

**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 2023

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: **Romania**

Name of the area: **Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve**

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:
2020 – 3 years since the renewal of EDPA

Central authority concerned:

Name: **Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests**

Address: 12, Libertatii Blvd, Sector 5, Bucharest, 040129

Tel: 004021 408 9642

Fax: 004021 408 9615

e-mail:

www: www.mmediu.ro

Authority responsible for its management:

Name: **Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority**

Address: 34A, Portului Street, Tulcea, Tulcea County, 820243

Tel: 0040 240 518945

Fax: 0040 240 518975

e-mail: arbdd@ddbra.ro

www: www.ddbra.ro

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.

N/A

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. contribute to the implementation of the Pan-European Action Plan for the Sturgeon ([T-PVS/Inf\(2018\)6](#)) adopted by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention and implement a monitoring system to assess the development of the sturgeon population in the Delta;

The project "Development of the Monitoring Station for migratory fish: sturgeon and mackerel - Isaccea", implementation continued in 2023. This year 25,000 juvenile sturgeons (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*), individually marked with CWT marks, were released in the Danube river as part of the project activities. According to Common Order no. 85/662/2021 of April 13, 2021 regarding measures to restore and conserve sturgeon populations in natural fish habitats, of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Ministry of Environment, Water and Forests, fishing of any species of sturgeon is prohibited all year round, and accidental catches must be released into the natural environment regardless of size, species or condition.

2. include in the management plan in preparation specific provisions dedicated to climate change and how to address this issue in relation to the long-term preservation of endemic species;

The revised management plan was subject to a public consultation/debate in 2022. The Project Implementation Unit proposed to include in the management plan specific provisions dedicated to climate change and how to address this issue in relation to the long-term preservation of endemic species. The final form of the management plan is in the environmental approval procedure, then following the governmental level approval.

3. request the responsible ministry to increase the number of staff members to the maximum limit foreseen to enable efficient work and add part-time contracts whenever needed for additional projects;

In 2023 were organized some job competitions, and the total number of staff members is so far 124 persons from a total of 171 persons as required by current legislation. Due to the economic crisis, that is manifesting in Romania as well, employment at public institutions is currently blocked. The low salary level makes the ARBDD staff members look for other better paid jobs.

4. secure a basic budget for the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve to enable the authority to fulfil its administrative tasks and allocate project funds fully to the projects themselves;

The annual budget allocation is made at the ministry level, depending on the available funds. Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority has its own revenues, from the tariffs for carrying out activities on the territory of the reserve, but not enough to fully support itself, without other funds. Due to the economic situation, many of the current and maintenance expenses will have to be limited to the strictly necessary.

5. ensure that the responsible authorities work out a master plan for wind farms in the perimeter of the protected area to prevent any impact on the birds and/or bats in the Danube Delta and consider the participation of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve administration in this process;

There are no wind farms inside the reserve. Outside the limits there are several such installations.

6. evaluate the rising number of permits for car and boat traffic and public access and define a maximum number of these permits, which should only be exceeded under exceptional circumstances;

The new management plan is analysing the activities with potential impact (pressure and threats) on the natural protected areas and on species and habitats of conservation interest, proposes protection and conservation measures to maintain the appropriate state of conservation.

7. request that the Ministry of Environment review the appointment system for the management/governor with regard to the minimum length of a working period to enable the manager to

develop and guide mid- and long-term strategies for the further development of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve;

There are no changes compared to the previous report.

8. make extensive use of the European Diploma logo and explain the relevance of the diploma in the information centres and in all information material provided to the tourist sector (boat excursions, accommodation, etc.).

European Diploma logo is used on each document produced by DDBRA and also on the web page www.ddbra.ro.

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.

Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority continued to implement projects that provide unclogging activities for some canals (3 projects) and for some lakes (2 projects), in different areas of the reserve. However, these actions are not enough to combat the effects of climate change, which are becoming more and more evident from year to year.

The number of employees at the end of the 2023 year is of about 124 persons.

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.

Proposal to change the limits of the strictly protected area Istria-Sinoie from Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Romania

The Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve and its functional areas were approved at national level by the Law 82/1993 regarding the establishment of the "Danube Delta" Biosphere Reserve, with subsequent amendments and additions, and the Romanian Government Decision no. 248/1994 adopting the measures for the application of Law no. 82/1993 regarding the establishment of the "Danube Delta" Biosphere Reserve.

