

**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: **Piatra Craiului National Park**

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas: **2021, 2 years** (The last renewal was due on 27th September 2021, but the validity of the Diploma was extended, on an exceptional basis (Covid-19), till 28th March 2024. The resolution CM/ResDip(2023)6 on the renewal was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 14th June 2023)

Central authority concerned:

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

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Authority responsible for its management:

Name: **Piatra Craiului National Park Administration**

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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.

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. secure the necessary budget for the national park administration to run and maintain the infrastructure for visitors and to conduct regular monitoring activities;

The national park budget is approved by a common order of the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity and the Ministry of Finance. It is largely (90%) funded by the National Forest Administration (RNP ROMSILVA) with whom the Piatra Craiului National Park Administration has signed a contract. The remaining 10% is self-raised, through visitor fees, tourist guiding fees, selling of merchandise in the Visitor Center and approval fees charged for analyzing development documentation submitted by various entities.

The total budget (without projects) for 2023 was 2,296,000 RON of which salaries amounted to 1,889,000 RON.

2. monitor the effect of climate change on species and habitats and ensure findings are considered in the management of the area;

The monitoring plan includes protocols for monitoring 16 Natura 2000 habitats that were identified in the park and the Natura 2000 site, among which are forest habitats (9110, 9150, 91E0*, 91Q0, 91V0 and 9410) as well as alpine bushes and heaths (4070* and 4060). All habitats are in a favourable conservation status. Of particular importance for monitoring the impact of climate change is the tree line zone where spruce forests intermingle with dwarf pine, habitat 4070* Bushes with *Pinus mugo* and *Rhododendron hirsutum* (*Mugo-Rhododendretum hirsuti*) in order to observe the altitudinal shift in vegetation.

We also observed a drying of Scots pines in one of the areas that we monitor and are currently collaborating with specialists from the Forestry and Silviculture Faculty (Transilvania University of Brasov) to try and understand the causes and whether climate change plays a role. We extracted several core samples from the pine trees, which are being analysed by the specialists.

Moreover, in the new management plan, which we are currently drafting, monitoring the effect of climate change will be given full consideration.



3. maintain and strengthen the good relations with the local and the county authorities, as well as with tourist organisations to work together on future sustainable tourist development in the area surrounding the national park, with special attention to visitors' hotspots;

During this reporting year the park administration made sustained efforts, through separate meetings and discussions but also within the Consultative Council of the park, to

work together with local and county authorities to address the increasing pressure of tourism, especially in key park entry points/hotspots.

As part of implementing the project to revise the management plan we are collaborating with the Ecotourism Association of Romania to develop a tourism strategy. This is based on a study that estimated the number of visitors to the park and surveyed their attitudes toward the park and its values.

4. continue and strengthen the implementation of the building guide in the sustainable development area of the Piatra Craiului National Park;

This aspect is one of the top priorities of the Piatra Craiului National Park Administration. The current management plan establishes the following principles for the sustainable development of human settlements, in the spirit of preserving and capitalizing on local traditions and specificity: 1. preserving the existing land parceling in historical format; 2. encouraging the retention and reconversion of the existing built environment; 3. encouraging the use and adaptation to modern needs of housing typologies that were developed historically; 4. optimal fitting to local relief and climate conditions through a good orientation relative to the cardinal points and the predominant winds; 5. preserving existing vegetation (isolated trees, property borders); 6. harmonious setting in the landscape; 7. employing techniques and materials that are traditional in the region. These principles will also be included in the revised management plan that is being drafted.

During 2023 more than 20 building and development projects were assessed for compliance with the "Guide to Building in the Sustainable Development Area of the Piatra Craiului National Park". The guide was published with support from the Romanian Order of Architects and it forms the basis on which all building projects submitted for approval to the park administration are evaluated in order to secure their harmonious integration in the landscape and the preservation of local tradition and specificity.

