

**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)<sup>1</sup>*

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

**Annual report for the year 2022**

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: Portugal

Name of the area: Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:  
awarded since 1992; 0 years since the renewal in 2022

**Central authority concerned:**

Name: Governo Regional da Madeira / Secretaria Regional de Ambiente, Recursos Naturais e Alterações Climáticas

Address: Rua Dr. Pestana Júnior, nº6 – 5º andar, 9060-207 Funchal, Portugal

Tel: (+351) 291 220 200

Fax: (+351) 291 225 112

e-mail: gabinete.sra@madeira.gov.pt

www: [www.madeira.gov.pt/sraac](http://www.madeira.gov.pt/sraac)

**Authority responsible for its management:**

Name: Instituto das Florestas e Conservação da Natureza, IP-RAM

Address: Rua João de Deus n12E R/C C, 9050-027 Funchal, Portugal

Tel: (+351) 291 145 590

Fax: —

e-mail: [ifcn@madeira.gov.pt](mailto:ifcn@madeira.gov.pt)

www: <https://ifcn.madeira.gov.pt/>

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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.  
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 Portuguese Government should continue to take the necessary steps to preserve the current 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:** The legal status of the Reserve has not been changed and there are no perspectives that such changes will occur, even considering a far future.

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. **revise and reinforce, if necessary, all precautions to ensure that non-native species of plants and animals are not introduced into the nature reserve;** No changes or deterioration of the environment occurred and the policies presented on the earlier annual reports still apply

2. **continue to improve the accommodation lodge and the communication systems of the nature reserve with new technologies that are available, in order to increase the capacity for wardens and military staff to contact their authorities in Madeira and their families; consider increasing the number of solar panels in order to reduce dependence on the generator;** A VSAT phone system with national indicative is installed, as well as a satellite internet system, fundamental for contacts, either with authorities as family. Small reconstruction and maintenance work was carried out at the biological stations of Selvagem Grande and Selvagem Pequena, to provide a better logistic support to the projects on going in the field and the comfort of the visitors. Contacts are being made to increase the number of solar panels by a financial support project.

3. **include in the monitoring programme the follow-up of a selected number of parameters, not only to survey the effects of the eradication of alien species of flora and fauna, which must be continued, but also to establish scientifically validated monitoring protocols to generate long series of data allowing for comparison between different time frames in changing scenarios. This recommendation includes the definition of specific census methods, stable over time, providing reliable datasets that, when analysed, provide trustworthy information on the evolution of and fluctuations and trends in the seabird colonies, including paying specific attention to possible increases in the yellow-legged gull population and the evolution and effect of microplastics on biodiversity;** The flora and fauna conservation status is improving due to the success of the alien species eradication project (2001 – 2004) (details given on the 2002 annual report). Monitoring of the main actions of this project, is maintained up to present, involving an intensive monitoring on both flora and fauna: evaluate the effects of the programme on non-target species, namely gecko *Tarentola bischoffi* and pipit *Anthus berthelotii*; evaluate quantitatively the regeneration of the natural habitats of the island. Qualitative and quantitative data is being obtained every year and reports are being produced accordingly. Although the yellow-legged gull (Atlantic form) *Larus michahellis atlantis* should not be considered an alien species, there is a constant effort to prevent their breeding on the islands (Selvagem Grande, Selvagem Pequena and Ilhéu de Fora). Due to the remoteness of Selvagens Islands and to their characteristics this is an easy and forward task. During 2022, local and foreign scientists develop various research projects in the fields of flora and fauna in Selvagem Grande, Selvagem Pequena and Ilhéu de Fora.

4. **in order to mitigate possible risks and hazards related to climate change and possible large-scale disturbances on the reserve (contamination, changes in the annual patterns of rainfall and/or temperature, invasive alien species, frequency of extreme events, etc.), reinforce the existing monitoring programme with new technologies such as remote sensing, satellites or drones, to follow up indicative parameters for: i. assessing the effects of climate change on the Selvagens Islands; ii. early detection of undesirable consequences on species, ecosystems and ecological functions; iii. estimating the rate of change (if any); and iv. defining predictive models that could be of help in anticipating possible management needs;**

5. **considering the vital role of the staff responsible for monitoring the nature reserve, and the difficult conditions in which they often have to carry out their tasks, enlarge and reinforce the team of wardens, providing opportunities and incentives for young naturalists to join the warden corps and to learn from experienced wardens, thus allowing a smooth transition between the current generation**

**of wardens and the next, without any loss of knowledge;** Procedure is ongoing to reinforce the warden corps with 7 new nature wardens.

**6. maintain dialogue with the economic players in the region, namely with tourism professionals, to avoid increasing the impact of visitors on such a delicate and vulnerable ecosystem, using new resources and technology to maintain the necessary restrictions while giving citizens a better understanding of the natural assets of the nature reserve; envisage drafting a tourism strategy to ensure a sustainable balance between showcasing the natural beauty of the islands and controlling the number of visitors;** there is regulation that approves the conditions for carrying out activities in Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve, as well as the respective Internal Regulations regarding human activities, including number of visitors by activity. Visitors are met by the Nature Wardens, accompany them along the informative circuit and then to the reception centre.

