. Various proposals had been made which tied in with those made by the Group at its previous meeting, and which concerned *inter alia* the need to raise

the profile of the European Diploma, including at international seminars and on the website, by introducing a shorter link on the home page, the need to secure more support from governments, to better highlight the Diploma on the UNEP/WCMC website and to improve synergies and co-operation with other programmes.

Prior to the discussion, Mr Eladio Fernandez-Galiano warned the group against proposing too many changes and being overambitious, given the limited resources allocated to this activity.

The Group members warmly thanked Marc Roekaerts for managing the database, a job that he had been doing for many years.

They felt that, in order to make it attractive again, the Diploma needed to be reinvigorated by issuing targeted calls for applications, by making better use of available material (annual reports and expert appraisal reports), by increasing visibility, thereby providing a boost for the Diploma, managers and local communities, and by better explaining the added value of the Diploma compared with other designations, namely managerial excellence and its role in halting the decline of nature in Europe.

The Group recognised that extending the European Diploma and preparing for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations were still top of the agenda.

It instructed the Secretariat to prepare a document on how to convey these different messages and to send a request to the managers, asking them to update the information on their respective areas.

## **12. Other business and closure of the meeting**

No specific points were raised. The Secretariat would notify members of the dates of the next meeting, to be held in 2013, in due course.

The Chair thanked participants, the Secretariat and the interpreters, gave Françoise Bauer the group's best wishes for her retirement later in 2012, and then declared the meeting closed.

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## Appendix II – Agenda

<b>THURSDAY 9 FEBRUARY</b>
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### 9h30-10h00 Welcome and Opening

1. Opening of the meeting by the Chair, Mr Michael Usher (United Kingdom) and presentation of the new members of the Group, Mr Aleksei Lotman (Estonia), Mr Peter Skoberne (Slovenia), Mr/Mrs ...(Turkey)
2. Adoption of the agenda  
[Document T-PVS/DE (2012)1]
3. General information on activities presenting an interest for the work of the Group.
4. Short presentation by the Chair of the minutes of the 2011 meeting of the Group of specialists and report on actions undertaken during the last year.

### 10h00-10h45 Applications for the European Diploma

5. Applications for the European Diploma of Protected Areas: presentation by the representatives of areas candidates of the application files of the Khosrov Forest State reserve (Armenia) and the Burren region (Ireland).  
[Document T-PVS/DE(2012)5]  
[Document T-PVS/DE(2012)6]
6. Information given by the Secretariat regarding the National Park of Sumava (Czech Republic).

### 10h45-11h00 Coffee break

### 11h00-12h30 Renewal of the European

7. Renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas to 10 awarded areas.  
[Document T-PVS/DE(2012)13]
- 7.1 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 :
  - National Park of the Abruzzi (Italy), *Mr Hervé Lethier*  
[Document T-PVS/DE(2012)10]
  - Maremma Nature Park (Italy), *Mr Hervé Lethier*  
[Document T-PVS/DE(2012)4]
  - Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve (Germany), *Mr Michael Fasel*  
[Document T-PVS/DE(2012)12]
  - Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine), *Mr Hervé Lethier*  
[Document T-PVS/DE(2012)7]

**12h30-14h00 Lunch break****14h00-16h00 Renewal(to be continued)**

- Muddus National Park (Sweden), *Mr Pierre Galland* [Document T-PVS/DE(2012)3]
- Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks (Sweden), *Mr Pierre Galland* [Document T-PVS/DE(2012)3]
- Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve (Portugal), *Mr Joe Sultana* [Document T-PVS/DE(2012)8]
- Port Cros National Park (France), *Mr Pierre Hunkeler* [Document T-PVS/DE(2012)2]

7.2 Areas 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 :

[Document T-PVS/DE(2012)13]

- Swiss National Park (Switzerland)
- Krimml Falls Natural site (Austria)

**16h00-16h20 Coffee break****16h20-17h30 Non renewal of the European Diploma**

8. Situation of the Bialowieża National Park (Poland) and of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National (Belarus) since the non-renewal in 2007

[Document T-PVS/DE(2012)14]

Presentation by the Secretariat of the state of progress. Presentation by the expert Mr Eckhart Kuijken of the report further to the visit of the National Park of Belovezhskaya Pushcha, discussion and proposal to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention.

*A dinner will be organised in an Alsatian restaurant (20h00) to gather participants if they wish. More information will be given during the meeting.  
Please note, this is not an invitation of the Council of Europe.*

<b>FRIDAY 10 FEBRUARY</b>
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**9h30-10h30 Annual reports**

1. Annual reports:

Brief presentation of a synthesis by the Secretariat and discussion of reports which need special attention.

**10h30-11h00 Renewal 2013 and Amendment to Resolutions**

2. Renewal foreseen in 2013: first renewal to the National Park of Retezat (Romania).

3. Amendments to the Resolutions adopted in 2008 regarding the renewal of the Diploma in order to adjust the period of validity.