According to the Statutory framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, with a total area of 580,000 ha, consists of:

- Strictly protected area, covering 50,600 ha
- Buffer areas, covering 223,300 ha
- Sustainable development areas, covering 306,100 ha

In order to ensure the protection and conservation of certain areas of natural habitat and specific biological diversity, as well as to capitalize on the available natural resources, according to the consumption requirements of the local populations and within the limits of the natural biological potential for the regeneration of these resources, were established the following areas with a differentiated regime of ecological protection:

- a) strictly protected areas, having the conservation regime of scientific reserves;
- b) buffer zones, with the role of protection of strictly protected areas and in which limited activities for capitalizing on available resources are allowed, in accordance with the approved management plans;
- c) areas of sustainable development, economically exploitable through traditional practices or new, ecologically acceptable technologies;
- d) ecological reconstruction areas, in which are taken only measures to restore the damaged environment, later becoming sustainable development areas or strictly protected areas.

At this moment, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority, the authority responsible for the management of the biosphere reserve, decided to make some changes in the limits of one strictly protected area and its adjacent buffer area, namely Istria-Sinoie, whose perimeter is recommended to be modified, based on the study entitled "Reconsideration of the current zoning of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve and proposals

for the management of areas with a full protection regime in the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve" developed in 2010 by the "Danube Delta " National Research and Development Institute - Tulcea.

Istria – Sinoie strictly protected area - current situation 400 ha



Proposed changes in Istria – Sinoie strictly protected area 1,095 ha



The modification of the strictly protected area Istria - Sinoie limits proposes to exclude the location of the Histria fortress, the anthropized area, which will be included in the adjacent buffer zone. The strictly protected area will take over from the perimeter of the Zmeica – Sinoie buffer zone, the surfaces on which well preserved habitats and species of community interest are found and which are justified, from a scientific point of view, to be included in the category of strictly protected areas. The strictly protected area Istria - Sinoie will increase its area from 400 ha to 1,095 ha, with an area of 625 ha taken over from the buffer zone Zmeica – Sinoie.

The proposal to modify the strictly protected area Istria - Sinoie therefore implies the exclusion of the humanized area, which also includes the fortress of Histria and its extension to the south of Sinoie lake and the southeast of Saele ridge.

After the approval of this changes, the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, with a total area of 580,000 ha, will consist of:

- Strictly protected area, covering 51,295 ha
- Buffer areas, covering 222,605 ha
- Sustainable development areas, covering 306,100 ha

The delimitation of the strictly protected area Istria Sinoie, the current situation and the proposed amendment, are represented in the Annex.

Based on the approval of the proposed changes in the biosphere reserve zoning, we will follow the procedure to change the Romanian Government Decision 248/1994 adopting the measures for the application of Law no. 82/1993 regarding the establishment of the "Danube Delta" Biosphere Reserve.

Attached you will find the MAB decision regarding the approval of these 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.

Danube Delta and its adjacent areas: Maritime Danube to Cotul Pisicii, Isaccea- Tulcea sector of the Danube flood plain, Sărăturile Murighiol - Plopu brackish lake, Razim- Sinoie lagoon complex, the coastal Black Sea from Chilia Branch to Midia Cape, the coastal marine waters up to 20 m depth were declared in 1990 as a biosphere reserve, with a total area of 580,000 ha. (<http://www.ddbra.ro>)

In 1991, an area of 312,440 ha from the Danube Delta was included on the List of the Natural World Heritage under UNESCO, the site no. 588. (https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/588/multiple=1&unique_number=695)

In 1991 Danube Delta and some adjacent areas were also included on the List of the Ramsar sites, with a total area of 647,000 ha, site no. 521.

(https://rsis.ramsar.org/RISapp/files/51415864/pictures/RO521_map1602.pdf) <https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/521>
Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve is also part of the Natura 2000 Network.

