

**Résolution CM/ResDip(2022)4
concernant le renouvellement du Diplôme européen des espaces protégés octroyé au Parc national
du Gran Paradiso (Italie)**

*(adoptée par le Comité des Ministres le 13 juillet 2022,
lors de la 1440e réunion des Délégués des Ministres)¹*

Annexe 5 : Plan type pour les rapports annuels

Rapport annuel pour l'année 2024

Les rapports annuels doivent faire apparaître les modifications par rapport à l'année précédente, dans des termes dynamiques de gestion et de fonctionnement et ne doivent pas se limiter à présenter des données de base. Tout nouveau texte ou carte introduisant une modification dans l'état de la zone devra être joint au rapport annuel.

Etat : ITALY

Nom de la zone : GRAN PARADISO NATIONAL PARK

Année et nombre d'années depuis l'octroi ou le renouvellement du Diplôme européen des espaces protégés : 2006 - 2016

Autorité centrale concernée :

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¹ Telle qu'amendée par la Résolution CM/ResDip(2014)2 le 2 juillet 2014, lors de la 1204e réunion des Délégués des Ministres.

1. **Conditions** : Lister ici toutes les conditions dont l'octroi ou le renouvellement du Diplôme européen a été assorti. Expliquer soit comment les conditions ont été totalement mises en œuvre, soit les progrès dans leur mise en œuvre. Veuillez également indiquer toute difficulté, non encore résolue, que vous avez pu rencontrer.

N/A

2. Recommandations : Lister ici toutes les recommandations dont l'octroi ou le renouvellement du Diplôme européen a été assorti. Expliquer soit comment les recommandations ont été totalement mises en œuvre, soit les progrès dans leur mise en œuvre. Veuillez également indiquer toute difficulté, non encore résolue, que vous avez pu rencontrer.

1. finaliser les règles d'application du plan de gestion en 2022 et mettre en œuvre celui-ci;
After a long and complex process of drafting and discussion, also following the issuing by the supervising Ministry (Ministry of the Environment) of a 'format for the regulations of national parks', as well as the designation in 2020 of the Gran Paradiso National Park as the Managing Authority of the relevant Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the Park Regulations were formally adopted by the Board of Directors of the Park on 31. 08.2022, and sent to the Ministry of the Environment to start the approval process, as required by the national framework law on protected areas (L. 394/1991). Approval of the Regulation is in fact the responsibility of the Ministry of the Environment, after hearing the opinion of all the local authorities concerned and in agreement with the two Regions of Piedmont and Valle d'Aosta Autonomous Region.

2. suivre de près les projets de rénovation ou de construction d'installations hydroélectriques; préserver les cours d'eau naturels et atténuer l'impact des lignes électriques :

The Park's territory has historically been characterised by the presence of important infrastructures for the production of hydroelectric energy (artificial lakes contained by dams, underground and open-cast pipelines, pylons and high and extra-high voltage electricity transmission networks). Many of these infrastructures were planned and approved before the Park was established. Following the approval of the Park Plan, only limited water withdrawals for local energy supply needs can be authorised, and in any case only after successful completion of the Environmental Impact Assessment procedure required by European legislation.

In this context, following the resubmission by CVA (Compagnia Valdostana Acque) of the Chavonne hydroelectric plant renovation project, modified following an initial negative opinion of the PNGP but still with heavy environmental impacts, especially in Valsavarenche, as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment procedure launched in 2024 by the Ministry of the Environment, during the first consultation, as the environmental authority concerned, the Park once again expressed a negative opinion on the project presented, inviting the project proponent to explore alternative project solutions that would limit the impact on the Park's territory.

At the beginning of summer 2024, some of the Park's valleys, in particular Val di Cogne and Valle Orco, were affected by a serious flooding event that caused heavy damage with substantial modifications to some of the watercourses within the protected area. A state of natural disaster was proclaimed at the national level for the affected areas. The local authorities, beneficiaries of the funds allocated by the central government for the restoration of the damaged areas, started urgent emergency restoration works, thanks to which they were also able to derogate from the national regulations on protected areas, according to which the Park Authority expresses its opinion on the sustainability of the projects in advance.