**7. along with the enlargement of the nature reserve to the boundaries of the Natural Monument of the Selvagens Islands Volcanic Edifice, consider extending the area covered by the European Diploma and the protection of the whole water column between the water surface and the bottom water. The management plans of the different existing protection categories should subsequently be harmonised;** the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve was enlarged and is now bounded by the marine area around these islands up to 12 nautical miles and the whole water column between the water surface and the bottom water is protected by regulation, Regional Legislative Decree No. 8/2022/M. Once this enlargement, we believe that the European Diploma will accept to cover all this area.

**8. consider making the scientific data collected over the years available to the public;** Qualitative and quantitative data is being obtained every year and reports are being produced and published accordingly.

**9. work to raise awareness of the importance of geological heritage;** No changes occurred and the policies presented on the earlier annual reports still apply.

**10. maintain in good condition the restored rubble walls and reconstruct any unrestored walls.** Most of the remaining unrestored rubble walls of the plateau are now well preserved and maintenance efforts are considered one of the priority duties of the nature wardens of the Island.

**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.

The marine area of Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve was enlarged up to 12 nautical miles around these islands by Regional Legislative Decree No. 8/2022/M 3<sup>rd</sup> of May. Once this enlargement, it is necessary to review the site management plan. This procedure will start at 2023.

**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.

The Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve area was enlarged and now comprises the islands Selvagem Grande and Selvagem Pequena, Ilhéu de Fora and other adjacent islets and is delimited by the marine area around these islands up to 12 nautical miles in accordance with the attached map.

**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.

All the events and lectures addressed to the public in general and target groups, as well as the website, facebook campaigns and new production of illustrated material, namely informative panels, used to raise awareness about the importance of the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve, were reinforced with the European Diploma logo.

Considering the need to contain the spread of the COVID 19 pandemic, and by recommendations of the Regional Government of Madeira, there was a decrease in the number of visitors and foreign scientists in 2020-2021, but nowadays everything got to normal, as before COVID-19 pandemic.

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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  
No changes or deterioration of the environment occurred.
- 6.2. Flora and vegetation: changes in the plant population and in the vegetational cover; presumed causes  
The flora and vegetation conservation status is improving due to the success of the mice and rabbits eradication project (2001 – 2004) (details given on the 2002 annual report). Qualitative and quantitative data is being obtained every year and reports are being produced accordingly. Since 2003 some species that have been extinct, were observed. The most relevant aspect of the work carried out in 2006 is the finding of four new species to Selvagem Grande. Throughout the island, endemic species like *Monanthes lowei* and *Schizogyne sericea* have increased their abundance and ground cover. This also happened with other indigenous and macaronesian endemic species like *Centaurea melitensis*, *Chenopodium coronopus*, *Lycopersicum esculentum*, *Spergularia falax* and *Anagalis arvensis*. In 2010 four species from bryoflora were reported new for these islands. No changes occurred in Selvagem Pequena nor in Ilhéu de Fora and the flora and vegetation of these two islands present a very good conservation status.
- 6.3. Fauna: changes in the sedentary or migratory populations; congregating, egg-laying and breeding grounds  
Terrestrial animal populations, namely of arthropods, terrestrial birds and reptiles are increasing in number and distribution. As a result of the work carried out in Selvagem Grande since 2001, in 2006 a new spider species, a new four species from Aphidae and a new order of Arachnida Solifugae were identified. Five species of the family Braconidae (Hymenoptera) were reported new for the Selvagens Islands. No changes occurred in Selvagem Pequena nor in Ilhéu de Fora and the fauna of these two islands present a very good conservation status.

## **7. Cultural heritage and socio-economic context**

- 7.1. Cultural heritage
- 7.1.1. Changes concerning cultural heritage  
No changes occurred
- 7.2. Socio-economic context
- 7.2.1. Changes concerning the socio-economic context  
No changes occurred

## **8. Education and scientific interest**

- 8.1. Visitors – Information policy  
No changes occurred and the policies presented on the earlier annual reports still apply
- 8.1.1. Arrangements for receiving and informing the public (building, booklets, maps, cards, etc.)  
No changes occurred and the policies presented on the earlier annual reports still apply.  
There is a program presented by the IFCN, IP-RAM that intends to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the oldest Nature Reserve in the country and mark the beginning of another 50 years towards even greater excellence, with a set of initiatives being outlined, such as: the launch of a book illustrated for children; an expedition to the Selvagens Islands; an international conference; a regatta; a swim crossing between the Selvagem Grande and the Selvagem Pequena; the project “Selvagens Islands without garbage”; an autonomous water motorbike crossing from Funchal to Selvagens; merchandising; between others.  
Considering the need to contain the spread of the COVID 19 pandemic, this program has only been carried out since October 2021 and will last until end of 2023.
- 8.1.2. Frequentation by visitors and behavior (number, distribution in time and space)  
During the year of 2022, permits to visit the reserve were issued to 110 boats, involving 662 persons. Most of the visits occurred from July to October. As usual, each permit was valid for 48 hours. When

asked visitors were allowed to overnight on shore. At the period requested, anchor and visits on land are not allowed at Selvagem Pequena as established by legislation and regulations. Public awareness, for the importance of this Nature Reserve as a bird sanctuary and as the southeast point of the Portuguese territory, involved photograph and film divulgation.