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

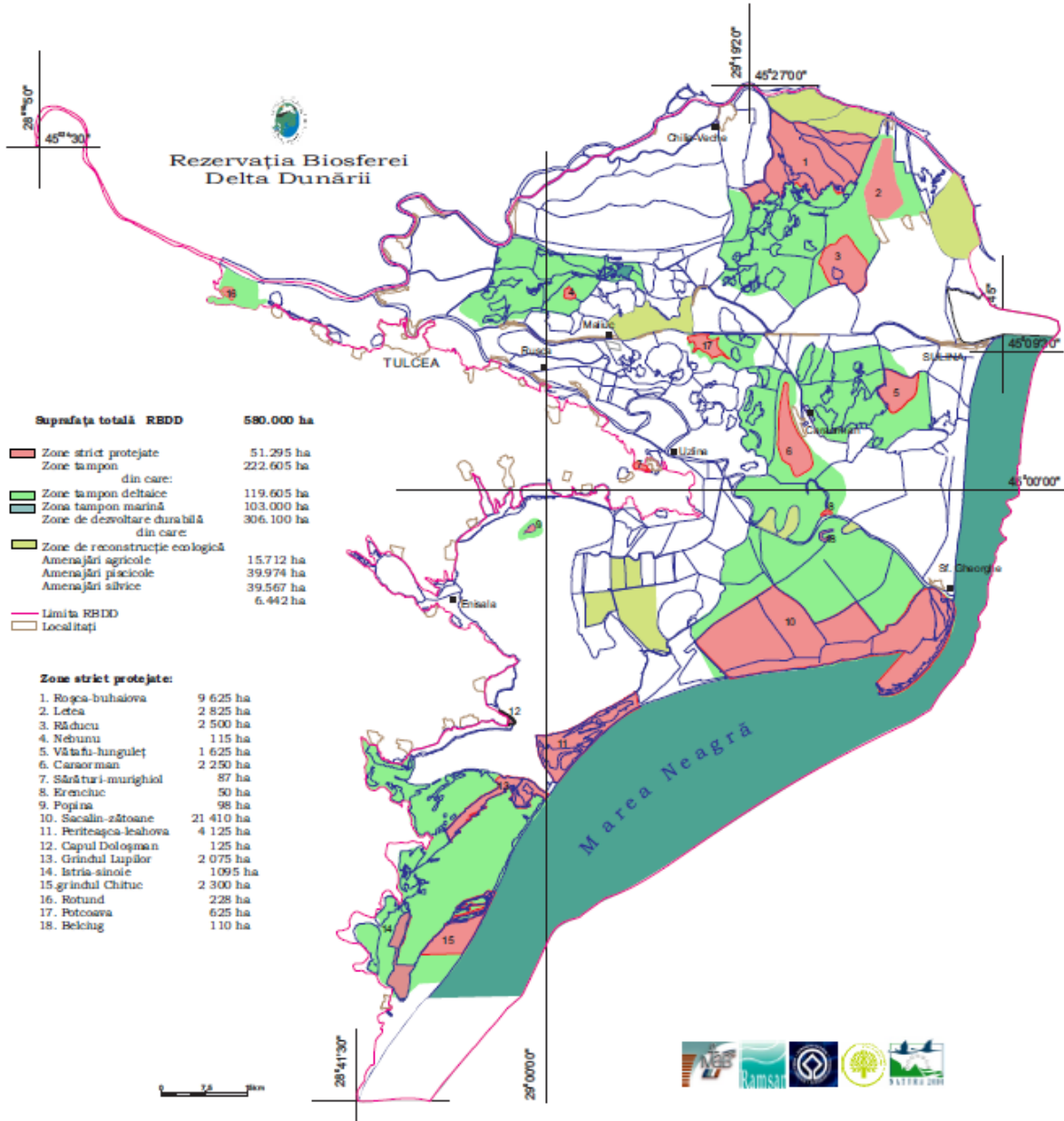
9. Site description (vulnerability, protection status, ownership, documentation)

- 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



International Co-ordinating Council of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme

Thirty-fifth session

UNESCO HQ, Paris, France
12 – 15 June 2023

[...]

315. **Danube Delta Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (Romania and Ukraine): Modification to the core area in the Romania national biosphere reserve.** The MAB Council welcomed this modification to the core area in the Romania's national biosphere reserve. In light of the recommendations of the 29th meeting of the Advisory Committee as contained in document SC-23/CONF.235/12, the MAB Bureau assessed the additional information provided by the authorities upon the Advisory Committee's request, namely a comprehensive zoning map by the Romanian authorities clearly indicating the zone categories specified by the Statutory Framework as well as additional information on the appropriate legal status for the new core area.
316. As the information received was satisfactory, the MAB Council **approved** the modification.
317. **With this, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves now comprises 748 biosphere reserves in 134 countries including 23 transboundary sites.**