3. étudier avec les communes concernées des solutions pour réduire le trafic touristique sur les routes donnant accès à la partie supérieure du parc :

The reduction of motorised traffic at high altitudes within the Park has been an open issue for a long time, with particular reference to the Colle del Nivolet State Road 460, which in the summer period when it is open to traffic registers extremely high numbers of vehicle passages, especially at weekends. In the last 20 years, the Park has tried to promote the reduction of summer vehicular traffic, encouraging the use of public transport (financing the shuttle bus that reaches Colle del Nivolet and Rifugio Savoia, free of charge on weekdays) and laboriously seeking compromise solutions with the local authorities involved (the Metropolitan City of Turin, manager of the road, and the Municipalities of Ceresole Reale and Valsavarenche) : In order to limit traffic on the busiest days, the experimental 'A piedi tra le nuvole' (Walking in the Clouds) project was implemented until 2023, whereby on 8 Sundays in July and August, the road was closed in the middle hours of the day at Lake Serrù (2. 200 m asl), with a paid shuttle service from the car park to the end of the road.

The Park Authority has always considered this to be a temporary solution that is unsatisfactory for the conservation purposes of the area and biodiversity, as well as being difficult to manage logistically, and therefore initiated further talks in 2023 with the actors involved, in order to find a definitive solution that would provide a greater guarantee for conservation purposes. Unfortunately, the talks initiated in the winter of 2023/2024 did not allow a political agreement to be reached to this effect, so that in the summer of 2024 the road was left open to traffic without the limitations of 'Walking in the Clouds', but with 6 days of total closure during special running and cycling events. However, the Park has launched a meticulous monitoring campaign aimed at accurately quantifying the extent of traffic along the Nivolet road, its acoustic impact and in terms of air pollution, as well as its direct and indirect impact on various components of animal biodiversity. The data collected, which is currently being processed, will be the basis for the park's formulation of a definitive management proposal from the summer of 2025, with which to reopen discussions with the authorities involved.

4. suivre de près la gestion des pâturages en étroite coordination avec les autres instances compétentes (commune, etc.); établir une cartographie et une base de données permettant le suivi à moyen et à long terme de l'utilisation des pâturages et des charges en bétail;
As indicated in previous reports, in the last decades farming activities progressively reduced. Currently inside the GPNP there are very few professional breeders, mostly devoted to cattle breeding. Although the percentage of people employed in agriculture is very low (about 3,0% in 2022), the impact of domestic grazing is far from irrelevant : this is due to the fact that on the alpine pastures the transhumance of herds and flocks is important. This is the reason why the Park carried out research on the impact of domestic grazing on animal biodiversity that will be fundamental for the management of these activities in all the territories that belong to the Park or that the Park rents in order to preserve biological diversity. In particular, in the framework of the Interreg Gebiodiv Project (2019-2022), in-depth monitoring of the state of the pastures before and after the summer grazing season was carried out, which led to the definition of thematic maps and of a common database for the Italian-French cross-border partnership of the project. Data collection continues even after the end of the project, in particular the monitoring of livestock grazing in the PNGP during the mountain pasture season is guaranteed by the activity of the Park's Surveillance Corps, which carries out periodic quantitative surveys throughout the mountain pasture season in all the Park's sectors, thus guaranteeing the collection of exhaustive data that are collected in a specific database.
5. cesser de réduire le personnel (gardiens) et, si possible, pourvoir les postes vacants; poursuivre les investigations pour rapprocher le bureau principal du parc de la zone concernée;
As of 2023, after years of a gradual reduction in staff due to retirements, there has finally been a reversal of the trend, thanks to the recruitment of 11 new park rangers (of which 9 posts established by competition and 2 recruited from a ranking list as replacements following resignations/retirements), as well as 5 new permanent employees among the staff of the Offices (2 in the Scientific Service, 1 in the Administrative Service and 1 in the Technical Service), in addition to 3 people hired on temporary contracts. All of the new hires are to fill posts that were vacant on the basis of the organisation's current staff plan, bringing the total number of employees (including fixed-term employees) to 73, compared to an organisation plan of 88. In 2025, an additional 4 park rangers are expected to be hired (by filling the vacancy list) and another official in the scientific service, for whom a competition has been announced and held at the end of 2024, to further reduce the organisation's staff deficit, which nevertheless continues to be under-staffed. In addition, at the end of 2023, following the appointment by the Ministry of the Environment, the new President of the Park, Dr Mauro Durbano, took office. One of the new President's first initiatives concerned the submission to the central government of a proposal to expand the organisation's staff to 108 from the current 88. In 2024, the search for a new headquarters was also resumed, with the aim of relocating the Authority's central offices to the Park territory, or at least to one of the municipalities in the protected area. A number of options have currently been identified, which will be submitted to the Park Community for consideration.
6. poursuivre les recherches sur la biodiversité, notamment celles relatives à l'abandon des pâturages aux niveaux alpin et subalpin; réunir l'ensemble des conclusions des travaux scientifiques dans une base de données accessible aux chercheurs et aux gestionnaires;
The Park has been engaged for over 15 years in long-term studies on biodiversity (through the monitoring over the years of some representative taxa, among which, for example, butterflies and some groups of pollinators), which have highlighted, among other things, the importance of the abandonment of traditional domestic livestock grazing activities on the abundance of invertebrate species in the medium and high mountain pastures. In consideration of this, the monitoring of the park's biodiversity continues with a particular focus on the effect of active management interventions aimed at maintaining high altitude pastures, implemented by the Park thanks to specific national and EU funding, such as the restructuring and reactivation of ancient irrigation systems that had been disused following the abandonment of high-altitude livestock farming activities and the grazing with donkeys of areas at risk of forest occupation. The data collected within the framework of these active management and monitoring activities are the subject of scientific publications and are collected in databases that, although not publicly accessible, can be made available to researchers and managers upon request.
7. poursuivre les comptages d'ongulés et d'oiseaux alpins en collaboration avec le Parc national de la Vanoise, en utilisant si possible la même méthodologie;