[Document T-PVS/DE(2012)9]

**11h00-11h15 Coffee break**

**11h15- 12h30 Future of the European Diploma**

4. Presentation by the consultant, Mr Marc Roekaerts, of the report. Analysis of the revised version of the document prepared by the Secretariat, proposals of future actions and setting-up of objectives by 2015.

[Document T-PVS/DE(2012)11]

[Document T-PVS/DE(2011)12]

**12h30-14h00 Lunch break**

**14h00-15h00 Discussion on the future of the European Diploma (to be continued)**

**15h00-16h00 Other business and closure of the meeting**

5. Date of the next meeting

6. Other business

7. Closure

### Appendix III – Information concerning the Abruzzi National Park



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#### RAPPORT D'EXPERTISE Conditions de renouvellement: mise à jour

Par rapport aux conditions de renouvellement proposées dans le rapport d'expertise le Parc a entrepris son travail que peut se résumer comme de suite.

CONDITION 1 : le plan de gestion a été soumis aux trois régions concernées par le Parc et au Ministère de l'Environnement.

#### CONDITION 2

○ la région des Abruzzes a décidé de rendre opératif l'action B2 du PATOM. Cette action concerne la gestion cynégétique dans la zone fréquenté par l'ours. Dans ce but la Division Chasse de la région a créé un group de travail composée par représentants du Parc des Abruzzes, de la Région, de l'ISPRA, des chasseur, de la province de L'Aquila, de l'Université de Rome (group de travail de Mr. Boitani) . Le group doit travailler pour trouver des formes de chasse qui soit respectueuses de la présence de l'ours. Le group a déjà fait deux réunion, le 15 décembre 2011 et le 12 janvier 2012. Dans ces réunions on a décidé de: a) réaliser une carte de présence de l'ours sur le territoire régional avec tous les informations relatives aux zones critiques pour l'espèce (zone d'alimentations, zones de tanières potentielles ecc.); b) proposer de systèmes de gestion cynégétique qui soit fonction de la cartographie du point précédent.

Le but est avoir systèmes de chasse différents selon les zones individués par la cartographie et avoir aussi des zones où la chasse est interdit pour sauvegarder les ours dans leurs aires plus critiques. Cette action de la Division Chasse régional marchera en manière autonome de la création de la zone périphérique selon la lois cadre des aires protégé : c'est une action du PATOM que la Région a décidé de réaliser tout de suite car le Parc a déjà une Zone de Protection ou Zone Tampon depuis le 1971 que peu constituer le nucléo de la future aire périphérique selon la lois cadre  
Dans le même temps le Conseille Directif du Parc a délibéré l'institution de la zone périphérique du Parc selon les indication de la loi cadres sur les aires protégés ; la Région des Abruzzes a envoyé la cartographie et le protocole d'entente entre région et parc à l'approbation de son Conseil régional  
En pièces-joints les documents relatifs à ce point

○ le Président du Parc a envoyé aux maires des communes du Parc une lettre (pièce joint) dans laquelle il souligne la nécessité de faire respecter les zones de Reserve Intégrales du Parc. Il écrit aussi clairement que si les éleveurs des communes ne respecterons pas la Reserve Intégrale il sera forcé a faire une révision des accord de locations

Dans le même temps deux actions prévues dans le projet Life ARCTOS vont terminer : ce sont les actions préparatoires A1 et A2 sur la gestion de la zootechnie dans le Parc et sur la gestion sanitaire du bétail domestique. Dans tout les deux cas à la fin de deux actions on devra produire un document technique pour la gestion de la zootechnie et des problématiques sanitaire dans le Parc. Nous avons programmé des réunions avec le Ministère de la santé, les divisions santé des régions concernées par le Parc, les autorités sanitaires locaux pour discuter les résultats des deux actions du Life et pour diriger les actions successives nécessaire pour concrétiser les indications des rapports techniques .

○ dans le projet Life ARCTOS nous avons une action qui concerne la réalisation de fermetures matérielles des routes forestières dans les zones plus critiques du Parc. L'action est sous la responsabilité d'un de partenaires du projet et donc ne dépend pas directement du Parc mais le Parc est le coordinateur du projet et donc il peu participer à la réalisation de l'action.

Aujourd'hui on a réalisé déjà deux barrages (Commune de Scanno), on a eu la réponse positive de deux autres maires du Parc pour réaliser trois barrages (Communes de Alvito et Picinisco), on a contacté les maires de San Donato V.C., Campoli Appennino et Scontrone dont nous attendons la réponse. En pièce-joint une cartographie de la situation actuelle.

Dans le projet on a prévu la réalisation de 20 barrages jusqu'à la fin du projet même (mois de aout 2014).

  
RESPONSABLE SERVICE SCIENTIFICO  
CINZIA SULLI

Pescasseroli, 2 février 2012.

