

**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: 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:

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:

Authority responsible for its management:

Name: Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority

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

Tel: 0040240 518945

Fax: 0040240 518975

e-mail: arbdd@ddbora.ro

www: www.ddbora.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. the process of co-ordinating the ecological management of the delta system with the three countries concerned (Moldova, Romania and Ukraine) should be continued and strengthened and the possibility of establishing a cross-border protected area should be considered in the framework of the trilateral agreement signed by the three countries concerned, under the auspices of the Council of Europe;

Under the Joint Operational Programme Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova 2007-2013, the three countries implemented in common the following projects:

- Consolidation of the nature protected area network for biodiversity protection and sustainable development in the Danube Delta and Lower Prut river region (PAN Nature)
- Inventory, assessment and remediation of anthropogenic sources of pollution in the Lower Danube Region of Ukraine, Romania and the Republic of Moldova

As a result of the implementation of the PAN Nature Project, in 2018 the International Co-ordinating Council of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme has declared the first biosphere reserve in the Republic of Moldova, the Lower Prut Biosphere Reserve. Having in view the existing transboundary biosphere reserve between Romania and Ukraine, the Danube Delta Transboundary Biosphere Reserve consisting of the Romanian Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve and the Ukrainian Danube Biosphere Reserve, The Romanian Parliament initiated the discussions for the establishment of a trilateral biosphere reserve between the three countries, Danube Delta – Lower Prut. The decision factors from Romania will analyze the possibilities to modify the Agreement for the creation and management of a cross-border protected area between Moldova, Romania and Ukraine in the Danube Delta and the lower River Prut nature protected area, signed in Bucharest on 5th June 2000 by the Minister of Environment and Territorial Planning of the Republic of Moldova, the Minister of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection of Romania and the Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of Ukraine in view to start the cooperation of the three countries to declare the trilateral protected area and to define new common policies in the field of environment protection, culture, education, research and a common management to apply these in the three biosphere reserves.

In 2019 started a new international project between the three Countries, lead by Rewilding Europe, a Cambridge Conservation Initiative, under the Endangered Landscape Programme. The Project Restoring the Danube Delta, Europe's largest wetland Ukraine, Romania & Moldova will be implemented during the period 2019-2024.

In February 2020, a stakeholders meeting for the EU GrazeLife project was organised in Tulcea, with the participation of representatives of some organisations from Ukraine.

Having in view the pandemic situation (SARS COV2 spreading) the collaboration between organisations from the three countries in 2020 was mainly on-line or via e-mail.

2. the possibility of reactivating the co-operation between other European Diploma sites which are deltas (Camargue National Reserve (France) and Doñana National Park (Spain)) should be explored;

In October 2016 was signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority (Romania) and the Joint Union for the Management of the Natural Regional Park of Camargue (France) on the cooperation in the protected areas. In 2017 a student from France developed a study tour in Danube Delta and Camargue. The cooperation continued in 2018 with the visit of the Romanian team to Camargue for the 10th Camargue Festival celebrating 40 years of Natural Regional Park of Camargue, in May. In June 2018, a team from Camargue visited Danube Delta in view to identify new fields of cooperation and to promote common projects. In June 2019 a mixed team from Natural Regional Park of Camargue and local communities representatives visited the Danube Delta in view to develop new collaborations between local communities from France and Sulina town from Romania, inside the Danube Delta.

Due to the covid19 pandemic, there were no field visits in 2020 to the two protected areas or exchange of personnel. All practical activities were postponed for next years. The cooperation agreement between localities from the two reserves, Arles and Port Saint Louis du Rhone from France and Sulina from Romania, was finally signed in 2020 by all sides.

In February 2020, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority and Public Institution "Nature Park Kopacki rit", Croatia, signed a Cooperation Agreement in the field of nature protection and future development of both protected areas.

3. the monitoring of the ecological services and of the socio-economic activities carried out on the reserve (fishing, hunting, shipping, agriculture, forestry, logging, tourism) should be strengthened in relation with the carrying capacity of the natural ecosystems and the value of the reserve; special attention should be paid to the shipping activities (movement of boats and speeding) as well as to illegal fishing and hunting.

The integrated monitoring programme of the reserve includes monitoring of the ecological services and of the socio-economic activities carried out on the reserve (fishing, hunting, shipping, agriculture, forestry, logging, tourism). The rules for navigation inside the reserve are stipulated in the Governmental Decision no. 538/2015. In 2018 Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority purchased a radar to detect the boats that exceed the legal speed on channels inside the reserve, according to the Governmental decision no. 538/2015. The use of the radar in the last two years helped in reducing the number of boats that exceed the legal speed. For the future years, the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority analyses the possibility of purchasing more radars, having in view the huge number of lakes, channels and streamlets inside the reserve and to reduce also the power of motors.

It is envisaged for the next year the acquisition of services for the elaboration of a study regarding the tourist support capacity of Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, including means of transport, restrictions and approved routes and the impact of fast boat transport, for each kind of protected area (strictly protected areas, buffer zones, transition areas).

