

**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 2021

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: Netherlands.

Name of the area: Naardermeer.

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:
Awarded at 5 May 2004, renewal at 21 November 2019.

Central authority concerned:

Name: Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

Address: The Hague, Bezuidenhoutseweg 73, 2594 AC The Hague

Tel: +31-70-379 8911

e-mail: Via <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/contact/contactformulier>

www: <https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-agriculture-nature-and-food-quality>

Authority responsible for its management:

Name: Natuurmonumenten

Address: Meerkade 2, 1412 AB Naarden

Tel: +31-35-6990000

e-mail: f.hijmansvandenbergh@natuurmonumenten.nl

www: <https://www.natuurmonumenten.nl/natuurgebied/naardermeer>

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. *preserve the integrity of the Naardermeer Nature Reserve and avoid, through regional planning processes, further habitat fragmentation within the reserve and in the surrounding landscape; increase the ecological connectivity both within the reserve and between the Naardermeer Nature Reserve and the surrounding natural areas;*

The integrity of the Naardermeer Nature reserve has been further preserved and improved the last year. The Naardermeer Natura 2000 Management Plan has been finalized and the Naardermeer Water Management Plan is reaching its final stage. Next to that, the planned reconstruction of De Schil has made some huge steps forward. After finishing the legal procedure the first development actions will be taken place in 2022.

Some important measures were implemented aiming at reducing the barrier effect caused by the major road A1 that delimit the Reserve towards the Natura 2000-areas Markermeer & IJmeer and Gooimeer & Eemmeer Zuidoever. It's not only about crossing the A1: also the surroundings of the eco-tunnels, the so-called ecological corridors, are planned to be optimized in the near future. Next to that, the railroad has been provided with no less than 9 eco-tunnels in 2019 and have further been monitored and optimized in 2021.

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. *following the withdrawal of the plans for the A6-A9 motorway connection that required the construction of a new stretch of road north-west of the nature reserve, monitor the possible impact on the diploma-holding area and its surrounding environment of the alternative selected route using the existing A1 and A9 highways;*

On-going, no recent developments.

2. *finalise the Natura 2000 management plan and the water management plan including the water level agreement for the Naardermeer Nature Reserve by 2020; if necessary, plan and implement additional management lines to ensure the long-term conservation of the Naardermeer Nature Reserve within the context and requirements of the European Diploma;*

No appeals are made within the legal procedure, which means that the Naardermeer Natura 2000 Management Plan is effective from November 2th 2020. The Water Management Plan including the Naardermeer Water Level Agreement has been approved by the council of the Water Board Amstel, Gooi & Vechtstreek and is now in its final stage within the legal procedure. If all goes well the Water Management Plan will be effective in the first half of 2022. Both plans are vital to ensure the long-term conservation of the Naardermeer Nature Reserve.

Natuurmonumenten, Waternet and the Province of Noord-Holland participated in constructing a new development plan to raise the water levels outside the Naardermeer core area (the part within the dykes surrounding the old Naardermeer). This plan, called development plan "de Schil" (Shell) benefits the growth of reedbeds and its spatial distribution and maintains the amount of water in the Naardermeer for a longer period each year, preventing the water level becoming too low. The western side of the outer Naardermeer is rich on phosphate. Together with a more natural water level and (much) more water this should boost the reedbeds and provide new breeding habitat for a.o. Purple Heron, Bittern, Bearded Tit, Savi's Warbler and Great Reed Warbler. The development plan is integrated in the Natura 2000 Management Plan for the Naardermeer. In 2020 and 2021 the legal procedures have been started to realize De Schil. Due to huge communication efforts of the Province, Waternet and Natuurmonumenten towards all stakeholders only three formal reactions have been submitted. If all goes well the legal procedure will be finalized in the first half of 2022 and will be started with the first developments in the second half of 2022.

3. *by 2020, draw up a development plan for the recently acquired lands within the buffer zone of the Naardermeer Nature Reserve – the Hilversumse Bovenmeent (De Jong grounds) – in order to ensure the full integration of this area into the reserve buffer zone by 2024;*

A development plan for the De Jong grounds has been made as part of the total development plan for the Naardermeer Nature Reserve buffer zone, the so-called "De Schil". According to the latest schedule, nature restoration at these grounds will be realised in 2022/2023 and will be fully integrated in the buffer zone.

