



Resolution CM/ResDip(2024)... on the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Ekenas Archipelago National Park (Tammisaari) (Finland)

(adopted by the Committee of Ministers on ... 2024

at the ...th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

Appendix 5: Model plan for annual reports

Annual report for the year 2024

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: Finland

Name of the area: Ekenäs Archipelago National Park

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

Central authority concerned: Ministry of Environment

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Authority responsible for its management:

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- 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 conditions

- 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. finalise the designation of the “Conservation Area of Segelskär”, providing a sufficient legal framework to secure the ecological, cultural, recreational and landscape values that deserve recognition.

2024: As part of Metsähallitus' new ownership policy guidelines until 2027, the development of a network of marine protected areas was included. According to this, the targeting of protection in marine areas will pay particular attention to unprotected underwater areas bordering existing national parks (such as Segelskär is) and marine areas where a protected coastal zone connects with an unprotected underwater value area or a marine area of importance for fish or birds. Other uses of the areas, such as recreation, fishing and hunting, will be taken into account in the development of the protection network. Actual implementation (ie finalising the designation) of the recommendation/measure has not yet started.

2. consider adopting a common approach to monitor factors of “global change” and assess the specific impact of climate change, pollution, invasive alien species, land use and all human-caused factors which could modify and deteriorate the ecological conditions of species, habitats and ecosystem services.

2024: Finland has a long history of marine monitoring, but there is a need to improve the long-term monitoring of marine biodiversity of shallow photic communities, which especially are affected by climate change, pollution, invasive alien species, land use, human-caused factors etc. This kind of marine biodiversity monitoring program will be developed in LIFE-IP Biodiversea project coordinated by Parks and Wildlife Finland. The development of the monitoring program has already begun by identifying where and how underwater biodiversity monitoring should be implemented, so that changes are detected in time. Presently the monitoring methods include remote sensing of subsurface

vegetation such as key species of *Fucus vesiculosus* and side scanning of *Zostera marina* beds and reefs, all of habitats which occur in the Ekenäs Archipelago NP area. The monitoring program also includes establishment of a collaboration network with all relevant authorities (Metsähallitus, Regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, Ålands Landskapsregering, Finnish Environment Institute), experts and stakeholders.

3. enhance the monitoring and management of marine birds, namely the common eider (*Somateria mollissima*); explore ways to strengthen conservation measures to improve the breeding success of this species, in collaboration with local research facilities and organisations;

2024: ASKO State of the marine waterfowl population in the outer zone of the Ekenäs archipelago (including island in the NP and in the Segelskär area) is monitored every three years in standardized waterfowl censuses. This monitoring has already been done during the previous diploma season. New data about the molting waterfowl in the Finnish outer archipelago is also produced in Biodiversea LIFE IP project via helicopter censuses. Censuses provided new data about the state of the eider population and importance of the marine areas outside the Ekenäs archipelago NP for molting eider. First censuses (coordinated by Finnish Environmental Institute) were made in 2023. Data is currently being analyzed.

4. explore the feasibility of extending the European Diploma to the Segelskär area once its designation as a conservation area is completed;

2024: Designation as a conservation area is not yet completed and hence Implementation of this measure has not yet started.

5. assess and analyse the environmental impact of tourism and the presence of humans on the natural assets of the protected area, including disturbances to the bird nesting process and trampling of soil, vegetation and invertebrates, etc., in order to, if appropriate, adapt and improve the tourism strategy and awareness-raising activities;

2024: Actions to analyze the impacts of environmental recreation were not conducted particularly in the Ekenäs archipelago NP in year 2024. However, new methods to assess the impacts of trampling using e.g. drone images and game cameras were tested and developed in the Archipelago Sea NP, which is located west of the Ekenäs archipelago NP. Methodological development (done in Biodiversea Life IP) gives new tools, which can also be applied in the Ekenäs archipelago NP.

