

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

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

Appendix 5: Model plan for annual reports

Annual report for the year 2020

Annual reports should describe the changes that have taken place since the previous year in dynamic terms of management and function and not be limited to basic data. Any new text or map introducing a change in the situation of the area should be attached to the annual report.

State: Scotland, United Kingdom

Name of the area: Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:

Year 3 – renewal from 4 July 2018

Central authority concerned:

Name: Ian Sargent

Address: Scottish Natural Heritage, Fodderty Way, Dingwall Business Park, Dingwall, IV15 9XB

Tel: 01463 701621

Fax:

e-mail: ian.sargent@nature.scot

www: www.nature.scot

Authority responsible for its management:

Name: Doug Bartholomew

Address: Anancaun, Kinlochewe, by Achnasheen IV22 2PA

Tel: 01463 701653

Fax:

e-mail: Doug.Bartholomew@nature.scot

www: <https://www.nature.scot/enjoying-outdoors/scotlands-national-nature-reserves/beinn-eighe-and-loch-maree-islands-national-nature-reserve>

¹ As amended by Resolution CM/ResDip(2014)2 on 2 July 2014 at the 1204th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.
Internet : <http://www.coe.int/cm>

1. Conditions: List here all conditions which were attached to the award or the renewal of the European Diploma. Explain either how the conditions have been totally complied with or detail the progress in complying with the conditions. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

N/A

2. Recommendations: List here all recommendations which were attached to the award or the renewal of the European Diploma. Explain either how the recommendations have been totally complied with or detail the progress in complying with the recommendations. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

1. Make a comprehensive mid-term assessment of the implementation of the Beinn Eige National Nature Reserve Management Plan (2015-2026) in 2020 and revise the relevant parts of the plan as appropriate;

In 2020 we completed a mid-term review of our management plan. Our management plan is comprised of a series of tasks to meet our broad objectives. Each task was reviewed in terms of; status (Achieved, ongoing, not yet achieved etc); progress; and if any changes are required. Finally we defined which Operational Plan the task fell into (Visitor Management Plan, Research and Monitoring Plan, or Habitat Management Plan). The Operational Plans contain the detail of how to practically achieve the task. In total 4 tasks were changed, and 6 tasks removed as they were completed or no longer relevant. I have attached a spreadsheet summary of the Management Plan review for information.

2. Prepare a revised management plan, taking an appropriately long-term view based on adaptation to the effects of climate change, by the end of 2026;

This recommendation is due in 2026 and will follow the annual reviews of the plan.

3. Ensure the continuance of monitoring of, and research on, the flora and fauna for the conservation of the native species, to derive appropriate performance and conservation indicators, and to assess the effects of climate change;

Due to restrictions of Covid-19, and the associated restrictions on movement and working, much of the planned research and monitoring was not able to be completed this year. We have been able to progress some desk based work through analysis of Herbivore Impact Assessments completed in 2019. This work directly informs our habitat management plan through adaptive management. As it will be Beinn Eige NNRs 70th anniversary in 2021, we have also been working on a spatial analysis to compare woodland cover in 1951 and 2021 using aerial photography and GIS analysis. We are also working with University of Highlands and Islands and our neighbours, National Trust for Scotland, on reactions of wild deer to various stimuli, with a view to protect vulnerable habitats in areas that cannot be fenced or where deer management it difficult, e.g. montane scrub communities.

4. Devise and implement with local stakeholders a tourism development strategy and a prioritised action plan so that the infrastructure of facilities can be developed for the benefit of both the national nature reserve and the economic well-being of the people who live in the area;

All our facilities were closed during the lockdown, and so our Visitor Facilities did not open until July 2020. We decided it was not appropriate to staff the Visitor Centre, so this year we have no figures for visitor numbers in the centre. However, anecdotally the site was very busy as people chose to holiday nearer to home, and this area was very popular for staycations. We are developing further interpretation and videos for our visitor centre for our website, which we hope will promote the NNR and the area. We have also drafted a Visitor Management Plan which sets out how we will manage visitors on the site and the wider area. This has not yet been completed, but I have attached a copy for your information. We are also working more closely with our neighbours with a view to setting up a Landscape Scale ecological restoration project, which will also focus on tourism and visitor management collaboratively (see section 5).

5. Develop further awareness-raising and educational activities on the role of biodiversity and ecosystem services, particularly targeting children and youths.

