

EUROPEAN DIPLOMA HOLDING SITE

**IPOLYTARNOC FOSSILS
NATURE CONSERVATION AREA**

HUNGARY

ANNUAL REPORT

2021

**FOR THE PERIOD
DECEMBER 1. 2020 - NOVEMBER 30. 2021**



State/Country: H U N G A R Y

The Protected Area:

Name: Ipolytarnoc Fossils Nature Conservation Area
Postal address: H- 3138 Ipolytarnoc Pf.1. Hungary
Tel/Facsimile: +36 32 454 188
Person responsible: Imre Szarvas
Email: szarvasi@bnpi.hu
Internet: <http://osmaradvanyok.hu>

Year of the award/Year of the last renewal/ Year until the award is renewed: 1995/2020/2030

Central authority concerned:

Name: Department of Nature Conservation, Ministry of Agriculture
Address: H-1055 Budapest, Kossuth tér 11. Hungary
Tel:+36 1 795 2397
Fax:+36 1 795 0080
Person responsible: Érdiné Dr. Szekeres Rozália
Email: rozalia.szekeres.erdine@am.gov.hu
Internet: www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-agriculture, www.termeszetvedelem.hu

Authority responsible for its management:

Name: Bükk National Park Directorate (BNPD)
Postal address: H - 3301 Eger Pf.116. Hungary
Tel: +36 36 411 581
Fax: +36 36 412 791
Person responsible: Ms. Kálmánné Rónai director
Email: titkarsag@bnpi.hu
Internet: <http://www.bnpi.hu>

0. Preface:

The European Diploma to the Ipolytarnóc Fossils was extended on 23 September 2020 by the Committee of Ministers until the inauspicious 11 September 2030, through the Resolution CM/ResDip(2020)9. This short annual report focuses on the implementation of the recommendations set in this new Resolution.

1. Conditions:

The Resolutions on the reward and renewals of the European Diploma to the Ipolytarnóc Fossils EDPA luckily never contained specified conditions.

2. Recommendations:

The Resolution CM/ResDip(2020)9 attached the following 12 recommendations to the renewal:

1. further explore the site's high potential for geological discoveries, especially palaeontological excavations. It would be of significant added value if further promotion of internationalisation of research activities took place by making the results of scientific research publicly available;

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

Research on the fossil footprints on the geological study trail has been going on, more than 40 vertebrate taxa have been identified so far, some of them on species level. As a preliminary result of it a paper was published in the Geoconservation Research Journal and it was uploaded to the webpage of the Site in this September.

https://www.osmaradvanyok.hu/msite/194/kordos-etal_-2021_tracking_ipolytarnoc_gcr6845471630438200.pdf

A volcanological study started to reconstruct the super-eruption, which preserved the palaeohabitat of Ipolytarnóc, a scientific paper on that is expected to be published soon. As

part of the RiWild Interreg SKHU/1902/1.1/037 project 3D laser scanning started to digitize the footprint surfaces of the excavated areas on the geotrail. The end result will be available for the scientific community, it will be publicized after 2023.

2. take all appropriate measures to preserve and, if possible, exhibit the site's geological and palaeontological resources. By 2025, engage in a careful (ensuring maximum respect of geological and palaeontological features) renovation/replacement of buildings, primarily the exhibition halls along the geological trail. Additionally, renovate the visitors' centre and other visitors' facilities during the renewal period of ten years;

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

Excavations of fossil resources are sheltered or winter covered at the Miocene stratotype section of the Borokas ravine. In situ exhibitions interpret the palaeontological finds. At the visitor center there is high-tech exhibition from some of the movable geological and fossil resources.

Part of the recently started RiWild Interreg SKHU/1902/1.1/037 project is the reconstruction of the worn-out II. Hall of the geological trail. After the second advertisement the public procurement proved to be successful, according to the plans the reroofing of that conservation building will start next year. Small scale renovations of the buildings, including the visitor center are taking place throughout of the year and we seek funds to repair the reception building's exterior plaster.

3. further explore the possibilities of the site taking a central and active role in the integration in the Slovak-Hungarian trans-border Nógrád-Novohrad Geopark, in order to preserve and raise awareness about the natural assets of the region and to further develop the multilingual information point for geo-tourism;

Action taken by the site to comply with the new recommendation:

As the main gateway to the Novohrad-Nógrád Geopark, Ipolytarnoc promotes the geological heritage of the region and advocates its resources to the visitors during special events, like the usual Geopark Week at the turn of May and provides exhibition place to the Geopark. Unfortunately second year of the covid-19 pandemic took its toll, due to restricting regulations up till May the crossborder geotourism activities had to be kept only digital, online, for a while Geopark programs were postponed or cancelled like the crossborder thematic guided tours to the tree-cave geosite on the Slovak side, but later these came into practice again.

The BNPD and the Geopark has a memorandum of understanding, the leader of Ipolytarnoc Fossils, as the delegated representative to the EGN Coordination Committee deals with the international affairs of the Geopark.

The GUIDE@HAND smart phone application is available for downloading in the reception building. It has further expanded and available in Slovak and English languages as well in offline format, it contains several Geopark study-trails.