## Appendix IV – Draft Resolutions 2012



### **1. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine)**

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(97) 21 on the award of the European Diploma to the Carpathian Biosphere 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 9-10 February 2012;

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

Renews until 30 September 2022 the European Diploma of protected areas to the Carpathian Biosphere Reserve;

Attaches the following 7 recommendations to the renewal:

1. Continue efforts to provide the CBR with more appropriate funding and to raise more additional funds from external sources;
2. Accelerate liaison with the authorities of Romania so as to complete the process of establishing a transfrontier Biosphere Reserve within the next two to three years;
3. Pay more attention to the elaboration and implementation of clear strategies and actions plans for the development of coordinated green activities around the CBR, working in close cooperation with the local stakeholders and in line with the presidential guidance;
4. Provide the Council of Europe with adequate and details figures, information and data on the legislation concerning the wolf (*Canis lupus*) in Ukraine and the enforcement of that legislation in the country, especially with regards to the art. 6 of the Bern Convention ; the State party should be urged to report on this issue to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, at its next meeting, and encouraged to strengthen its efforts on reducing the poaching activities in and around the Diploma-holding area;
5. Devote priority efforts to the monitoring and conservation of the European mink and to the control of the population of the American mink within the CBR;

6. Follow up the implementation of the conclusions and recommendations made in the reports on inventory and monitoring, and on the challenges and solutions for the management of the CBR, published in 2008 and 2011, giving the CBR the capacity to undertake these; and
7. Strengthen cooperation with the local socio-economic stakeholders, including the forest and the tourism sectors, and develop specific awareness pilot activities targeted on them; these activities should address the issue of climate change, and promote local adaptation measures to global warming, including alternative socio-economic measures, such as schemes for green tourism, carbon sequestration and payment for ecosystem services.





## **2. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Muddus National Park (Sweden)**

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 (67) 23 on the award of the European Diploma to the Muddus 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 9-10 February 2012;

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Muddus National Park (Sweden) until 27 October 2022;

Attaches the following 7 recommendations to the renewal:

1. Provide sufficient financial and human resources, including field staff, to the new "Laponiatjouttjudus" (management board) in order to implement the new Management Plan and ensure a smooth transition from former the County management structure to the new board; and provide as soon as possible an English translation of the Management Plan;
2. Continue the predators' inventories and use the results in order to help conserving the exceptional predator populations while allowing the Sami population to continue their traditional reindeer herding activities;
3. Establish a centralized research database linked to a GIS for the whole Lapponia area and make the results of the research widely available for scientist and visitors;
4. Continue the monitoring of the fire areas including the natural regeneration processes and design a programme to monitor the effects of climatic change;
5. Assess the visitor flows and their impact both within and outside the park (ecological and economic impact);
6. Consider linking the Muddus National Park with the Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks and other conservation areas so that the Lapponia World Heritage Site becomes a single European Diploma site; and
7. Reflect on the use of the different national and international designations for the area; organize a workshop with the relevant international organizations (e.g. Council of Europe, World Heritage Convention, Ramsar Convention, and National Park Service) with a view to harmonizing the reporting and monitoring requirements and the respective perimeters.



### **3. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks (Sweden)**

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 (67) 23 awarding the European Diploma to the Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks;

Taking into consideration the expert's report submitted to the Group of Specialists for the European Diploma of Protected Areas at its meeting on 9-10 February 2012;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks until 27 October 2022;

Attaches the following 8 recommendations to the renewal:

1. Provide sufficient financial and human resources, including field staff, to the "Laponiatjouttjudus" (management board) in order to implement the new Management Plan and ensure a smooth transition from former the County management structure to the new board; and provide as soon as possible an English translation of the new Management Plan;
2. Continue the predators' inventories and use the results in order to help conserving the exceptional predator populations while allowing the Sami population to continue their traditional reindeer herding activities;
3. Establish a centralized research database linked to a GIS for the whole Lapponia area and make the results of the research widely available for scientist and visitors;
4. Closely monitor the use of snowmobile, motor boats and other off-road vehicles, particularly in view of controlling illegal hunting and fishing;
5. Set up a system for estimating the number of visitors, their profile and distribution over the year and initiate a research programme on the long term impact of the different human activities (e.g. reindeer herding, fishing and tourism) on the landscape, and design a programme to monitor the effects of the climatic change;

6. Build and equip as soon as possible the Visitor information centre in Stora Sjöfallet for the Lapponia WH site and provide specific information on the different National Parks; establish a network of smaller information points at strategic entrances into the Parks and communicate about the different categories of international designations;
7. Consider linking the Sarek and Padjelanta National Parks with the Muddus National Park and other conservation areas so that the Lapponia World Heritage Site becomes a single European Diploma site; and
8. Reflect on the use of the different national and international designations for the area; organize a workshop with the relevant international organizations (e.g. Council of Europe, World Heritage Convention, Ramsar Convention, and National Park Service) with a view to harmonizing the reporting and monitoring requirements and the respective perimeters.



