



Strasbourg, 09 July 2013  
[PA02e\_2013.doc]

**T-PVS/PA (2013) 2**

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE  
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**Group of Experts on  
Protected Areas and Ecological Networks**

---

5<sup>th</sup> meeting  
18-19 September 2013  
Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France

**Extract from the list of decisions and adopted texts on the protection of habitats,  
at the 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee  
of the Bern Convention**

*Document prepared by  
the Directorate of Democratic Governance*

---

*This document will not be distributed at the meeting. Please bring this copy.  
Ce document ne sera plus distribué en réunion. Prière de vous munir de cet exemplaire*

## Table of Contents

<b>Point 5.5 Habitats</b> .....	3
<b>Appendix 1:</b> Resolution No. 8 (2012) of the Standing Committee, adopted on 30 November 2012 on the national designation of adopted Emerald sites and the implementation of management, monitoring and reporting measures.....	6

[....]

## 5.5 Habitats

Relevant Documents: T-PVS/PA (2012) 17 – Report of the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks  
T-PVS/PA (2012) 13 – Compilation of government reports and contributions on the establishment of the Pan-European Ecological Network  
T-PVS/PA (2012) 12 – Draft Action Plan on the future development of the Pan-European Ecological Network  
T-PVS/PA (2012) 08 – Draft resolution concerning the national designation of adopted Emerald sites and the implementation of management, reporting and monitoring measures  
T-PVS/PA (2012) 14 – Draft list of sites to be officially adopted as Emerald sites  
T-PVS/PA (2012) 16 – Draft list of proposed Emerald sites to be officially nominated as candidate Emerald sites

### a. **Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks – Progress report and draft resolution**

The Chair of the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks, Mr Jacques Stein, presented the progress made by the Group in 2012. As planned in the Emerald Calendar (2011-2020), the constitution process of the Emerald Network pursued with several activities implemented in the target countries.

Regarding the completion of phase I of the Network's constitution process, a contract for a second European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme on the setting-up of the Emerald Network in seven Eastern and Central European and South Caucasus countries was signed in October 2012. The project would be officially launched at a side event taking place during the Standing Committee. The new project covers the period 2013-2016 (four years) and will focus on achieving the biogeographical process of Phase II in all seven beneficiary countries.

Moreover, the work on the setting-up of the Emerald Network continued in Switzerland, through a biogeographical seminar to assess the sufficiency of all 37 Swiss candidate Emerald sites, and Norway, where a second technical Emerald seminar provided for a final quality check of the Norwegian Emerald database, as well as for the planning of the process further on. More particularly, the final Norwegian delivery of proposed Emerald sites can be expected at the end of 2012, while a first biogeographical Seminar for Norway should take place in 2013.

Regarding Morocco and Tunisia, the Secretariat recalled the strong interest expressed by both countries to work on the setting-up of the Network if funds were available. An activity targeting both countries is included in the draft 2013 programme of activities of the Convention, pending the allocation of voluntary contributions.

The delegates of Albania and Serbia informed the Committee on the efforts made at national level to streamline Natura 2000 & Emerald processes so to avoid duplication of work and ensure efficient use of resources. However, both countries, as well as Montenegro, shared the difficulties encountered in mobilising the necessary financial resources to continue this work.

The delegate of “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” informed that his country will continue to work on both the Emerald and Natura 2000 setting-up processes through a new two-year project to be launched soon. Coordination of activities with NGOs and local communities is an important objective of the project.

The Secretariat insisted on the need to ensure co-ordination of the activities related to the Emerald and Natura 2000 networks at national level, and confirmed its availability for technical support to the countries which may request so.

The Chair of the Group of Experts further informed that a contract was awarded to the European Centre for Nature Conservation (ECNC) for preparing, for the Council of Europe, a draft Action Plan for the setting-up of the Pan European Ecological Network (PEEN). Mr Kristijan Civic (ECNC) explained that the Action Plan builds on the discussions held by the Group of Experts and proposes few simple activities, mainly to urgently address defragmentation, which may be implemented by the Convention to contribute to the development of the PEEN.

Requests for voluntary contributions will be sent to the interested Parties in order to eventually start the implementation of the Action Plan under the 2013 Programme of Activities.

The Secretariat further presented the draft resolution concerning the national designation of adopted Emerald sites and the implementation of management, reporting and monitoring measures, which is aimed to become a reference document for concrete functioning of the Network.

Proposals of amendments were presented by the EU Member States and Croatia, while Switzerland sponsored the proposals made by the representative of Pro Natura. Other delegations expressed their support to the Resolution. The delegate of Ukraine, Mr Igor Ivanenko, echoing the comments from other Parties working on the Emerald Network, proposed that the Group of Experts on Protected Areas is instructed to work on the possible ways for transposing the requirements for the Emerald Network at national level, through the national designation of adopted Emerald sites.

