

**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 2020

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: Republic of Belarus

Name of the area: Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:
2018, 2 years

Central authority concerned:

Name: Belovezhskaya Pushcha National park
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Fax: +375 16 31 56656
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Authority responsible for its management:

Name: Presidential Affairs Management Department of the Republic of Belarus
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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. by 2020, design and adopt a management plan for the long-term conservation of the area which will include strategic aims and targets, an estimated budget and a time frame for its full implementation, as well as a monitoring mechanism for the assessment of the implemented management measures; the management plan should meet international standards and take into consideration the recommendations attached to the renewal of the European Diploma; the draft management plan should be submitted to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention prior to its adoption;

Actual Management plan of the National park was revised in 2015 broad participation of stakeholders for the period of 2016-2020. Due to the difficult epidemiological situation in the country, the development of a new management plan began with a delay.. The development of the new Management plan of the National Park in accordance with national legislation and recommendations of European Diploma started in 2020 and will be completed to the middle of 2021, after elaboration it will be directed to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention for adoption and approval of national authorities.

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. maintain a high level of human capacities and a skilled and professional staff;

No changes

2. increase and secure the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park budget with State resources, so as to be able to continue to manage the diploma-holding area in an exemplary way, as required by the European Diploma regulation;

The amount of budget funding for the activities of the national park in 2020 remained at the level of the previous year.

3. expand the strict protected zone of the diploma-holding area to the historic Bialowieza forest limits and manage this zone in order to preserve and enhance the ecological and biological natural processes which are key assets of the European interest of the diploma-holding area;

Completed earlier. The possibility of further strengthening territorial protection will be considered in process of preparing a new Management Plan.

4. totally protect the old-growth tree communities and restore and enhance old natural forest all over the historical Bialowieza forest;

Currently, according to the current legislation, 90% of the high-growth forests of the national park are managed without cutting. The possibility of additional restriction of economic activity in old-aged natural forests will be considered in process of preparing a new Management Plan.

5. pursue the efforts to preserve the ecological character of wetlands and to implement an integrated management of water resources;

Implemented. During 2015-2020 restoration activities implemented at 6 sites. Two more sites are in progress – “Zarkauscyna forest drainage network” and “Renaturalization of Narauka river”. New strategic plan on wetland restoration in Belovezhskaja pushcha National park for the period until 2030 will be developed in 2021 and integrated into the new Management plan

This work was commended by UNESCO World Heritage Committee at its 43rd session at Baku (30 June – 10 July 2019) (Decision 43 COM 7B.14): “Taking note of the conclusions of the 2018 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission, commends the State Party of Belarus for successfully focusing the management of its part of the property on maintaining natural ecological processes, and on the restoration of wetlands, including Ramsar-designated areas”

6. pursue the efforts to reduce the red deer population (*Cervus elaphus*) and to remove all winter feeding places from the diploma-holding area (core and buffer zones);

When drawing up a new management plan, the territorial distribution of winter feeding sites will be analyzed and measures for its further reduction will be proposed.

7. assess the state of conservation of the elk (*Alces alces*) and design a hunting regime accordingly;

New propositions of additional protection of elk population will be implemented in the new Management plan and the National Park Regulation.

8. pursue the efforts to prevent or fight against the spread of invasive alien species in the diploma-holding area, and especially to eliminate *Quercus rubra*, *Solidago Canadensis* and exotic fish;

*An inventory of the distribution of alien invasive plant species in the territory of the National Park was carried out in 2018. The area in which these species are distributed (the Sosnowsky's hogweed (*Heracleum sosnowskyi*) and the Canadian goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*)) amounted to 150 ha. Measures have been taken to eliminate these species - first of all, manual and mechanical mowing, as well as disking of soil on former agricultural land.*

9. create an overall database including performance indicators, covering both natural resources and socio-economic uses and activities in order to ensure the continuous monitoring of the European significance of the diploma-holding area;

No changes.

10. adopt a clear and sustainable tourism strategy and engage a more active sustainable development policy together with local stakeholders, and if possible with the authorities of Poland, promoting and supporting extensive farming, manufacture and marketing of green products and services, and the preservation and renovation of cultural heritage; include in the forthcoming management plan a specific programme of activities aiming to preserve or restore local cultural heritage, including architecture, local breeds, traditional uses and activities, as well as all other cultural assets of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park and its buffer zone, so as to strengthen sustainable development in the diploma-holding area;

Recommendation will be implemented in new Management Plan.

11. ban hunting in the whole Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park territory and minimise hunting pressure in its buffer zone; with reference to the moratorium on wolf hunting established in 2015, and as foreseen in the current management plan, forbid wolf hunting by law on the territory of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park, as well as in the whole historic Bialowieza forest;

The practice of hunting management in the Belarusian part of the World Heritage Property will be reviewed, which will be reflected in the new Management Plan.

12. develop a long-term vision for the European bison population and strengthen scientific and technical co-operation with the authorities of Poland in the whole historic Bialowieza forest;

A long-term vision of transboundary management of bison populations will be developed after the results of studies to determine the genetic status of both subpopulations in collaboration with polish colleagues.

13. consult with the International Union for Conservation of Nature Large Herbivores Commission in order to assess whether the European bison in the diploma-holding area require specific conservation measures.

Not carried out

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.

No changes

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

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.