#### 8.1.3. Special visits (distinguished persons, groups, etc.)

- Ministra da Defesa Nacional (Minister of National Defense);
- Comitativa da Ministra da Defesa Nacional (Minister of National Defense Representatives);
- Secretário de Estado do Mar (National Secretary of State for the Sea);
- Presidente do Governo Regional da Madeira (President of Madeira Autonomous Region);
- Comitativa do Presidente do Governo Regional da Madeira (President of Madeira Autonomous Region Representatives);
- Presidente da Assembleia Legislativa Regional da Madeira (President of the Regional Legislative Assembly of Madeira);
- Secretária Regional de Ambiente, Recursos Naturais e Alterações Climáticas (Regional Secretary for the Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Changes);
- Vogal do Conselho Diretivo do Instituto das Florestas e Conservação da Natureza IP-RAM (Member of the Board of Directors of the Institute of Forests and Nature Conservation IP-RAM)
- Presidente da Câmara Municipal do Funchal (Mayor of Funchal);
- Presidente da Junta de Freguesia da Sé (President of the Parish Council of Sé);
- Comandante de Zona Marítima da Madeira (Madeira Maritime Zone Commander);
- Enviado especial do Secretário Geral das Nações Unidas para os Oceanos (Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General for the Oceans);
- Distinguished journalists, a number of renowned national and international media industry;
- Distinguished investigators, as ornithologists and herpetologists, from a number of renowned national and international universities and other scientific institutions.

#### 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.)

No changes occurred to the information presented on the earlier annual reports

##### 8.2.2. Scientific publications

Lia Godinho, Lucía Soliño, Catarina Churro, Viriato Timoteo, Carolina Santos, Neide Gouveia, Jorge Diogène & Pedro Reis Costa (2022): Distribution, identification and cytotoxicity of *Gambierdiscus* (Dinophyceae) in the Atlantic Selvagens Islands (Madeira, Portugal): a ciguatera gateway to Europe, *European Journal of Phycology*, DOI: 10.1080/09670262.2022.2086710

Alves, F. (2022). Portugal leads with Europe's largest marine reserve. *Nature* 601: 318

Canals A., Varela Martínez C., Diogène J. & Gago-Martínez A. (2021). Risk characterization of ciguatera poisoning in Europe. EFSA supporting publication 2021:EN- 6647. 86 pp. doi:10.2903/sp.efsa.2021.EN-6647

Oron, S.; Friedlander, A.M.; Sala, E. & Goodman-Tchernov, B. N. (2021). Recent shallow water foraminifera from the Selvagens Islands (Northeast Atlantic) – Assemblage composition and biogeographic significance. *Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science* 264: 107671.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ecss.2021.107671>

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

#### 9.1. Changes in legislation or regulations

the responsible regional authority updated the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve legislation and regulations in order to increase the marine area to 2677km<sup>2</sup>, in an area of 12 nautical miles around the Selvagens Islands. It is in this extension that all existing species are fully protected from extractive activities, such as fishing or the exploitation of inert materials.

#### 9.2. Changes in ownership title (conversion to public property, rentals, etc.)

No changes occurred

#### 9.3. Extension or transfer, new uses (for example, conversion into total reserve)

See 9.1

### 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

Monitoring of the main actions of the project “Restoration of the terrestrial habitat of Selvagem Grande (for details refer to previous annual reports).

- 10.1.2. Protection against the elements (fire, water regime)  
There is no need for this kind of protection
- 10.1.3. Approaches and thoroughfares (paths, roads, car parks, signposting, fencing, etc.)  
No changes occurred
- 10.1.4. Field equipment (hides and study facilities)  
Small reconstruction and maintenance work was carried out at the biological stations of Selvagem Grande and Selvagem Pequena, to provide a better logistic support to the projects on going in the field and the comfort of the visitors.
- 10.1.5. Waste management  
No changes occurred
- 10.1.6. Use of renewable energy systems  
Maintenance work was carried out
- 10.2. Management
  - 10.2.1. Administrative department: changes made  
No changes occurred
  - 10.2.2. Wardens’ department: changes made  
Procedure is ongoing to reinforce the warden corps with 7 new nature wardens.
  - 10.2.3. Internal policing measures  
No changes occurred
  - 10.2.4. Infringement of regulations and damage; legal action  
During 2022 not occurred significant infringement.

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

Our point of view on this matter has not changed since the previous reports. Therefore we still believe that it is always important to be awarded with such a distinguished Diploma. It is of enormous importance in obtaining political and economic support at regional, national and international levels. Overall, it is recognition for the conservation effort made by the *Governo Regional da Madeira*. The award of the diploma plays an important role as an encouraging factor to the wardens and officers responsible for this Protected Area. Moreover it is a matter of Regional pride, with a very positive influence on the public support towards general nature conservation actions.