5. maintain regular control measures for forestry activities and enhance co-operation between owners, the forestry authority and the Piatra Craiului National Park administration;

In 2023 the park administration undertook 143 patrolling missions, 52 of which were carried out in collaboration with the Mountain Gendarmerie. With respect to forestry activities, 50 requests for specific conditions for wood marking and harvesting were submitted to the park administration by forest districts operating in the area. In all cases written conditions were sent to the forest districts detailing measures to ensure compliance with park objectives. Moreover, in the majority of cases the chief ranger/park rangers participated in the field to verify the tree marking and harvesting operations.

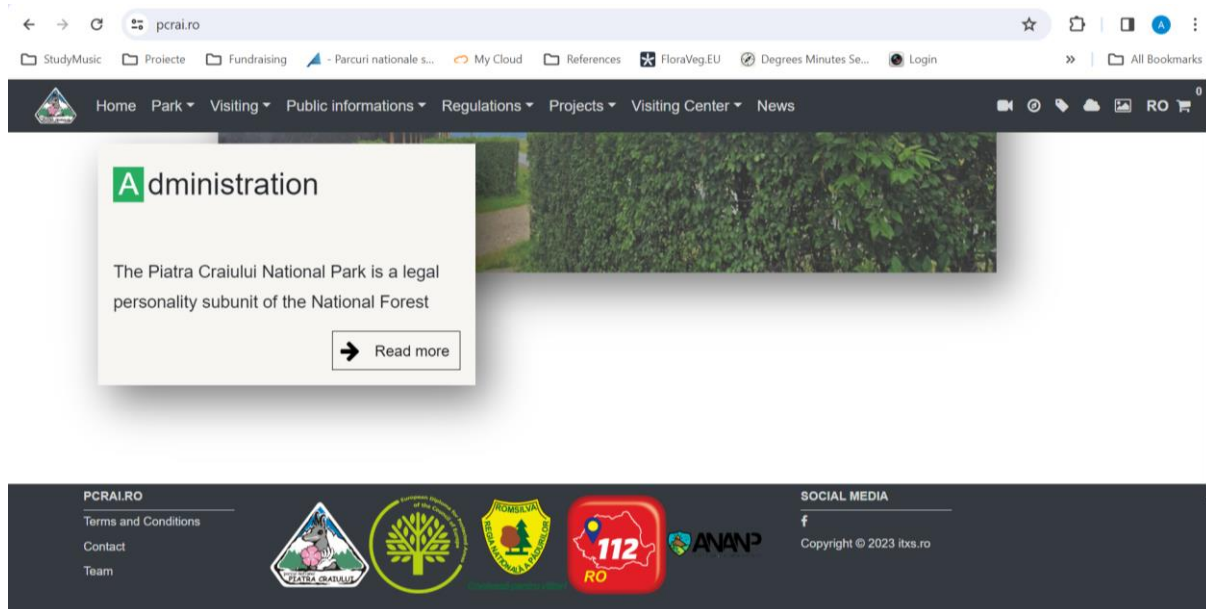
As part of the process of drafting the revised management plan, the park administration has been working closely with forest owners and administrators in order to agree on the extension of the core area (the strictly protected and the integral protection zones). Moreover, the meetings of the Consultative Council of the park are very good opportunities for consultation and collaboration between owners, forestry authority and the park administration.

6. continue the gradual replacement of spruce forests with broad-leaved forests in the middle-mountain level and ensure sustainable forest practices are systematically used within the national park;

The gradual replacement of spruce with broadleaf species is one of the key measures that will be included in the revised management plan and will create the legal framework for such forestry activities in the park area. The current and the future forest management plans will have to be harmonized with the park management plan after its approval, and together with monitoring activities undertaken by the park administration, will ensure the implementation of sustainable forestry practices in the area.

7. continue giving appropriate visibility to the European Diploma logo in all information material and brochures and explaining the relevance of the diploma wherever appropriate, in particular in the visitors' centres and on the website.

The European Diploma logo is used in all published material, in the administration letterhead and also on the website as well as in the Visitor Center.



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.

There were no significant changes since the last annual report.

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.

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.

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