#### **4. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve (Portugal)**

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 (92) 18 awarding the European Diploma to the Selvagens Islands Nature 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 9-10 February 2012;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve until 18 May 2022;

Notes with satisfaction the removal of the invasive exotic species;

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

1. that The Portuguese Government continues to take the necessary steps to preserve the current islands status of the Selvagens Islands and to unequivocally support the Madeira Regional Government in all matters concerning the nature reserve, in accordance with the provisions of Act No. 15/86 of 21 May 1986.

Attaches the following 5 recommendations to the renewal:

1. Continue to take all precautions to ensure that no non-native species of plants and animals are introduced;
2. Continue to improve the accommodation and the radio/phone system, which provides the capacity for wardens to contact their authorities in Madeira and their families;
3. Continue the studies to survey the effect of the eradication of the alien species of the flora and fauna for the next few years;
4. Make efforts to eliminate the breeding of the Yellow-legged Gull (*L. m. atlantis*) on Selvagem Pequena and Ilhéu de Fora;
5. Increase the awareness of the importance of the cultural and geological heritage; and
6. Continue the programme of reconstruction of the remaining unrestored rubble walls.



## **5. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Lüneburg Heath 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 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 (67) 23 awarding the European Diploma to the Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve;

Taking into consideration the expert's report submitted to the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas at its meeting on 9-10 February 2012;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve until 25 October 2022;

Attaches the following 13 recommendations to the renewal:

1. Pursue a reduction, or at least a limitation to no more than the current amount, of the concession of ground-water extraction and coordinate the ground-water extraction for irrigation on farmland technically and quantitatively with the activities and infrastructures of Wasserwerke Hamburg; carry out additional studies and monitoring in order to collect more information about the influences of all kinds of water extraction on species and ecosystems; and simulation modelling should be undertaken for all factors possibly influencing the groundwater level, the soil, the streams, the different types of vegetation including forests, the biotopes of red-list-species, and the natural dynamic of the whole ecosystem;
2. Pursue political recognition of the VNP's Lüneburger Heide Nature Reserve (NLH) and increase the public funding to the same level as that provided to Federal Nature Parks;
3. Reconsider the ongoing practice of agricultural funding and pursue recognition of all types of heathland cultivation and all heathland restoration activities as a kind of 'green land cultivation' with the same amount of funding, especially during the EU-funding period 2013-2020;
4. Pursue the continuation of funding for the rearing of the "Heidschnucke" (Heathland sheep) by Lower Saxony and the Federal Republic and recognise the "Dülmener Pferde" (Heathland horses) as worthy of subsidy by the rear-premium of Lower Saxony;
5. Develop a concept for connecting the large heathlands areas east and west of Wilsede by an ecological corridor;
6. Pursue restoration of streams, their associated wetland biotopes and their buffer strips;

7. Reduce areas with cultivation of energy-crops to a level that does not affect the Nature Reserve's flora, fauna, groundwater and the scenic attractions;
8. Continue ecological forest management and convert mono-croppings of spruce into mixed forests including oak (*Quercus* spp.);
9. Ensure that existing scientific data are included and respected in regional planning processes and also ensure that negative impacts on the Nature Reserve from outside the area's boundary are prevented; before licensing a wind farm, or any other project in the neighbourhood of the reserve, carry out sufficient and detailed studies taking into account the formulated VNP recommendations;
10. Complete the data base of Lower Saxony concerning FFH-Species so that all species existing in the reserve are listed and considered in regional, national and federal planning procedures;
11. Create suitable ecological corridors between the Nature Reserve and the black grouse biotopes outside the Reserve without endangering infrastructures such as like wind-turbines;
12. Realize the concept of buffer zone areas with a high protection status in the neighbouring areas of the Nature Reserve; and
13. Establish a corps of rangers (Naturwacht).



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## **6. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Swiss National Park (Switzerland)**

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 (67) 23 awarding the European Diploma to the Swiss 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 Swiss National Park until 27 October 2022;

Attaches to the renewal the following 6 recommendations:

1. Take all necessary measures to fulfil the UNESCO condition that the national park, which is the core zone of the “Biosfera Val Müstair/Parc Naziunal” biosphere reserve, be entirely surrounded by a buffer zone;
2. Ensure that staff numbers are sufficient to comply with existing requirements and grant sufficient additional resources with a view to the celebration in 2014 of the 100 year jubilee;
3. Continue to raise among local inhabitants, municipalities and visitors, the awareness of the return of large carnivores, working in close cooperation with the Hunting and Fishing Department of the county of Graubünden;
4. Initiate studies with the different ministries and authorities concerned on the possibilities of minimising the impact of the Pass dal Fuorn road;
5. Continue the close co-operation with the neighbouring Stelvio National Park; and
6. Consider the enlargement of the European Diploma area to include the whole of the Biosphere Reserve.