Collaboration in scientific research between the GPNP and the PNV is one of the basic aspects of the twinning project between the two protected areas, and is a consolidated and growing reality. Various research projects, e.g. on the ALCOTRA Programme of cross-border cooperation between France and Italy, have seen and still see the participation of both parks on research topics on alpine fauna (e.g. the Lemed Ibex project). The AlpsLife project, financed by the Interreg Alpine Space programme, started in 2024. It aims to harmonise monitoring methods and data collection systems concerning biodiversity between Alpine countries. The GPNP, a project partner, involved the PNV as project observer. There is also a direct channel of communication and exchange between the two parks, regardless of specific projects: the scientific teams of the two parks and the universities that collaborate with them meet periodically to discuss the developments and complementarity of the research conducted by the two protected areas, particularly on the ibex. In 2024, staff from the GPNP travelled to the PNV to participate in a capture session of female ibex. There were also several bilateral meetings on research topics: on 7/10/2024 in the PNGP, and on 8/11 the GPNP Director attended the PNV Scientific Committee meeting. A meeting between the staff of the scientific services of the two parks, already scheduled for November 2024, was postponed to 2025.

8. formaliser, dans la mesure des possibilités légales, le statut du comité scientifique du parc et le rendre opérationnel;

The Park's Scientific Committee was established and appointed by the Park's Board of Directors with Resolution No. 17 of 26/04/2022 and is now up and running. On 12/04/2024 a joint online working day of the PNGP Scientific Committee and that of the Vanoise National Park was held, during which a reciprocal update on the results of the main scientific research being carried out in the two twinned protected areas was held. A one-day meeting in the presence of the two scientific councils was also planned for July 2024, but was postponed to 2025 due to organisational problems.

9. veiller à ce que le programme de recherche et les activités du parc national prennent en compte les effets du changement climatique sur les processus écologiques liés au maintien, sur le long terme, de l'intérêt européen exceptionnel de la zone diplômée; coordonner les recherches avec celles du Parc national de la Vanoise et intégrer les résultats aux plans de gestion respectifs;

Data collection and research on the effects of climate change on the ecological processes and environmental components that characterise the protected area has been going on for several years now in the GPNP. Doing this in a coordinated manner with other territorial realities of the Alps, and in particular with the PNV, is an important objective that the GPNG has been pursuing recently, with the adhesion to the ACLIMO project financed by the Interreg ALCOTRA programme and started in October 2023, which intends to deepen, together with all the project partners in the Alpine border area, the topic of water resources in the context of climate change. The incorporation of the results and conclusions of the research activities into concrete management actions in the Park's Management Plan is a complex process, first and foremost because of the complexity of the approval, and therefore amendment, process of the Plan itself. However, the process of constructing specific grazing plans has been initiated, at least for pastures owned or in any case directly managed by the Authority, which take into account the recommendations and good practices that emerged as a result of the Pastoralp and Gebiodiv projects. One of the strategic objectives identified by the Authority in the 2023-2025 Performance Plan within the strategic area Eco-system services and climate change monitoring/mitigation is that of monitoring and modelling the effects of climate change on mountain eco-systems, both with regard to the increase in temperatures and on the reduction of meteoric water supplies.