We have been unable to deliver many of the programmes for young people this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. We have been trying to engage with people in different ways. This has included three features on national television, and we have commissioned a short film to talk about the NNR, our management and what people can enjoy on site. We have also set up an Instagram account for Beinn Eige NNR which has currently got over 1,000 followers. We have also made progress in engaging with local schools (Torridon Primary, Gairloch High School) through conversations to try to develop more engagement.

We were unable to support our usual residential volunteer programme, but we continued to support one Student Placement. We hope that we can return to supporting volunteers and our education programme again soon.

3. Site Management: List here any changes to the European Diploma holding site management, in relation to both terrestrial and aquatic environments (as appropriate), and in relation to staff and finances, since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

We have recruited a Reserve Officer on a 2-year contract to fill the Reserve Officer vacancy, so we are now back to our standard staff capacity.
This year has been challenging with the Covid-19 pandemic, and we have had to strip back our objectives to focus on core priority work and to make sure the site is safe for visitors and our staff.
We continue to work with local Deer Management Group on collaborative deer management, but this remains challenging.

4. Boundaries: Give details of any changes to the boundaries of the European Diploma holding site since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. If there are any changes, please attach an appropriate map to this report. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

N/A

5. Other information: List here any other information about the European Diploma holding site which you consider should be provided to the Council of Europe.

We are in the early stages of developing a landscape scale ecological restoration partnership with our neighbours which covers the length of Glen Torridon, one of the most iconic Glen's in Scotland. We have been driving this along with the Woodland Trust for Scotland, and it includes other NGOs and private estates. We have had initial meetings with the partnership, which has been positive, and we are looking for ways in which we can work together and collaborate. Ideally this will include non-native invasive control at a landscape scale (*Rhododendron ponticum* control and American mink monitoring); ecological restoration projects (e.g. woodland expansion, upland habitat restoration, peatland restoration, river restoration); collaborative deer management; collaborative visitor management; sharing of resources, skills and equipment. We are due to be meeting again in spring 2021 to develop plans further. This is not public yet as we need to find out how willing the other partners are for this project to progress.

The following sections of the form should only be filled in if your area is in the year before a renewal of its European Diploma for Protected Areas, i.e. year 4 after the award of the European Diploma or year 9 after its renewal.

6. Natural heritage (general abiotic description: geomorphology, geology and hydrogeology, habitats, flora, fauna, landscape) – State of conservation

- 6.1. Environment: changes or deterioration in the environment, of natural or anthropic origin, accidental or permanent, actual or anticipated
- 6.2. Flora and vegetation: changes in the plant population and in the vegetational cover; presumed causes
- 6.3. Fauna: changes in the sedentary or migratory populations; congregating, egg-laying and breeding grounds

7. Cultural heritage and socio-economic context

- 7.1. Cultural heritage
 - 7.1.1. Changes concerning cultural heritage
- 7.2. Socio-economic context
 - 7.2.1. Changes concerning the socio-economic context

8. Education and scientific interest

- 8.1. Visitors – Information policy
 - 8.1.1. Arrangements for receiving and informing the public (building, booklets, maps, cards, etc.)
 - 8.1.2. Frequentation by visitors and behavior (number, distribution in time and space)
 - 8.1.3. Special visits (distinguished persons, groups, etc.)
- 8.2. Scientific research
 - 8.2.1. Current or completed research (observation, experimentation, etc.; identification or inventory of the species listed in the appendices to the Bern Convention, etc.)
 - 8.2.2. Scientific publications

9. Site description (vulnerability, protection status, ownership, documentation)

- 9.1. Changes in legislation or regulations
- 9.2. Changes in ownership title (conversion to public property, rentals, etc.)
- 9.3. Extension or transfer, new uses (for example, conversion into total reserve)

10. Site management (management plans, budget and personnel)

- 10.1. Improvements made
 - 10.1.1. Ecological action affecting the flora and biotopes; controls of fauna
 - 10.1.2. Protection against the elements (fire, water regime)
 - 10.1.3. Approaches and thoroughfares (paths, roads, car parks, signposting, fencing, etc.)
 - 10.1.4. Field equipment (hides and study facilities)
 - 10.1.5. Waste management
 - 10.1.6. Use of renewable energy systems
- 10.2. Management
 - 10.2.1. Administrative department: changes made
 - 10.2.2. Wardens' department: changes made
 - 10.2.3. Internal policing measures
 - 10.2.4. Infringement of regulations and damage; legal action

11. Influence of the award of the European Diploma for Protected Areas