## **7. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Krimml Waterfalls Natural site (Austria)**

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 (67) 23 awarding the European Diploma to the Krimml Waterfalls Natural site;

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;

Noting that the Krimml Waterfalls Natural site is located within the Hohe Tauern National Park;

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Krimml Waterfalls Natural site until 27 October 2022;

Attaches the following 8 recommendations to the renewal:

1. Review and where necessary improve the regulations of the protected area in order to strengthen the protection status; and devote a part of the management plan of the HTNP to the Krimml waterfalls;
2. Continue to take appropriate measures in order to preserve the natural beauty of this impressive natural monument for future generations;
3. Avoid impacts on the high aesthetic quality of the landscape surrounding the Krimml Falls, especially in the areas around "Wasserfallboden" and "Schönangerl";
4. Maintain great vigilance regarding the development close to the falls, e.g. installations or extension of shops, as well as medical care and new touristic activities (e.g. ice-climbing);
5. Avoid as far as possible increasing light pollution;
6. Continue to pay close attention to the problem of path erosion; and ensure that visitors only use the existing paths;
7. Pursue scientific research and secure funding for studies on regional birdlife, fungi (including lichens) and bryophytes, as a contribution to protect the area's typical biodiversity; and
8. Strengthen the cooperation with local stakeholders, especially land owners, the municipality, the Austrian Alpine Association (ÖAV), tourism operators and associations.





## **8. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Port Cros 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 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 (97) 22 awarding the European Diploma to the Port Cros 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 9-10 February 2012;

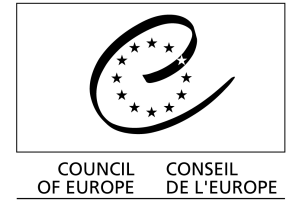
Having regard to the proposals of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention;

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Port Cros National Park until 30 September 2022;

Attaches the following 11 recommendations to the renewal:

1. Ensure that the development of the new *Grand Parc* consolidates the protection of Port Cros and that it in no way undermines such protection; and keep the relevant Committee informed about how the situation develops;
2. Ensure the early implementation of formal protection for Porquerolles, with its adjoining marine area, which is a vital complement to Port Cros;
3. Consolidate and co-ordinate the protection of the surrounding marine area initiated under Natura 2000, and seek a regional solution to the problem of waste water from boats;
4. Actively work on enlarging the Port Cros National Park by introducing a partnership zone on the mainland and an adjacent maritime zone, and initiate the consultation procedure for drafting the Park's Charter, ensuring maximum involvement by local stakeholders;
5. Continue to assess the impact of recreational activities, introduce indicators for environmental load and pressure capacity indicators in order to prevent the tolerance threshold of the land and sea habitats from being exceeded, and monitor the development and impact of new sports activities in order to regulate them as soon as they emerge; define and implement the necessary tools for achieving this objective and involving all partners in their implementation;
6. Continue to monitor commercial fishing and regularly adapt the regulations and voluntary agreements with fishermen in order to ensure sustainable use of this local resource; assess the impact of angling and tailor the regulations to current needs;

7. Provide visitors with more visible information on the fact that they are entering a natural protected area at the ports of entry and by displaying notices in the shuttle boats, and place greater emphasis on the European Diploma;
8. Continue to monitor and control invasive alien species such as *Carpobrotus* spp., *Caulerpa taxifolia*, black rats and feral cats, and actively participate in the Mediterranean alarm network on new high-risk species;
9. Involve the Park more actively and visibly in measures concerning sustainable development and moderate use of such resources as fresh water and energy;
10. Clarify the formal and actual responsibilities and tasks of the National Park and those of the other local players such as the municipal, departmental and maritime authorities; and
11. Promote local reappropriation of the Park by developing partnerships with local political, economic and voluntary players.



### **9. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Maremma Regional Park (Italy)**

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 (92) 17 awarding the European Diploma to the Maremma Regional 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 9-10 February 2012;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Maremma Regional Park until 18 May 2022

Attaches the following 7 recommendations to the renewal:

1. Develop, in collaboration with the local authorities concerned, an approach to the management of the Ombrone by river basin, pursuant to the EU Water Framework Directive, with a view to attaining good ecological status for the watercourse within the meaning of that directive;
2. Finalise the extension of the Park to include the marine environment under conditions to be decided in agreement with local players;
3. Designate the Trappola (Ombrona Delta) as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention;
4. Considerably increase human resources in the Park responsible for field inspections and ensure a level of funding consistent with the increasing needs of optimum management of the diploma-holding area;
5. Step up technical support for local enterprises involved in developing integrated agro-environmental activities and promoting local products and services;
6. Develop action plan to promote the protection and enhancement of the Park's anthropological heritage; and
7. Prepare a plan for the management of the wolf population.