4. continue the gradual replacement of non-native tree species, in particular Robinia pseudoacacia and regionally non-native Pinus species with native deciduous tree species (for example, Quercus) by assisting the natural succession process through ecologically sensitive land management practices. Also take measures to control herbal invasive alien species such as Ambrosia artemisiifolia. Continue the control of game which is causing considerable damage to vegetation and protected animal species;

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

The forestry activity continued on the rehabilitation of old orchards, enhanced the spreading of indigenous tree species and suppressed exotic species, including the elimination of invasive plants this year. In the meadows of the border zone and around the buildings on the geological trail the pine tree and acacia spreading have been suppressed.

Sensitive game management is an ongoing activity throughout the year, the ranger of the site is responsible for it with the assistance of the staff of the BNPD headquarters. The local TETT Foundation NGO also endorses these efforts. To help the game management a game-refrigerating container was installed this November to temporarily store shot game.

5. maintain the balance between open spaces and wooded areas on the western side of the conservation area, close to the nearby settlement, to preserve the mosaic structure of the landscapes there. Maintain the use of the regional breed/landrace of Racka sheep because of its added value from a historical husbandry point of view, and also to increase structural diversity in the herb-dominated vegetation. For agropastoral reasons, maintaining hay-cutting by local farmers and/or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) should be encouraged. Limiting management of open habitats to the use of sheep grazing alone would change the landscape into a mosaic of patches covered in woody and herbal plant communities (so-called woodland), which would not comply with earlier recommendations (2010);

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

At the buffer zone, close to the local settlement the meadows are leased to local farmers, grazing, hay cutting and bailing activities are ongoing. Tree thinning on forest edges has maintained the mixed vegetation cover of the landscape. Clearings are also maintained as part of game management and along some parts of the state border, the mosaic-like structure of the landscape is well managed. There are two Racka sheep grazing close to the trailhead of the geological study path as an added value to demonstrate the protected ancient breeds of the animal husbandry heritage.

6. replace the power line that runs between the village and the visitors' centre by an underground structure, respecting the current landscape and exhibitions; comply with earlier recommendations (2010);

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

The Enjoy Park project has a section for this and we seek for other funds to sponsor undergrounding the power line between the local village and the main parking plot, but not just for aesthetic landscape protection but also from endangered bird protection point of view.

7. explore the feasibility of a video presentation, or documentary film on the scientific, evidence-based process of palaeontological science (paleotaxonomy as well as paleoecology and ecosystem reconstruction/restoration). In particular, the palaeontological method which reconstructs whole animals based on "simple" footprints is astonishing and will interest the general public and scientists in other life sciences;

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

Hopefully the end result of the 3D scanning will lead to the identification of new animal species within 2 years, we consider this as an opportunity to extend the reconstruction to an animated presentation of the scientific process, but this may need more resources to make it done.

8. as is already done in the rock park, install more visual markers that make links between present and past (Miocene) ecosystems;

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

The new exhibition in the Ancient Pine visitor center has a movie about the site's game management, which refers to the connection between the present game tracks and of the fossil tracks of the past, the animation of an interactive touch wall leads from the present animals to the beasts of the paleohabitat. More developments are planned on this issue.

9. improve documentation/reporting on the results of management measures through structured monitoring, as well as of public response (numbers of visitors, appreciation), etc;

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

A new questionnaire was circulated this summer and fall as printout and was uploaded to the webpage of the site to check on the quality of our services and give field for input to the visitors' opinions.

10. further enlarge local, regional and transnational public involvement and administrative co-operation, for example on the Novohrad - Nógrád transnational Geopark (to be undertaken by the Bükki National Park authorities rather than the Ipolytarnóc management);

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

From this year on the BNPD headquarter takes part in the Nógrád County led planning of the Enjoy Park megaproject, which targets the geotourism developments of several geosites managed by the BDNP, including Ipolytarnoc. The RiWild project includes outside researchers like the Herman Otto Museum of Miskolc, the staff of the TETT Foundation NGO takes part of the maintenance of Ipolytarnoc and other nearby geosites.

11. consider citizen science projects in order to strengthen involvement and engagement of non-scientific stakeholders;

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

The RiWild Interreg SKHU/1902/1.1/037 project will make available the 3D scanned paleosurface to the public as an open database from 2023, all of the scientific papers are uploaded to the Site's website and there are different university cooperations for field practices of students. Email correspondence concerning fossils is frequent with interested of different backgrounds.

12. continue to make good and systematic use of the logo and slogan of the European Diploma.

Action taken by the site to comply with the recommendation:

The European Diploma logo is exhibited everywhere within and in the surroundings of the site, including roadside panels leading to the EDPA. All of the circulated media information text mentions the fact about the European Diploma, this prestigious title is well advertised.

3. Site Management:

The BNPD provides leadership and specialists' expertise from the Headquarters to the site. The BNPD with the help of a local TETT Foundation NGO employs the workers, despite the 2 year-long pandemic the management is stable, there are no changes since last year.

4. Boundaries:

The area has fixed boundaries, its buffer and core zones are well defined, no changes occurred.

5. Other information:

The covid-19 pandemic caused some problems in the management of the site, which has grown to one of the main geotourism propagators in the region. The Hungarian government last year started to review the Tentative List of the World Heritage Sites in Hungary, the Ipolytarnoc Fossils EDPA is involved in this revalidation, which seems to be a slow process.

The significance of the European Diploma is well recognized. The logo is on all the publications, road panels of the EDPA and visibility is well maintained.



3D scanning and remapping fossil tracks, RiWild project



The unmasked staff of Ipolytarnoc EDPA in the 2.year of the pandemic