6. pursue the efforts and improve the efficiency of methods for the eradication of invasive alien species, such as the racoon dog, mink and white-tailed deer; exclude the use of glyphosate for the eradication of *Rosa rugosa* and *Acer pseudoplatanus*, or reduce its use to a strict minimum, in places where there are no better alternatives, and use all precautionary measures possible to avoid damage to aquatic species and habitats;

2024: Alien predators (namely mink and raccoon dog) possess a threat for breeding eider in the NP. Intensive eradication of alien predators from the Ekenäs archipelago (including

areas both in and around the NP) has been started in collaboration with Parks & Wildlife Finland and local hunting organizations. In year 2023 (data from year 2024 not yet available), approximately 40-50 islands were inspected to search alien predators and a total of 10-20 minks and 5-10 raccoon dogs were removed. The work will be continued in a comparable effort in the following years to achieve sustainable results. Eradication of raccoon dog and mink from the outer archipelago islands that lay close to important birdcolony islands south of the NP (ie. Trutlandet, Äggharuna etc.). A local hunting club has been granted a licence to hunt whitetail deer.

Grazing of traditional pastures on Näset, Rödjan and Jussarö continued as normal. The control of invasive species was limited to Sycamore maple (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) on island Jussarö (only 30-50 living coppice were found). A longterm insect study with ligh- and "bait-based" bucket traps continued.

7. make the monitoring results of marine ecosystems available to the public, develop scientific knowledge and promote measures to fight against the pollution in the Baltic Sea; **2024:** Finland's monitoring program under the marine strategy was updated in year 2020. The program contains all the marine monitoring activities, which have different responsible authorities. Monitoring program provides data on the state of the marine environment in the Baltic Sea. Through the update P&W Finland is responsible for new macrophyte dive transects located in sand, gravel and mud habitats with submerged aquatic vegetation. Transects are situated in the whole coastline of Finland (two in the Ekenäs Archipelago NP) and are implemented in every three years. The data are saved in database used by different authorities and even publicly available map service (<https://velmu.syke.fi/>) maintained by Finnish Environmental Institute. Ekenäs archipelago NP plays an important role particularly on the monitoring of mud habitats which are representative within NP and also monitored in the program.

Pollution, including excessive land-based nutrients causing eutrophication, is the main problem deteriorating marine habitats. LIFE-IP Biodiversea projects main aim is to enhance the protection of marine nature including restoration of marine habitats. Marine restorations, which are piloted in the project also within Ekenäs archipelago NP, will be monitored and the results published to improve the cost-effectiveness of the restorations. Monitoring the outcomes of the restorations contributes also to bigger picture enabling other actors to use the most feasible restoration methods to improve marine habitats and even on a national restoration plan scale.

8. reinforce the staff of the warden corps and technicians to improve their ability to cope with the increasing challenges resulting from global change and rising tourism pressure; secure the financial resources to pursue the monitoring programs in the national park;

2024: The area's recreational services for visitors have been maintained at the same locations and at the same level as during the last report, despite reduced resources. On the island of Jussarö, there is an entrepreneur who offers services such as a sauna and café for visitors, while the other service locations, Rödjan, Modernmagan, and Fladalandet, are

unmanned and only provide limited services such as a fireplace, toilet, and tent site. A longterm insect study with ligh- and “bait-based” bucket traps continued.

9. make more use of the European Diploma logo in all information material and brochures, and explain the relevance of the diploma wherever appropriate, in particular in the visitors’ centres and on the website.

2024: A press release on the renewal of the diploma was sent out in August 2024. Diploma logo is displayed on the national parks website.

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.

2024: At the end of year 2023 employer held change negotiations. The negotiations were motivated by the need to adjust and reform operations. Employer took decisions on restructuring on economic, production and operational grounds. A total onf 11 consultations were held between the employer and the the staff representatives on the impact of the change on staff. As a result of the restructuring, a total of 39 permanent posts in Parks and Wildlife ceased to exist and this also affected the national park. Substantial changes to job descriptions and conditions of employment of was directed to 75 staff members in Parks and Wildlife Finland.

From the beginning of year 2024, the organisation of Parks and Wildlife Finland was reorganised on the basis of national units, with a focus on customers and demand. The reform aims to streamline and improve the efficiency of operations through, for example, a simpler organisation, digitalisation and the opportunities offered by knowledge management. The operational reform aims to align operations with the current financial framework and to streamline the cost structure. It also sought the ability to adapt to changing financial situations, including through increased use of outsourcing.

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.

2024: No changes in the boundaries.

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

2024: No other information.

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.

DO NOT FILL YEAR 2024

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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