### **10. Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Abruzzi, Lazio and Molise National Park (Italy)**

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 (67) 39 awarding the European Diploma to the Abruzzi 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 9-10 February 2012;

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

Congratulates the managers of the Park for their efforts since the last renewal;

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Abruzzi National Park until 26 November 2022;

Attaches the following 2 conditions to the renewal:

1. that the PNALM management plan be finally adopted within a maximum period of one year, i.e. before the meeting of the Group of Specialists in 2013;

2. that strenuous efforts be taken so that:

- in pursuance of Italy's Framework Law on Protected Areas, peripheral zones are created on the territories of the Abruzzi and Molise regions by the end of 2013, and that regulations on hunting, which take account of the need to minimise disturbance to bears during the autumn, are introduced in these zones and applied with effect from, at the latest, the 2013-2014 hunting season;

- the regulations prohibiting livestock farming within zone A of the PNALM are applied absolutely and without delay, and that local elected representatives are made aware of this matter;

- consultation begins without delay with the municipal authorities of the PNALM municipalities on physical closure of those access routes to the diploma-holding area which are most critical from the viewpoint of the conservation of large animals; this consultation should lead to closure arrangements and appropriate regulations, taking account of the rights of local third parties, being adopted by the end of 2013;

Attaches the following 8 recommendations to the renewal:

1. Begin implementation of the PATOM action plan for the protection of the bear population as soon as possible, facilitated by the administration of the PNALM (Abruzzi, Lazio and Molise National Park);
2. Continue discussions on the inclusion within the diploma-holding area of the sectors adjacent to the PNALM deemed to be of major biological interest for large carnivores, especially the brown bears and wolves;
3. Complete the preparation of the economic and social development plan by the end of 2012, as scheduled by the PNALM administration, with a view to its early implementation;
4. Substantially increase the human and financial resources earmarked for scientific activities in the PNALM and tailor them to the complex problems which the Park will be facing over the next few years; ensure that its general capacities are such that it can carry out its conservation and monitoring assignments appropriately;
5. Consider the possibility of instructing all technical personnel to record any violations of the PNALM regulations;
6. Launch discussions on the need for controlled management of red deer, linking this to improving the state of conservation of the chamois population;
7. Make a special effort to support rural tourism activities around the PNALM periphery; and
8. Launch discussions with local mayors on the issue of stock and wildlife feeding.

**Appendix V – Revised Resolutions 2008****Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Dobročský National Nature Reserve (Slovakia)**

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 (98) 28 awarding the European Diploma to the Dobročský National Nature Reserve (Slovakia);

Taking into consideration the different reports sent to the secretariat by the managers of the diploma-holding area;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Dobročský National Nature Reserve until 18 September 2018;

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

– pursue the process of transforming anthropogenic forests into semi-natural forests, mainly in the buffer zone of the Dobročský National Nature Reserve, in compliance with the management plan;

Attaches the following recommendations to the renewal:

1. promote awareness-raising activities, mainly:

– updating the exhibition on the Dobročský National Nature Reserve in the Pred Skalickou cottage;

– in co-operation with the forestry authorities, installing the information point on the Dobročský National Nature Reserve in the Forestry Museum in the Vydrovská Valley, near Čierny Balog;

2. implement other activities listed in the management plan, particularly research and monitoring.



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**Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)**

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 (98) 25 awarding the European Diploma to the Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation);

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas on 17 and 18 March 2008;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve until 18 September 2018;

Attaches the following recommendations to the renewal:

1. provide sufficient resources to ensure proper functioning of the reserve. Financial support is needed to carry out basic research and establish infrastructure for the development of ecological education, as well as for strengthening the Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve protection capacity;
2. carry on systematic efforts to extend all the Reserve territories, especially their buffer zones and to establish and/or restore ecological corridors between these territories;
3. continue efforts to search for new valuable steppe territories which could be joined to Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve or constitute stepping stones or ecological corridors between the existing territories of the reserve;
4. encourage further co-operation projects with international participation – such as the “Yaroslavna” project – in the sphere of nature and landscape conservation and sustainable development;
5. continue work on the optimisation of territory of the Belogorye Biosphere Reserve. This reserve might be expanded through incorporation of new steppe ecosystems, which would strengthen the interest of the diploma-holding area. Possibly consider the extension of the European Diploma to the Belogorye Reserve.



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**Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve (Russian Federation)**

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 (98) 24 awarding the European Diploma to the Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve (Russian Federation);

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas on 17 and 18 March 2008;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve until 18 September 2018;

Attaches the following conditions to the renewal:

- as the Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve has no buffer zone and the woodland north-east of the reserve has been given to logging companies, create a 200- to 300-metre wide protective zone where no felling is allowed along the boundary of the diploma area, especially the north and east boundaries of Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve;
- support the reserve in its efforts to create a system for remitting part of the money due for the water intake from the reserve. The clear water taken for municipal purposes amounts to 8 to 9 million cubic metres per year and Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve does not receive any compensation. Compensation in the form of subsidies for nature conservation should be granted to the reserve;

Attaches the following recommendations to the renewal:

1. continue work on optimising the Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve area, which could be expanded by incorporating unmanaged woodland along the state border and adjacent to the south and west boundaries of the reserve, including parts of the Kamennoye and Minozero lakes. In exchange for the forest tracts along the state border (sections 4 to 14 and 27 to 29), the reserve could give the local authorities the woodland adjacent to the motorway and railway as land suitable for the development of road and rail services;
2. provide sufficient resources to ensure the proper functioning of the reserve. Financial support is needed to carry out fundamental research and strengthen environmental education activities. Special funds are needed to publish a special jubilee edition to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve, and to build new tourist paths in the reserve.





**Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park (Germany/Luxembourg)**

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 (73) 33 awarding the European Diploma to the Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park (Germany/Luxembourg);

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas on 17 and 18 March 2008;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Germano/Luxembourg Nature Park until 25 October 2018;

Attaches the following conditions to the renewal:

- at the initiative of the states concerned, resume the work of the intergovernmental committee as soon as possible;
- engage in an in-depth analysis of the mission, the medium-term objectives and future structure of the Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park;
- define specifications and a road map for the drawing-up of a global management plan for the Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park incorporating those of the nature parks on its territory; prepare the management plan before the next renewal of the European Diploma falls due and ensure the funding required for its implementation;

Attaches the following recommendations to the renewal:

1. maintain and step up consultation and collaboration between the parties concerned by the Our and Sure basins, focusing on relations between the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg and the Rhineland-Palatinate *Land*;
2. pursue public awareness-raising and information activities;

3. encourage the swift creation of the Müllerthal-Kleine Luxemburger Schweiz nature park and incorporate it as far as possible in the Germano-Luxembourg Nature Park;
4. find a solution allowing aquatic fauna to pass or circumnavigate the obstacle of the Vianden hydroelectric dam;
5. maintain vigilance with regard to leisure and sporting pursuits (camping, rock-climbing, canoeing, etc.).



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**Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the volcanic phenomena of the Tihany Peninsula (Hungary)**

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 ResDip(2003)18 awarding the European Diploma to the volcanic phenomena of the Tihany Peninsula (Hungary);

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas on 17 and 18 March 2008;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the volcanic phenomena of the Tihany Peninsula until 28 May 2018;

Attaches the following recommendations to the renewal:

1. translate the management plan into more detailed and practical measures;
2. strongly enforce the ban on new buildings on the site;
3. pursue the planning and construction of the visitor centre near Lake Belsö;
4. continue to manage and control visitor pressure;
5. keep the balance between closed forested areas and open areas (meadows with hedges and bushes);
6. encourage farming and wine-growing practices consistent with the conservation of natural and landscape assets;
7. encourage the transfer of management rights on fishing in Lake Belsö to the Balaton Uplands National Park;
8. encourage the transfer of state properties to the Balaton Upland National Park and pursue the acquisition of private land;
9. continue to control invasive species such as the *Ailanthus*;
10. develop co-ordinated management with nearby protected areas such as the reed beds on the shore of Lake Balaton and the Külsö and Felsö marshes.



### **Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Matsalu National Park (Estonia)**

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 ResDip(2003)17 awarding the European Diploma to the Matsalu Nature Reserve (Estonia);

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas on 17 and 18 March 2008;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Matsalu National Park (new name) until 28 May 2018;

Attaches the following conditions to the renewal:

- the ongoing land reform process shall not in any way change the present characteristics of the national park or be detrimental to the park's biodiversity;
- maintenance of the meadows, particularly the coastal ones, shall continue to be given high priority;
- the national park's management shall have the necessary funds to continue its monitoring, enforcement and environmental education activities;
- private open land shall not be developed in any way that would be incompatible with the aims of the park;

Attaches the following recommendations to the renewal:

1. co-operation with farmers should continue, and where possible increase, particularly in the form of support for traditional uses like grazing or mowing;
2. the national park's management should continue to play a social role to help the local people within the park's boundaries develop activities compatible with the aims of the park, such as bird-watching, handicrafts and restoration of the historical heritage;

3. potential external threats from industry, agriculture, tourism and development should be continuously monitored and a buffer zone in which hunting is prohibited should be established around the national park;
4. continue the programme for the elimination of alien species;
5. reinforce the programme of scientific studies.



**Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Thayatal National Park (Austria)**

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 ResDip(2003)16 awarding the European Diploma to the Thayatal National Park (Austria);

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas on 17 and 18 March 2008;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Thayatal National Park until 28 May 2018;

Attaches the following recommendations to the renewal:

1. as soon as the results of the study on the ecology of the Thaya River and how it is affected by the Vranov Dam operations are received, the Thayatal National Park, as well as the Podyji National Park in the Czech Republic, should undertake to translate the proposed measures into action. The ideal flow rate of 2.4 cubic metres per second already set by the Czech experts must be achieved;
2. in view of the four or five artificial sills across the Thaya, consider renaturalisation work to recreate rocky rapids over a longer stretch of the river. In terms of priority, the sill immediately upstream is most in need of improvement;
3. ensure that transfrontier projects and activities involving both the Thayatal and Podyji national parks are increasing in scope and are well funded and intensified, particularly with a view to taking essential measures on the impact of the Vranov Dam;
4. given the spontaneous establishment in the park of new species such as the otter and beaver and the current study on the wild cat, there is a need to document the presence of roving animals as fully as possible and consider the full potential of the park's habitats;
5. develop the use of the Kaja Castle ruins in the park's education programmes as an example of how historical monuments can be incorporated into education on the environment.



**Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Bieszczady National Park (Poland)**

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 (98) 27 awarding the European Diploma to the Bieszczady National Park (Poland);

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas on 17 and 18 March 2008;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Bieszczady National Park until 18 September 2018;

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

– the government concerned shall undertake to adopt a management plan for the diploma-holding area, within no more than two years of the renewal of the period of validity;

Attaches the following recommendations to the renewal:

1. extend the perimeter of the diploma-holding area by including in the park the territory currently separating its two cores;
2. implement a programme to study and monitor the status and development of large predators throughout the Bieszczady National Park and the three neighbouring parks of Cisniansko-Wetlinski, Dolina Sanu and Nadsanski; recruit for the purpose a zoologist who will report on this programme to the diploma-holding area's scientific team;
3. step up co-operation between the management of the Bieszczady National Park and the municipalities with a view to forging a common vision and setting common objectives for spatial planning and development, taking account of the biological and landscape significance and sensitive nature of the sites;

4. draw on the activities and expertise of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, particularly for the application of its articles on conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity (4), spatial planning (5) and forestry (7);
5. consider strengthening co-operation between the bodies directly responsible for managing the protected areas on the borders of the three neighbouring countries (Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine), based on the programming of joint activities.





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### **Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Poloniny National Park (Slovakia)**

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 (98) 26 awarding the European Diploma to the Poloniny National Park (Slovakia);

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas on 17 and 18 March 2008;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Poloniny National Park until 18 September 2018;

Attaches the following conditions to the renewal:

- finalise and adopt the management plan for the park within two years of the renewal;
- start work on devising a new blueprint for forestry and hunting management in the diploma-holding area, taking greater account of the biological imperatives dictated by its European significance, within one year of the renewal. The national authorities shall supply a strategic plan for the sustainable development of the woodland during the next period of validity of the diploma and inform the Group of Specialists on the Diploma each year of the progress made. This blueprint shall include revision of the current hunting allocation in the diploma-holding area, ensuring that the functional units each cover a surface area of 3 000 to 4 000 hectares, consistent with the biology of large herbivores;
- create a functional network of protected areas during the next period of validity, meeting international standards in this area and complying with the national Law on Nature and Landscape Protection (notably sections 28 and 30);
- pursue the steps taken to purchase private forests and draw up a future purchasing plan with specific objectives, indicating the funding to be assigned to this purpose each year;
- set up a scientific programme inventorying and monitoring the large carnivore populations in the diploma-holding area; the national authorities shall submit the scientific protocol for that programme for opinion to the Group of Specialists on the Diploma within one year of the renewal;

Attaches the following recommendations to the renewal:

1. give the management of the diploma-holding area greater responsibility for forestry and hunting matters and involve it in the corresponding decision-making process;
2. consider the signature of a simplified agreement between the bodies directly responsible for managing the protected areas on the borders of the three neighbouring countries (Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine), based on the programming of joint activities;
3. pursue efforts to upgrade human resources, in particular by taking on more technical staff and wardens, and very substantially step up funding, at least doubling the annual ratio per hectare for the period of validity of the diploma;
4. give full protection to wolves and ban shooting them throughout the area of the national park;
5. strongly consider the designation of a hunting district within the park as a strict cynegetic reserve;
6. pursue the efforts to restore buildings in the traditional regional style; the park might devise a charter of architectural rules for local authorities;
7. start experimenting with the selective felling of beech forest in a state-owned woodland unit; the national authorities shall inform the Group of Specialists on the Diploma each year of the progress made.



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**Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Maritime Alps Nature Park (Italy)**

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 (93) 20 awarding the European Diploma to the Argentera Nature Park (Italy);

Taking into consideration the different reports sent to the secretariat by the managers of the diploma-holding area;

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

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas, awarded to the Maritime Alps Nature Park (new name) until 3 May 2018;

Attaches the following conditions to this renewal:

- following the environmental impact studies carried out in the framework of the project to build a micro-hydroelectric power plant in the Meris Valley, keep watch over possible further development of the project and, if the project is to go ahead, the Council of Europe Secretariat must be immediately informed and no decision taken before a special on-the-spot appraisal has been carried out;
- the same condition for the project concerning the piping of hot spa water from Terme di Valdieri down the valley;

Attaches the following recommendations to the renewal:

1. pursue co-operation efforts to secure financial support for research work on biodiversity protection and sustainable development;
2. examine the opportunity to ensure the protection and the management of the park's adjacent areas, in particular the territory of the municipality of Vinadio and the special nature reserve of Phoenician Juniper, by setting up a "contiguous area" in accordance with the national law on protected areas (Law of 6 December 1991, No. 394), and step up, as far as possible, a territorial management project for the area;

3. organise information and awareness-raising activities for local stakeholders, particularly on sustainable tourism. Development projects, even those located outside the park boundary, should be avoided if they

have a potentially negative impact on the protected area, since the priority is conservation and sustainable tourism throughout the whole area;

4. pursue co-operation with Mercantour National Park (France) in order to set up a transfrontier protected area.