4. potential external threats should be continually monitored, especially the likely adverse transboundary impact on the ecosystem of the whole delta of the works related to the Bystroe canal in the Ukrainian sector;

The integrated monitoring programme of the reserve includes as well the monitoring of the aspects on the impact of the transport activities from the Chilia channel, as a consequence of the functioning of the navigation channel Danube – Black Sea (Bystroe), built on the Ukrainian side of the Danube Delta. In 2020 the Ukrainian part presented the "Final Summary Report on Research Assignment Danube – Black Sea Deep Water Navigation Route Project. Operation Phase. Comprehensive Environmental Monitoring in 2019-2020 - Maritime Access Channel Area". For a more complex report and detailed analyses, the Romanian part will support the implementation, as soon as possible, of the Common Harmonised transboundary monitoring network of the environmental status of the Danube Delta. This will offer independent data for both countries, to base on them their management decisions.

5. the usefulness of banning hunting, or of managing hunting on a demonstrably sustainable basis, on the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, especially in the most sensitive areas, should be studied;

According to the Law 82/1993 for the establishment of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve the hunting activity on the protected area's territory was banned starting with 2013. During the years 2018 and 2019 the hunting activity was allowed for concerned authorities in view to monitor the spread of the disease like African swine fever. In 2020 there were no African swine fever events inside the reserve.

It was approved the elaboration of a scientific study on the assessment of hunting resources in the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (DDBR), for the numerical assessment and to establish the status of health and the delimitation of population areas for the main species of wild animals in the DDBR.

6. a system for better management of natural fisheries resources should be explored for the benefit of the local people, in order to reduce the categories and number of intermediary actors/stakeholders; the fish resources should be managed by the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority;

Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority managed the fish resources on the reserve's territory, based on the Management Plan and Regulations approved by the Governmental Decision no. 763/2015. The local population has the right of exclusiveness at the renewable natural resources use through traditional economic activities. In 2020 the commercial fishing activity continued in compliance with the provisions imposed for the Covid19 pandemic.

7. information concerning access of boats to vulnerable parts of the reserve should be made readily available to the public;

All the necessary information related to the economic activities allowed on the protected area's territory are posted on the web page: www.ddbra.ro.

Information panels were installed in the field and information useful for access for tourist purposes in DDBR was disseminated through the institution's Facebook page.

8. the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority should continue to bring technical and financial assistance to the local populations, municipalities and private operators in different fields (land planning, water supplies, sewage treatment) and assist with information on organising and developing activities compatible with the aims of the reserve, such as ecotourism, bird watching and handicrafts;

For the financial period 2014-2020 there are several financial programmes supporting different kind of activities and stakeholders and beneficiaries from inside the reserve. Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority supports local communities in accessing the funds and implement several projects with impact on and benefits for local population.

9. the restoration programme of the existing buildings should be continued, using traditional materials and natural local products; the cultural value of the reserve, especially the different ethnic roots of the populations, should be enhanced with the engineering and technical input of specialised institutes;

Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority surveys the ways that the objectives presented by the implementation on the Building Regulation in Reserve are followed. The Governmental Decision on the approval of the urban framework regulation for the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve was reviewed and improved.

10. an external review and assessment of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve's Conservation Strategy (for example, priorities, management objectives, operational objectives and financial requirement) should be organised in 2010, ten years after its declaration, with the support of international expertise;

In September 2015 Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve organized an international meeting for an external review and assessment of the Conservation Strategy. Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority has in view in the next years to improve its legal framework and the strategies for the conservation of the Danube Delta's biodiversity and ecosystems. A project financed by the EU will have as result a revised Management Plan for the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve. In 2020 Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority celebrates 30 years since its establishment.

11. the necessary funding should be provided in order to improve the capacities/performance of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority; a feasibility study on the creation of a financial mechanism should be undertaken so that all commercial activities and uses (not only tourist activities) contribute to the financing of the reserve;

The legal framework foresees measures for economic-social development of the Danube Delta area. Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority improves its budget with funds from fees, permits and authorizations issuing, but also by implementing projects with international funds (from EU mainly).

12. the adoption of the legal framework (master plan, Law on the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, Law on the Protected Areas) should be accelerated;

Based on the Management Plan, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority proposed every year new legal documents to be adopted by the Government, in view to support its activity for nature conservation and protection and sustainable development in the area.

13. noting that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure is in operation, the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority should continue to analyse carefully the requests for new wind farms in the neighbourhood of the reserve.

Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority surveys carefully the development of wind farms in the reserve's neighbourhood area.

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.

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The number of jobs in the organizational chart changed from 173 in 2010 to 133 in 2013 and to 171 from 2015 to present. The number of employees in 2020 is of about 119 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.

There are no changes to the boundaries of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve.

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/en/danube-delta-biosphere-reserve/danube-delta/location>)

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)

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