

**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

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: SPAIN

Name of the area: DOÑANA NATIONAL PARK

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:
2011 and 15

Central authority concerned:

Name: JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA. MINISTRY OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT.
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS.

Address: Sundheim House. Avda. Manuel Siurot, 50. 41071 – Seville

Phone: + 34 955 00 34 00

Fax:

Email:

www: <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/organismos/sostenibilidadymedioambiente.html>

Authority responsible for its management:

Name: DOÑANA NATURAL AREA. MINISTRY OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT
(MINISTRY OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT)

Address: El Acebuche Administrative Center. Ctra. Almonte-Matalascañas, SN. 21730
Matalascañas. (Huelva).

Phone: +34 959 43 96 25

Fax:

Email: dir.pnDonana.csma@juntadeandalucia.es

www:

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.

1. **the Spanish authorities should continue to take all necessary measures to ensure that the Port of Seville development projects have no significant environmental impact on the Doñana ecosystems. Any decision should be conditioned by the results of a complementary study to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report;**

There have been no variations in this matter. The project has been rejected by the Spanish authorities. The third planning cycle 2022-2027, approved by Royal Decree 35/2023, of January 24, published in BOE no. 35, of February 10, 2023, effective February 11, 2023, does not include it among its measures

2. **the Andalusian Government, responsible for the management of the national park and also for water management, should ensure the high quality of water entering the national park and eliminate avail illegal extraction of groundwater; in accordance with the Water Framework Directive, it should monitor the status of the aquifer underlying the national park and surrounding lands, the extent of groundwater extraction and the water quality;**

It is recalled, firstly, that the competences in matters of surface and groundwater in the Guadalquivir Hydrographic Basin are held by the General State Administration, through the Guadalquivir Hydrographic Confederation.

The most relevant advances developed in this area are detailed below.

Since 16 July 2020, the date on which the groundwater masses of La Rocina, Almonte and Marismas were declared as bodies at risk of not reaching good quantitative status, and of the groundwater body of La Rocina, at risk of not reaching good chemical status, all the actions of the Guadalquivir Hydrographic Confederation (hereinafter CHG) in this area have been covered by this administrative and legal tool.

As mentioned in previous reports, the two most effective measures to control illegal extractions are the regulation of existing catchments that comply with the regulations and the closure of those that are not under management. In this way, the reduction of pressure on the aquifer and a substantial improvement in the governance of the body of water are favored.

Regarding the actions aimed at the closure of wells, despite the delays resulting from judicial procedures in which these files are usually included to guarantee effective judicial protection, the information provided by the CHG indicates that, since 2019, the figure of irregular catchments for sealing is **1,214**. This figure represents an increase of **155 wells** inserted in closure or sealing processes since the last report submitted by the Kingdom of Spain. This amount integrates the reported catchments that were subject to sanctioning procedures, some prior to the regularization of the Fresno irrigable area and the County irrigable area, which has given rise to various situations.

Since 2023, the CHG has been working with a tool hosted on the Basin Organization's website that allows holders of private water use rights to register their volumetric meters and periodically upload the readings (<https://www.chguadalquivir.es/web/extranet>). This information becomes part of the data repository together with those recorded by the CHG itself through the readings obtained in its inspection and control tasks.

With this, the tool allows balances to be made, to contrast the withdrawals with the volumes granted and to correlate the data with others. Although this tool is applied throughout the Guadalquivir Hydrographic Demarcation, it is in sensitive areas such as the Doñana area where it is especially important. This information has allowed the CHG to process, since 2018, **1,272 disciplinary proceedings** for infringements in legal and illegal operations in the NDT and its surroundings, with a total economic impact of **€14.2 million**, which includes both sanctions and the assessment of damage to the public hydraulic domain.

The area dedicated to crops under plastic shows a downward trend. The monitoring carried out by the CHG shows that the Guadalquivir basin has gone from 5,936 ha in autumn 2017 to 4,981 in autumn 2025. Of these, 1,113 (19%) were outside SAR in 2017 and 494 (10%) in 2025, so it is presumed that they are illegal. This type of situation motivates CHG inspections. It is relevant to note that the affected area has been reduced by 13% in the 2025 campaign compared to the previous year.