**Decision:** The Committee took note of the report of the Group of Experts meeting in 2012 and welcomed the progress achieved in 2012 in the setting-up of the Emerald Network and expressed its appreciation of the efforts of Contracting Parties and Observer states on that process.

The Committee examined, amended and adopted Resolution No.8 (2012) on the national designation of adopted Emerald sites and the implementation of management, monitoring and reporting measures (appendix 9 to this report).

#### **b. Setting-up of ecological networks - Progress on the establishment of the Emerald Network**

The Secretariat reminded the new terminology adopted for the “proposed Emerald sites”, “candidate Emerald sites” and “adopted Emerald sites”, which corresponds to a certain phase in the constitution process of the Emerald network and therefore shows progress towards its completion.

Two draft lists of sites were submitted to the attention of the Standing Committee: one concerning proposed Emerald sites to be officially nominated as candidate Emerald sites, including 957 sites submitted by 7 Central and Eastern European and South Caucasus countries; a second list of sites was submitted by Switzerland for proposing its 37 already candidate Emerald sites for official adoption as Emerald sites.

**Decision:** The Committee adopted as Emerald sites the 37 sites submitted by Switzerland, listed in document T-PVS/PA (2012) 14. It further acknowledged and welcomed this adoption as historical since these were the first sites to officially integrate the Emerald Network.

The Committee officially nominated as candidate Emerald sites the sites submitted by 7 Central and Eastern European and South Caucasus countries, listed in document T-PVS/PA (2012) 16.

The Committee expressed its gratitude to the European Union for the financial support provided for four additional years to the setting-up of the Emerald Network in Central and Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus. It further thanked the European Environment Agency and its European Topic Centre for Biological Diversity for their cooperation and scientific and technical support and encouraged a strengthened involvement in particular with regards to the constitution of the Network in Central and Eastern Europe.

#### **c. European Diploma of Protected Areas**

Relevant documents: T-PVS/DE (2012) 15 – Report of the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas in 2012  
 T-PVS/DE (2012) 13 – Adopted Resolutions on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas in 2012  
 T-PVS/DE (2012) 18 – Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas to the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park in Belarus

The Secretariat informed that, in 2012, the Diploma of Protected Areas was renewed to ten diploma holding areas. A successful on-the-spot appraisal was held in the Poloniny National Park (Slovakia) following the difficulties encountered by the national authorities to implement the conditions and recommendations attached to the last renewal of the Diploma. Furthermore, the Secretariat received two new applications for the award of the Diploma, respectively from Armenia (Khosrov State Reserve) and from Ireland (Burren region). The reports and recommendations of the relevant on-the-spot appraisals should be examined by the Group of Specialists in 2013.

The Secretariat further informed that the discussions on the application submitted by the Šumava National Park in the Czech Republic were again postponed in 2012 at the request of the Czech authorities. The reason is the on-going process of drafting a new Act for the Park, including its zoning regulations.

The delegate of the Czech Republic, Ms Alena Vacatkova, apologised for postponing the discussion on the application of the Šumava National Park. She expressed the appreciation of her authorities for the work carried out by the expert who visited the Park. Nevertheless she pointed out that the current priority for the authorities is the preparation of the new Act on the National Park Šumava and related strategic documents, including particularly the management plan which will integrate, as much as possible, the recommendations made following the on-the-spot appraisal. While confirming the interest of the Czech Republic for the European Diploma of Protected Areas, the country preferred to put the application of the Šumava National Park in stand-by for the moment.

Regarding the issue of the renewal of the Diploma for the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park (Belarus), which was pending since 2011, the Secretariat informed that, following the on-the-spot appraisal, the independent expert suggested to the Group of Specialists a renewal for a limited period with conditions and recommendations. After discussing the appraisal's report, the Bureau suggested a renewal for 5 years, compatible with previous practice under the Diploma.

**Decision:** The Committee welcomed the renewal of the Diploma to ten diploma holding areas and praised the successful result of the on-the-spot appraisal held in the Poloniny National Park (Slovak Republic). It further acknowledged the applications for the award of the Diploma by two areas respectively in Armenia and Ireland.

The Committee examined the Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma to the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park and agreed on the principle of an exceptional renewal for 5 years only. The Draft Resolution will be forwarded to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for possible adoption.

## Appendix 1



### Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

#### Standing Committee

#### **Resolution No. 8 (2012) of the Standing Committee, adopted on 30 November 2012 on the national designation of adopted Emerald sites and the implementation of management, monitoring and reporting measures**

The Standing Committee to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, acting under the terms of Article 14 of the Convention,

Considering Articles 3 and 4 of the Convention;

Having regard to its Resolution No. 1 (1989) on the provisions relating to the conservation of habitats;

Having regard to its Recommendation No. 16 (1989) on Areas of Special Conservation Interest (ASCI);

Having regard to its Resolution No. 3 (1996) on the setting-up of a pan-European Ecological Network;

Recalling its Resolution No. 5 (1998) concerning the rules for the Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest (Emerald Network);