10. mieux faire connaître le Diplôme européen, utiliser son logo de façon plus large et promouvoir le dialogue entre les espaces diplômés. Veiller en particulier à poursuivre et à intensifier la coopération transfrontalière avec le Parc national voisin de la Vanoise. Profiter des anniversaires à venir (100 ans du parc du Gran Paradiso en 2022, 60 ans du parc de la Vanoise en 2023) pour faire la promotion du fruit de leur collaboration :

The anniversaries of the two parks were an opportunity to renew the close relationship that had previously existed. Management and staff met on several occasions for the launch and closing of the centenary of the Grand Paradis National Park in 2022 and 2023 and the anniversary of the Vanoise National Park. 2023 was also the occasion for the field teams (rangers) to meet around the emblematic species of the two parks: the Alpine ibex, during a trapping session in May 2023 in the Orgère valley (Haute Maurienne), an experience repeated in the spring of 2024. In May 2023, a delegation from the PNV took part in the award ceremony of the 'Photographing the Park' competition, in which the two parks have participated for many years. Finally, in October, a delegation from the Gran Paradiso National Park took part in the concluding seminar of the BIRDSKI project 'Verts une meilleure prise en compte de l'avifaune dans les domaines skiables', promoted by the PNV. As a result of these direct exchanges, the two parks are involved in two ALCOTRA projects 'ACLIMO' on climate and water issues, and 'BiodivTourAlps' on biodiversity and tourism, projects launched at the end of 2023 with a 'summit' already jointly planned by the two partner parks in 2026 for the public, elected representatives and all local stakeholders.

Gestion du site : Lister ici toute modification dans la gestion du site détenant le Diplôme européen, en ce qui concerne les environnements terrestre et aquatique (si applicable), et en ce qui concerne les agents et les ressources financières, depuis l'envoi du dernier rapport annuel au Conseil de l'Europe. Veuillez également indiquer toute difficulté, non encore résolue, que vous avez pu rencontrer.

No changes to the European Diploma holding site management were recorded, in relation to terrestrial and aquatic environments. With regard to financial resources, in 2024 the GPNP received a contribution of € 6.094.000,00, with a slight decrease compared to 2023, due to cuts in resources for national protected areas in the annual national budget law.

However, it has been possible to ensure management costs, to maintain a high conservation level of the GPNP and to implement scientific research, thanks also to new financial resources from the EU following the approval and start-up of several new projects financed by various EU programmes. As far as staffing is concerned, please refer to the comments made in response to Recommendation No. 5.

3. Frontières : Détailler tout changement apporté aux frontières du site détenant le Diplôme européen depuis l'envoi du dernier rapport annuel au Conseil de l'Europe. S'il y a des changements, veuillez joindre une carte appropriée à ce rapport. Veuillez également indiquer toute difficulté, non encore résolue, que vous avez pu rencontrer.

No border changes were made in the last year.

4. Autres informations : Lister ici toute autre information, concernant le site détenant le Diplôme européen, que vous estimez nécessaire de fournir au Conseil de l'Europe.

We would like to emphasize the importance of the rôle played by scientific research within the GPNP, in particular of the studies carried out over the long term in study areas with methodologies standardized and constant over time.

These long-term studies concern both vertebrate (Alpine ibex, Alpine chamois and Alpine marmot) and invertebrates species. The main purpose of this investigations is to measure the variations in behavioural ecology and life-history of a large number of tagged animals, and those in the altitudinal distribution of the invertebrate species induced by global warming.

The GPNP believes that the promotion of scientific research is one of the main goal of protected areas, together with Nature protection and conservation: the Park has to be seen as « open-air laboratory », that invites and motivates national and international research institutes to carry out long-term investigations to better understand the dynamics of environmental transformations occurring in the Alpine Arch.

The effective validity of these research actions is confirmed by numerous scientific publications that the Park has produced in the last twenty years (largely available on www.pnpgp.it).

In recent years, researches in the Park were focused in particular on the effects of climate changes, with projects focused on variations in animal biodiversity, landscape transformation and glaciers reduction. In all these research and monitoring actions, Park's and external researchers are actively supported by Park's rangers.

The GPNP is also responsible for the National Animal Biodiversity Monitoring Project, which is active since 2007 and involves the other three national Alpine protected areas and some Alpine regional Parks of Piedmont Region.