

**Resolution CM/ResDip(2018)18  
on the revised regulations for the European Diploma for Protected Areas**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 04 July 2018  
at the 1384th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)<sup>1</sup>*

**Appendix 5: Model plan for annual reports**

**Annual report for the year 2025**

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: **ITALY**

Name of the area: **RISERVA NATURALE STATALE ISOLA DI MONTECRISTO**

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:  
**1988 first award, 2025 last renewal-**

**Central authority concerned:**

Name: **Arma dei Carabinieri – Comando CC Tutela per la Biodiversità – Raggruppamento  
CC Biodiversità**

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e-mail: **rgpbio@carabinieri.it**

www: **<https://www.carabinieri.it/chi-siamo/oggi/organizzazione/tutela-forestale-ambientale-e-agroalimentare>  
<https://rgpbio.it/>**

**Authority responsible for its management:**

Name: **Reparto Carabinieri per la Biodiversità di Follonica**

Address: **Via E. Biccocchi 2 – 58022 Follonica – Italy**

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e-mail: **043591.001@carabinieri.it**

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<sup>1</sup> As amended by Resolution CM/ResDip(2014)2 on 2 July 2014 at the 1204th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.

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 **No Condition where attached to the renewal**

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. explore, with the help of the International Union for Conservation of Nature Species Survival Commission, the status of the “Montecristo Goat”, the needs for its preservation and if its in situ conservation is needed, the ways and means of its integration and conservation within the island’s ecosystems;  
**on 31 December 2019, the extension of the LIFE+ project “Resto con Life” 13NAT/IT/000471 came to an end. Throughout 2025, the actions set out in the “After LIFE Conservation Plan (2020–2025)” continued. Pending approval of the Management Plan for the Montecristo Goat (*Capra aegagrus hircus*), monitoring and conservation activities are ongoing, including ex situ conservation within an enclosure established in another nature reserve managed by the Carabinieri Biodiversity Unit of Follonica, while simultaneously reducing browsing pressure on vegetation by decreasing the goat population. In 2025, the ex situ conservation area hosted 2 adult individuals from the original nucleus transferred from Montecristo Island, as well as 11 young individuals born in 2021–2025 (three births in 2025) following the transfer of the adults. In October, new enclosures were built in Cala Maestra, providing approximately 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> of land excluded from goat grazing. The area was subsequently planted with young plants grown from seeds previously collected on the island.**

2. continue the monitoring of the island’s flora, fauna and vegetation units, and evaluate the management activities that are necessary for the conservation of species and the restoration of native vegetation;  
**maintenance and enhancement of the site dedicated to the conservation of native plant material—known as the “former vegetable garden” and also used for educational and outreach purposes—were carried out. Seedlings produced at the CNBF nursery in Pieve S. Stefano from propagation material collected on the island were planted in fenced reforestation areas. In October/November, new propagation material was collected from plant species present on the island, with particular focus on priority habitats and *Quercus ilex*. Regular maintenance of the protective fences against goat grazing continued. Research conducted in 2023–2024 on habitat 8230 “Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation” and habitat 3170 “Mediterranean temporary ponds” made it possible to complete the classification of the island’s cliff and rock vegetation. During cliff exploration, a small population of a species new to science was discovered and classified as *Leontodon montecristensis* (a new endemic species exclusive to Montecristo Island).**

**The research results were published in the Official Journal of the Italian Botanical Society in an article titled “*Leontodon montecristensis* (Cichorieae, Asteraceae), a very unlikely new member of the genus discovered on an inaccessible cliff of Montecristo Island (Tuscany, Italy)”, available online at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/11263504.2025.2519080>.**

**Furthermore, the Carabinieri Biodiversity Unit of Follonica promoted and collaborated with the Universities of Florence and Siena in producing an updated inventory of the vascular flora of Montecristo Island, published in the Italian Botanist under the title “An updated of the vascular flora of the Island of Montecristo (Tuscan Archipelago, Italy)”:**  
<https://italianbotanist.pensoft.net/article/139675/>.

**All research outcomes were presented during various outreach events, including a contribution to the International Conference “Old-Growth Forests and Ancient Trees, a Treasure of Nature, Life and Culture”, held in Florence on 1 October 2025. In collaboration with the Universities of Siena and Florence, a conference titled “Nature unveiled by science – Montecristo – the latest research on flora and fauna” was held. Regular monitoring continues regarding the eradication of invasive alien plant species and the status of native populations of natural or artificially introduced species (as part of habitat restoration actions). Eradication interventions were carried out on sporadic individuals of invasive exotic flora.**

3. continue ecological surveillance of the island in order to detect undesirable alien species early enough to ensure their eradication;  
***continuous monitoring of invasive alien species and eradication of detected individuals is ongoing. Migratory wildlife flows are constantly observed, with particular attention to nesting species and the Yelkouan shearwater (Puffinus yelkouan). Successful nesting continues following rat eradication in previous years. Biosecurity measures are consistently implemented. Research activities aimed at detecting the presence of bats on the island and identifying their species were also carried out, in continuity with previous years.***

4. complete the remote surveillance system as far as necessary and feasible in order to be able to detect and prohibit any illegal activities on and around the island;  
***maintenance work was carried out on the video surveillance system created in collaboration with the Parco Nazionale of Arcipelago Toscano, which allows for constant remote control of the main sites on the island. The system, implemented by other video cameras aimed at osprey nests (Pandion haliaetus) in past years, allows for constant monitoring of this species.***

5. explore any sensible arrangements for visitors as a possible alternative to the existing quota of 1,000 per year, including possible improvements to awareness-raising and educational activities targeting the public visiting the island;  
***once 30 August 2024, the agreement between the Comando Carabinieri Tutela Biodiversità and Parco Nazionale Arcipelago Toscano was renewed, for a period of three years (2024 – 2026), which allowed the organization of visitor use to be maintained through the formation of visiting groups of up to 75 people for a total of 2,000 visitors per year, of which approximately 275 were reserved for students. During excursions along the identified paths, the groups, after being welcomed by military personnel at the recently renovated Info Point, were accompanied by National Park guides.***

6. ensure that the resources are secured in a sustainable way to maintain the management of the reserve and to further develop its long-term management plan;  
***the authority responsible for the reserve management (Reparto Carabinieri Biodiversità di Follonica) is going on with the setup of the naturalistic management plan of the Reserve.***

**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.

***From April to October (the period during which visit and private boat access permits are issued), surveillance of the Reserve was conducted by two military personnel assigned to 15 shifts of fifteen days each. During the remaining months, a custodial service was activated employing civilian workers, also in fifteen-day shifts. In 2025, 7 permanent workers and 6 temporary workers were hired. This allowed numerous work shifts to be carried out and increased management and maintenance activities of the facilities.***

**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.

***No Changes reported***

**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.

***A cooperation agreement was finalised with the Superintendence for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape for the provinces of Pisa and Livorno for the exhibition of archaeological finds at the Info Point and the Natural History Museum. Restoration work has begun on the archaeological site known as the "Grotta del Santo", funded by the competent Ministry.***

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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**

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