As a result of the declaration in 2020 of three of the five bodies of water at risk of not reaching good quantitative status, the procedure for the **compulsory constitution of communities of users** of the body of water was initiated ex officio under articles 56.1.a), 87 and 88 of Royal Legislative Decree 1/2001, of 20 July, approving the Revised Text of the Water Law and articles 171.5.e), 201 and 228 of Royal Decree 849/1986, of 2 August, approving the Regulation of the Public Hydraulic Domain. Since the last report, **substantial progress has been made, as the statutes of the Communities of Groundwater Users (CUAS) of Marismas and La Rocina and Almonte have already been approved.**

Regarding the approval of the Action Plans, in July 2025 the CHG Governing Board approved the action program for the La Rocina groundwater body, which is the one in the worst situation, as it has also been

declared at risk of not reaching good chemical status. **This Plan establishes a 15% reduction in water withdrawals.** Subsequently, in September, the first meeting of the Exploitation Board of this water body was held. The rest of the plans are already drafted for their next approval.

Also in the sense of improving the available information, the CHG works in the Doñana area with a piezometric network that has 289 operational piezometric boreholes, in which manual readings of the piezometric level are carried out every month. A process of progressive automation of the readings is currently underway that allows the data to be integrated into the Automatic Hydrological Information System (SAIH) of the Guadalquivir basin. To date, a total of 197 piezometers have been automated in the Doñana area. In addition, maintenance and validation work is carried out on the installed equipment, so access to the database requires authentication by means of a username and password. Once the quality of the information has been verified, access will be public.

Regarding the reduction of the impact of water withdrawals for urban consumption in the peridune lagoons of the national park, to date one of the two wells planned for the change of location of the wells that supply water to the tourist center of Matalascañas has been carried out with an investment of €140.000, and the drafting of the project for the reorganization of the battery of wells has been completed. awarded for an amount of €17,908. The project is currently in the environmental processing phase, and although it initially had a budget of €2.5 million, this has been increased to almost €4 million. In addition to this issue and given the age and characteristics of the Matalascañas distribution network, there are frequent breakdowns and losses (40%) in the distribution, which implies a loss of efficiency in water consumption, as well as an inadequate service to users. To solve this situation, and in addition to the reorganisation of the battery of boreholes (action 2.2.1.), the renovation of the arteries that connect the main branch with the tanks of the urban supply system has been proposed². The collaboration agreement between the CHG and the City Council of Almonte to carry out these actions has already been drafted and is in process. The specifications are also being drafted to contract the drafting of the project, with an estimated budget of 193,435.05.

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. all efforts should be made to restore the good ecological state of the river at the level of its catchment (river basin or water basin), within the meaning of the Water Framework Directive; all appropriate measures should be taken in order to make water use and other activities, especially agricultural activities, in this catchment (basin) compatible with this aim;**

The hydrological plans are the basic tool for correcting the problems of each of the basins. The hydrological plan for the third cycle (2022-2027) is currently being developed, which incorporates, with respect to the previous ones, the adjustments that have been necessary for its application. This plan for the third cycle approved by Royal Decree 35/2023, of 24 January, published in BOE no. 35, of 10 February 2023, is in force from 11 February 2023 until it is updated again in 2028.

With the publication of the initial documents, the procedure for the fourth planning cycle has begun. The provisional outline of important topics is currently in the process of public consultation. Together with the draft of the hydrological plan, the Strategic Environmental Study, required by the parallel strategic environmental assessment process, has been submitted for consultation. Once the consultation phase has been completed, the environmental body (DG for Quality and Environmental Assessment of MITERD) will adopt and publish a Strategic Environmental Statement that must be taken into consideration before the approval of the new revised hydrological plan.

The Outline of Important Issues of this planning process, reported by the Water Council of the Demarcation in December 2020, has identified the main problems that prevent the achievement of the objectives of hydrological planning in the Guadalquivir hydrographic demarcation and the possible decisions that can be adopted for their solution are specified.