Bearing in mind the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, in particular Target 11 establishing a conservation target of 17% of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10% of marine and coastal areas and Target 12 aiming to prevent the extinction of known threatened species and to improve and sustain their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline;

Bearing in mind the CBD Conference of the Parties Decision XI/24 on protected areas and noting IUCN Resolution 5.40 on Endorsement and uniform application of protected area management guidelines;

Recalling the Calendar for the implementation of the Emerald Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest (2011-2020) [document T-PVS/PA(2010)8], committing Contracting Parties and Observer states to the Bern Convention to the completion of the Emerald Network constitution process by 2020;

Expressing its appreciation for the considerable efforts and on-going work of Contracting Parties and Observer states on the constitution of the Emerald Network on their territories;

Recognising the work of the European Union and its Member States on the development of the Natura 2000 Network and their current efforts on improving the management of the Network and achieving a favourable conservation status for threatened species and habitats;

Recalling Article 2c of Resolution No. 1 (1989), which interprets the term “conservation” as the “*maintenance and, where appropriate, the restoration or improvement of the abiotic and biotic features which form the habitat of a species or a natural habitat (...), and includes, where appropriate, the control of activities which may indirectly result in the deterioration of such habitats (...)*”;

Considering that paragraphs 3a and 4a of Recommendation No. 16 (1989) on Areas of Special Conservation Interest recommend that steps are taken by Contracting Parties either by legislation or otherwise, to ensure that the areas “*are the subject of an appropriate regime, designed to achieve the conservation of the areas*” as well as to “*draw up and implement management plans which will identify both short- and long-term objectives*”;

Considering that Recommendation No. 16 (1989) further recommends Contracting Parties to “*review regularly or continually in a systematic fashion their performance in the implementation of (...)*” the Emerald Network as well as that “*appropriate ecological and other research is conducted, in a properly co-ordinated fashion, with a view to furthering the understanding of the critical elements in the management of such areas and to monitoring the status of the factors giving rise to their designation and conservation*”;

Considering that Resolution No. 5 (1998) concerning the rules for the Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest requests the Governments to “*undertake surveillance of the conservation status of species and natural habitats in designated ASCIs*” and “*to inform the Secretariat of any important changes likely to affect negatively in a substantial way the ecological character of the designated ASCIs or the conditions having justified their designation*”;

Conscious that monitoring and reporting of the management of the Emerald sites is essential for ensuring the efficiency of the Emerald Network in the long-term for achieving its objectives and that its features should be decided upon as soon as the national designation of the Emerald site as Area of Special Conservation Interest takes place;

Bearing in mind that for Contracting Parties which are Member States of the European Union, the Emerald Network sites are those of the Natura 2000 Network and that the procedures established under the European Union Directives 2009/147/EC (codified version of the amended Directive 79/409/EEC) and 92/43/EEC are those to apply for them;

Resolves to adopt the following rules for the national designation of Emerald sites:

### *1. National designation*

1.1 Parties will designate, by national legislation or otherwise, the sites on their territory adopted as Emerald sites by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention, as foreseen in the Calendar for the implementation of the Emerald Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest (2011-2020).

### *2. Management*

2.1 The national designation of the adopted Emerald sites will ensure that they are protected from external threats and subject to an appropriate regime for achieving a satisfactory conservation status of the species and natural habitats listed in Resolutions no. 4 (1996) and no. 6 (1998) present on the site, involving, if and where appropriate, management plans, administrative measures and contractual measures;

2.2 The authorities responsible for the implementation of the management measures and their monitoring will be clearly identified;

2.3 Specific short and long-term site objectives will be drawn up for the management of Emerald sites, in compliance with the national/regional conservation objectives of the country, in order to facilitate the monitoring of their implementation and the regular assessment of their achievement;

2.4 National, regional and local stakeholders will be involved, if and where appropriate, in the planning of the management of the sites, as well as in the implementation of the conservation and protection measures foreseen, and in the monitoring of the sites' management.

### *3. Monitoring*

3.1 Parties will ensure that a monitoring framework forms an integral part of the management plans and/or other administrative measures taken for the designation of Emerald sites;

3.2 The monitoring of the site's management will comprise regular surveillance of the implementation of the conservation regime and of the conservation status of the species populations and natural habitats -in particular those listed in the Standing Committee's resolutions no. 4 (1996) and no. 6 (1998)- and/or of other factors giving rise to the designation of the area as specified in paragraph 1 of Recommendation 16 (1989);

3.3 The regular surveillance of the conservation status of species and natural habitats for which the sites has been designated will comprise appropriate scientific and ecological research, aiming at identifying whether it contributes to the long term survival of the species and habitats.

*4. Reporting*

4.1 Parties will report to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention on the conservation status of species and habitats listed in Resolutions No. 6 (1998) and No. 4 (1996) of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention;

4.2 The report will be submitted in English, every six years from the date of the adoption of this Resolution and shall reflect the previous period of six years;

4.3 The Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks will prepare a reporting format to be used for the purposes of this reporting.