4. *before 2029, secure the necessary funding to acquire the remaining areas within the buffer zone which are not yet the property of the Natuurmonumenten organisation. Alternatively, if the current administrative procedures do not allow the necessary land acquisition, ensure that the management of these areas is carried out in collaboration with the authorities responsible for the diploma-holding area;*

Although it was not yet possible for Natuurmonumenten to acquire all the missing lands and this way completing the Naardermeer Recovery Plan, it was possible to buy a large property in the south-western part of the Naardermeer Nature Reserve, the so-called De Jong grounds. The other missing properties, about 20ha in the Overscheense Polder, are mainly in agricultural use. These properties are part of the development plan "De Schil" as mentioned above at Recommendation 2 and 3. The province of Noord-Holland has taken initiative to obtain these last properties and has started negotiations with the owners. This process is still in action.

When obtained the grounds will have to be managed conform the requirements as mentioned in the development plan. This does not automatically mean that these grounds will be sold to Natuurmonumenten. Due to Dutch law the grounds have to be sold in an open process, with the requirements as mentioned in the development plan as binding principles. After realizing the development plan the Naardermeer core area will be almost totally surrounded by new restored nature in 2025/2026.

5. *within the continued monitoring of Bovenste Blik Lake, integrate further research aiming to identify the main reasons for the decreasing water quality in this lake; define and implement appropriate management measures to prevent further water contamination; improve and keep the water quality in this lake at the same levels currently observed in the remaining lakes of the Naardermeer Nature Reserve;*

After study we found out there were two reasons for the high level of phosphate in the Bovenste Blik. First reason was a leaking dam between former agricultural grounds and the Bovenste Blik, which resulted in phosphate rich water moving towards the Bovenste Blik. This leakage has been repaired in 2020. Second reason was phosphate rich sludge on the bottom of the Bovenste Blik. We did extensive research on the location of the sludge, bearing in mind the protected Chara vegetation in the lake itself. We found out that there was a correlation between the distribution of Chara and the location of sludge. The coverage of Chara was much higher at locations where the amount of sludge was at its lowest. To create more suitable habitat for Chara vegetations and to decrease the amount of phosphate-rich sludge a large dredging project has started in 2021. The dredging was very successful and will be finished in December, which is exactly according to the planning. After this the dredging materials will be removed from the Naardermeer before the breeding season of the Greater Cormorants (earliest breeding birds in the Naardermeer) starts. An unexpected bonus was a successful breeding attempt of Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*) at the sludge depots. Black-winged Stilts are rare breeding birds in the Netherlands. A pair managed to raise three chicks successfully, which was a first for the Naardermeer.

6. *initiate studies focusing on the biological control of invasive alien plant species occurring in the reserve and prepare a strategic plan for their mechanical or manual control;*

A strategic plan how to deal with invasive species has been prepared in 2018. Measures as mentioned in this plan have been carried out by volunteers and Natuurmonumenten. It's a living plan: if new invasive species occur they will be recorded in the plan, including the needed measures. This year we've managed to almost eradicate New-Zealand Pigmy Weed thanks to the weekly efforts of our special invasive alien plants-volunteer.

7. *strengthen the monitoring programmes and the conservation measures to guarantee the presence of naturally occurring species newly appeared in the diploma area.*

No special efforts were taken to strengthen the monitoring programmes this year due to covid restrictions. The yearly count of Great Cormorant nests and Purple Heron nests has been carried out. The Purple Heron colony peaked at 111 nests, which is even more than 2020 (105 nests) and is the highest number of nests since 1978! The main reason for this increase is better nesting habitat protection by Natuurmonumenten. By placing an increasing number of nets around the reedbeds geese were not able to feed on the reed, hence stronger reed which is suitable for the herons to nest. In 2022 even more nets will be placed to create more suitable reedbeds for the herons to nest.

Though there has been no obligation this year to monitor dragonflies this year we were very glad to find a small number of fresh Lilypad Whiteface again, a very rare species of dragonfly in the Netherlands which has reproduced for the 3th year in a row in the Naardermeer after its first appearance in 2018.

The Grass Snake monitoring program will be revitalised in 2022. A volunteer has been found and will be trained by RAVON, the national NGO on reptiles, amphibians and fish. On-going monitoring projects contain camera trap research for Otters and other mammals, butterfly monitoring in Laegieskamp and wintering waterfowl monitoring.

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.

No changes.

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.

No changes.

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.

No extra information.