This document again incorporates a specific file on Doñana (Fact Sheet 10), which, as mentioned, is in the public information phase, through which suggestions and proposals can be made to the document. In any case, this section will carry out an adequate assessment of the environmental repercussions that the new planning could have on the natural values of the site.

With this new cycle, it is expected to achieve the objectives of good condition of water bodies for 2033 in those aspects that have not been achieved in the current planning cycle despite the efforts made.

2

2. a specific emergency plan for the Doñana National Park should be prepared and a map of natural risks should be drawn up;

The Natural Area has a Self-Protection Plan against oil spills and is a priority area in the plan against forest fires in Andalusia: Plan INFOCA. There have been no changes from the last report issued.

3. the implementation of the action plans for the conservation of the flagship species, in particular the Iberian lynx and the Imperial eagle, should be actively pursued; new action plans for other threatened species should be drawn up if needed.

The conservation plans for the most emblematic species of Doñana are still in force and developing normally. There are currently 7 plans that include species present in Doñana:

- Recovery plan for the Iberian lynx.
- Recovery plan for the Iberian imperial eagle.
- Recovery and conservation plan for necrophagous birds.
- Plan for the recovery and conservation of steppe birds.
- Plan for the recovery and conservation of wetland birds.
- Plan for the recovery and conservation of aquatic invertebrates and fish.
- Plan of Dunes and Coastal Cliffs.

Of all These plans, the success of the Iberian lynx conservation programme stands out, which has managed to remove the species from the "Endangered" category and move it to the "Vulnerable" category. The population of Doñana, in the latter, is reaching record population levels.

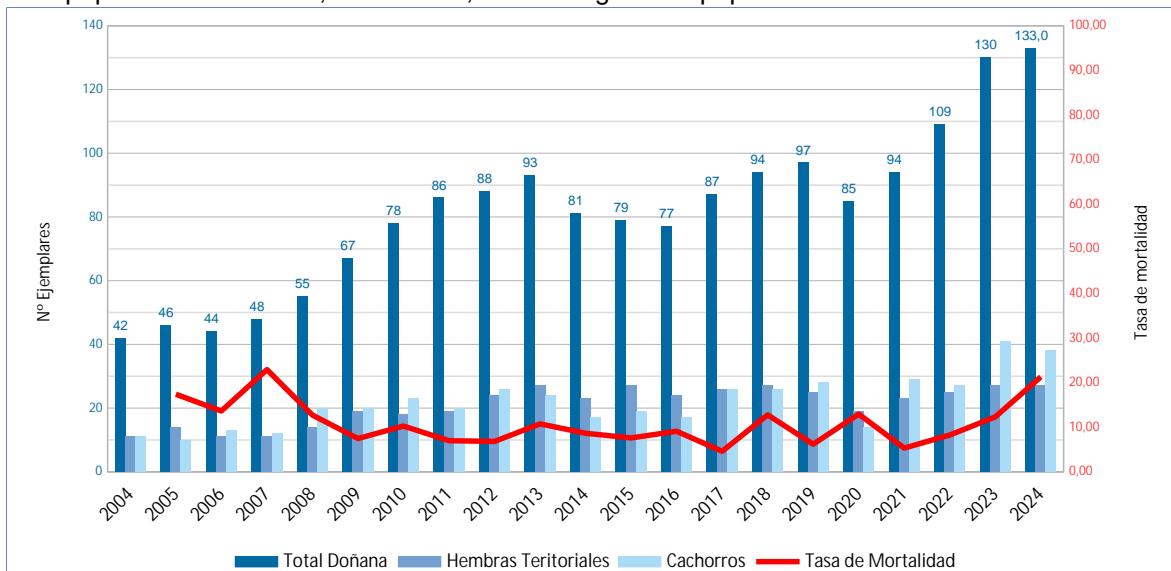


Figure 1. Evolution of the Aljarafe - Doñana population of the Iberian lynx

Regarding the evolution of the imperial eagle, since 2020 the number of pairs with imperial eagle territory in Doñana has remained at eight, although with significant oscillations in the number of those that are laid and those that achieve reproductive success. In 2025 the eight pairs detected have started laying, but only two have managed to successfully raise their individuals, so only 5 chicks managed to fly. Productivity has stood at 0.62 this breeding season. On the positive side, the appearance of a new territory in Rocina Sur stands out, which has also been reproductively successful.

