

**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:

Name of the area: Retezat National Park

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

EDPA renewed on 14 June 2023, valid until 2 July 2033

Central authority concerned:

Name: Ministerul Mediului, Apelor si Padurilor (Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests)

Address: Bulev. Libertatii, nr. 12, sect. 5, Bucuresti, Romania

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Authority responsible for its management:

Name: RNP Romsilva - Administratia Parcului National Retezat R.A. (Retezat National Park Administration)

Address: 337423 Nucsoara, nr. 284, com. Salasu de Sus, jud. Hunedoara, Romania

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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.

facilitate the adoption of the management plan by the responsible authorities without further delay and work towards securing funding for its implementation;

The development of the management plan's text was completed at the end of 2021, then the stages of analysis and approval by the Local Environmental Protection Agency (LEPA) and the National Agency for Natural Protected Areas (NANPA) followed, so the proposal was submitted on 14 February 2023 to the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests for final analysis and approval. After a significant delay, the ministry made observations and asked for clarifications twice, requests to which the park administration promptly responded. However, due to this prolonged dialogue, the plan has not yet been approved. At the moment we are waiting for the reaction of the ministry to the last clarifications that we sent them on 18 October.

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. strengthen monitoring programmes and secure financing for their implementation; initiate in particular the monitoring of the effect of climate change on species and habitats and ensure findings are considered in the management of the area;

In 2021, based on the measures comprised in the draft of park's management plan, and according to the existing funds at that moment, Retezat National Park Administration (RNPA) conceived the monitoring plan for a series of species and habitats (the ones considered more vulnerable or present in small numbers within the park's limits). The monitoring plan was approved by the Scientific Council of the park and is implemented since 2022. After the final approval of the management plan, RNPA can apply for additional funds to be used for implementation of all proposed conservation measures, including monitoring activities.

In 2022 RNPA approved the implementation of two projects on the park's territory, FishME and AlpChange, which study the alpine habitats (focusing on freshwater habitats), and the impact of climate change and other human activities on these alpine habitats.

2. prepare a plan for maintaining and developing the infrastructure (such as headquarters, potential information points, entrance points, camp sites, shelters) of the national park and seek appropriate financing; **Taking into account the current situation of the infrastructure owned by RNPA (2 visitor centres, 3 information points, 3 tourist shelters, 1 wildlife observation point and 3 entrance points), what we consider to be done is the maintenance of these constructions, without need to increase the infrastructure. Depending on the urgency of intervention in different locations, in each annual budget plan we foresee the amounts needed for such kind of works.**

3. maintain and strengthen the good relations with the local and regional authorities, as well as with tourist organizations to reach an agreement on future sustainable tourist development in the area surrounding the Retezat National Park;

Regarding this matter, we can honestly say that the relationship with the local and county authorities is a good one, but there is a jurisdictional aspect that comes into play here: most of our duties and competences, as an administrative structure, are limited to the territories of natural protected areas for which we are responsible, so we don't really have a way to intervene outside of them.

4. strengthen the co-operation between the administration of the national park, the National Agency for Natural Protected Areas and the National Forest Administration (ROMSILVA) to ensure a coherent and harmonized management of the protected areas under their respective responsibility;

We always keep this attitude in mind, both because we have a hierarchical relationship with both mentioned structures, and because they are the only ones that can help us in our relationship with other entities at high level. And as far as ROMSILVA, the need of good co-operation is even clearer because it is our main (and often the only) financial supporter.

5. pursue the efforts to further enlarge the strict protection zone (zone A) and the integral protection zone (zone B);

We have achieved this already, in the process of developing the management plan, through a good understanding first of all with ROMSILVA, then with the Romanian Academy and last but not least with some of the municipalities that own land in the park. At the moment, the surface of the protection zones (A and B) represents 76% of the total surface of the park, this means that we

managed to exceed the percentage recommended by IUCN regarding the weight of the protection zones of the national parks.

6. consider ways and means for a more sustainable use of forests within the buffer zone of the Retezat National Park;

This is not a simple matter, it involves two aspects: the social-economic one of the local communities whose existence is largely based on the wood harvested from the buffer zone of the park, and the legal-technical aspect related to the way this wood can be exploited.

Anyway, one thing is certain and clear: by law, stricter rules apply to wood exploitation in that area than to ordinary harvesting (the one that takes place outside the park).

7. make more use of the European Diploma logo in all information material and brochures, and explain the relevance of the diploma wherever appropriate, in particular in the visitors' centres and on the website.

In 2023, implementing the recommendation to utilize the European Diploma logo more prominently in our information materials and brochures has been one of our priorities. We have ensured that the logo is featured prominently on cover pages, within key sections, and alongside relevant information across our printed and digital materials. Moreover, we have taken significant strides to explain the significance and relevance of the European Diploma throughout our visitor centres. These materials explain how the EDPA acknowledges Retezat National Park's commitment to upholding stringent European conservation and management standards.

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.

Since last year there were no changes in the main/important issues that are subject of our activity.

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 were no changes to the boundaries of the park since the last annual report.

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.

At the moment, we don't have any other special information to communicate to the Council.

Park director,

Zoran Acimov
