

**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*

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: Armenia

Name of the area: Khosrov Forest State Reserve

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

"Khosrov Forest" State reserve has been granted with the European Diploma Status in 2013, award has been renewed in 2018.

Central authority concerned:

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Tel: +374 11 818559

Fax: +374 11 818506

e-mail: minenv@env.am

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Authority responsible for its management:

Name: "Khosrov Forest" State Reserve" SNCO

Address: Kasyan St., 79 Building Ararat, Vedi

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www: <https://www.khosrovreserve.am>

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.

1. by 2020, design and adopt a management plan for the long-term conservation of the area which will include strategic aims and targets, an estimated budget and a time frame for its full implementation, as well as a monitoring mechanism for the assessment of the implemented management measures; the management plan should also consider a strategic approach for the development of sustainable tourism compatible with the carrying capacity of the Khosrov Forest Reserve and the preservation of its integrity as a strictly protected area; the draft management plan should be submitted to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention prior to its adoption;

The development of the new management plan of Khosrov Forest State Reserve is currently planned in the framework of the "Biodiversity and Sustainable local development in Armenia" program. In a meanwhile the sustainable tourism is successfully applied in order to exclude the illegal entry into reserve and to make the visitor flow manageable. The Ministry of Environment established trails and defined entrance fee management system using the electronic payment system. At the visitor centres of the reserve the visitors will be introduced to the flora and fauna, and each tour will be accompanied by the ranger. In order to minimize the impact of the human factor or anthropogenic pressure on the territory of the state reserve a restriction on the number of the visitors is applied under the strict supervision of the Ministry of Environment.

2. launch a political and administrative process aiming to sustain the preservation of the European interest of the area by means of expanding the territory of the reserve to better preserve the state of conservation of the key species (large carnivores and herbivores); removing the existing 11 enclaves along the border of the Khosrov Forest State Reserve; establishing a buffer zone with a clear protection regime and limits, minimizing hunting and the effects of grazing on the reserve; addressing the issue of the "transit routes" that cross the reserve; and working to minimize their general impact on the natural assets of the diploma-holding area;

The hunting is banned in the area of the reserve and during the 2023 no poaching cases were recorded in the area. The conservation of large carnivores was successfully applied in the reserve and cameras are installed in the area and records of species were captured. According to the new management plan the boundaries of the reserve will be expanded, a buffer zone will be established with the clear protection regime and restrictions, which will ensure the integrity of rare and endangered flora and fauna species. The measures will also reduce the anthropogenic pressure (grazing, poaching) and will improve the efficiency of conservation of Khosrov Forest State Reserve.

3. maintain and sustain the legal regime as a strictly protected area for the Khosrov Forest State Reserve in the future law on the protection of nature currently under discussion in the parliament;

Currently the law on the specially protected nature areas is being revised where the new concept is introduced. When the law is adopted the legal regime of Khosrov Forest State Reserve as a strictly protected nature area or reserve will be maintained.

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. as part of the new management plan, create and fund an awareness and training programme for local people, visitors and members of the staff of the reserve, in particular in relation to the management of litter and other waste, and to the development of sustainable tourism;

An awareness and training programme as part of the new management plan will be implemented. In 2023 working with local communities to better support and protect the environment Khosrov Forest State Reserve SNCO in cooperation with the relevant departments of regional administrations and municipal administrations, public schools, international donors, NGO and other organizations engaged in public and environmental activities, organized several dozen educational visits, fieldworks, seminars on environmental topics for school children and community members from both adjacent communities of Khosrov Forest State Reserve and from all over Armenia within the framework of projects aimed at environmental education and upbringing.

2. secure the Khosrov Forest State Reserve administration capacities in the future, with the support of the Armenian authorities and external donors; provide staff with specific incentives to foster their interest in the preservation of the reserve and its value;

Khosrov Forest State Reserve SCNO is managed with the joint support from the state budget and donor organisation funding such as WWF Armenian, CNF, which help to provide staff with specific incentives like increase in salary or trainings for professional growth, new skills to positively impact current position and career pursuits of employees to foster their interest in the preservation and conservation of the state reserve and its value.

3. assess the state of conservation of the wolf population (*Canis lupus*), both at national level and in the diploma-holding area, and adapt the current legal and administrative regime of protection accordingly; design a “wolf concept” providing a general legal and administrative framework for the management of this species in Armenia, in line with the Bern Convention and the regulation of the European Diploma for Protected Areas.

Annually conducted biodiversity research and monitoring activities of a number of vertebrate species (predatory mammals, hooved animals, birds of prey) including wolves, provide required data about status of the represented species in the territory of Khosrov Forest State Reserve. The state of conservation of the wolf population (*Canis lupus*), both at national level and in the diploma-holding area are assessed by specialists. In 2023 monitoring camera traps installed in the territory of state reserve have periodically recorded wolf packs.

- 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 have not been changes in the management of Khosrov Forest State Reserve and the new management plan is currently being revised. It should be highlighted, that currently the ecotourism activities are managed very effectively in Khosrov State Reserve compared to previous years with the active involvement of tour operators and other companies. As a result the numbers of visitors and revenues have increased in 2023 which is a positive tendency.

- 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.

The borders of Khosrov Forest State Reserve are planned to change after the adaptation of the new management plan. Currently there are no changes. The total area of Khosrov Forest State Reserve is 23.213.5 ha

- 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.

Since January 2018 until now camera traps instilled in Khosrov Forest State Reserve have regularly captured a leopard. The Caucasian leopard subspecies (*Panthera pardus tulliana*) also known as the Persian or Central Asia leopard is common in Armenia. The species is qualified as critically endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and the Red Data Book of Armenia. The leopard is one of the rare and valuable representatives of the fauna of Armenia and its presence in Khosrov Forest State Reserve has an important environmental significance as its protection is currently one of the most important environmental challenges not only in Armenia but also for the entire ecoregion. Conservation of the Leopard in Armenia project has been implemented by the Ministry of Environment in cooperation with WWF Armenia and Khosrov Forest State Reserve SNCO since 2002.

Leopard Conservation National Action Plan 2020-2030 aims to restore population of the endangered leopard, preserve both habitat and main prey species and stabilize ecological processes in the region.

In 2023 monitoring camera traps recorded leopard's footages more than ten times in all quarters.

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

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