Regarding the red kite (*Milvus milvus*), the other endangered bird of prey in Doñana, it continues to maintain a downward trend globally both in number of pairs and in the number of chicks, although the main problem of the species is reproductive productivity, since it has very low values and similar to those of the imperial eagle in 2025. Since 2022, the number of breeding pairs in Doñana seems to have stabilised at around 20-21 pairs and in the last three years the pairs with clutches have maintained a slightly upward dynamic, as has production, but, in any case, with very low values.

4. concerning the Port of Sevilla development projects, the Spanish authorities should avail itself of the best international scientific expertise and also take account of the relevant international conventions, such as the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention and the Bern Convention, and work closely with the relevant international bodies, including the European Union and the European Environment Agency.

Royal Decree 35/2023, of 24 January, approves the revision of the hydrological plans of the hydrographic districts of the Western Cantabrian, Guadalquivir, Ceuta, Melilla, Segura and Júcar, and of

the Spanish part of the hydrographic districts of the Eastern Cantabrian, Miño-Sil, Duero, Tagus, Guadiana and Ebro¹. This planning no longer includes the deep dredging of the Guadalquivir River, maintaining the commitment made by the authorities of the Kingdom of Spain.

5. the updating of the management plan should be started in 2011;

The current planning of the Doñana National Park has been in force since September 2016 (Decree 142/2016, of 2 August, published in the Official Gazette of the Junta de Andalucía of 26 September 2016). A specific modification is currently being processed and a thorough review and update of the same is planned to begin soon.

6. the extension of the Doñana 2005 Project to riparian vegetation, correcting erosion problems or extending its scope to adjacent areas of agricultural marsh, should be undertaken.

The action planned for the recovery of the Caño Guadiamar has not made progress during 2025.

The project for the extension of hydrogeomorphological restoration actions and naturalization of the Partido stream to the Ajolí Bridge in its section under T. M. de Almonte (Huelva), is currently being executed.

7. the possibility of developing co-operation with other European Diploma sites which are deltas, such as the Camargue National Reserve (France) or the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (Romania), should be explored.

With regard to this recommendation, the progress made since the last report submitted to the Council of Europe has been the unblocking of the legal-administrative obstacles that were conditioning the conclusion of the twinning process with Everglades (USA). Following the favourable report of July 2024 by the Doñana Participation Council, the appropriate formula for twinning has been defined with the Ministry and the Autonomous Agency of National Parks.

The changes in the US administration and its political priorities currently mean a slowdown in the ratification process of this bipartite collaboration, so that it is currently not possible to venture an estimated deadline for its definitive formalisation.

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.

In terms of personnel, 2025 remained at similar figures to 2024. The personnel involved in the management of the protected area were approximately 50% civil servants or similar and the rest personnel linked to different projects that support the management. The budget of the Doñana National Park and Doñana Natural Park during 2024, after the closing of the accounts, amounted to more than €19.5 million. This figure represents a significant increase of €2M compared to 2023. The accounts for 2025 have not yet been closed.

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.

In 2025 the boundaries of the protected area have not been modified, however between 2024 and 2025 the Junta de Andalucía has acquired almost 9,000 hectares of marshland, between the Veta La Palma and Tierras Bajas estates with an investment of almost €80M, thus generating important restoration possibilities.

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.

In response to the Decision adopted at the 38th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, the certifications and designations that overlap with the European Diploma of Doñana are the following:

World Heritage.

Ramsar Site

Biosphere Reserve.

Site of Community Importance.

Special Area of Conservation.

Special Protection Area for Birds

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