

**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)<sup>1</sup>*

**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:** Ireland

**Name of the area:** Burren region

**Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma of Protected**

**Areas:** 2020, 2 years since the EDPA Award was renewed in 2018 (initially awarded in July 2013)

**Central authority concerned:**

**Name:** The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Dept of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG)

**Address:** 90 King Street North  
Dublin 7  
D07 N7CV  
IRELAND

**Tel:** 076 1002603 or 087 2391264 (Dr Andy Bleasdale)

**e-mail:** [andy.bleasdale@chg.gov.ie](mailto:andy.bleasdale@chg.gov.ie)

**www:** [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)

**Authority responsible for its management:**

**Name:** High Nature Value Services Ltd/ The Burren Programme

**Address:** Old School House, Carron, Co. Clare, V95 K0NA, IRELAND

**Tel:** 065 708 9000 (Dr Brendan Dunford)

**e-mail:** [info@burrenprogramme.com](mailto:info@burrenprogramme.com)

**www:** [www.burrenprogramme.com](http://www.burrenprogramme.com)

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<sup>1</sup> 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. secure a budget from 2022 onwards for the development of a successor programme to the current Burren Programme; share with the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas the details of the successor programme to the current Burren Programme prior to its entry into force;

*The Burren Programme (BP) is funded under Ireland's Rural Development Programme (2014-2020) with 5-year contracts awarded to all (328) participating farmers. Given the delay in agreeing a new CAP, transition arrangements for 2020-2021 are currently being developed by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). These include a provision of an extension of all BP Farmer contracts until the end of 2022 and an extension of the contract for HNVS Ltd who administer the Programme.*

*Details of the successor (2023 onwards) programme to the BP will be shared with EDPA group of specialists, but details will probably not be available until late 2022. In the meantime, positive preliminary discussions continue to take place with DAFM regarding the future evolution of the BP, which remains a flagship programme nationally and internationally.*

**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. prepare an overarching management framework document for the Burren Region diploma-holding area, outlining the various management initiatives and their inter-relationships;  
*An 'Entity relationship diagram' for the Burren Programme (managed by HNVS Ltd) was attached to the 2018 report. There are no updates to this diagram in 2020 with all the actors listed remaining in place.*

2. aim both to increase the quality of the natural heritage and to prevent damage to the cultural heritage in those areas of the Burren Region not included within the three Special Areas of Conservation;  
*Approximately 5% of the BP area is non-designated, Annex I habitat. The quality of the natural heritage in the BP area continued to improve during the reporting period and the BP team continue to ensure that no damage is done to these areas of Priority habitat. Non-designated Annex I habitat outside of the BP is protected under Local Authority plans or through DAFM EIA rules. Any instances of damage being reported or witnessed is reported immediately by the BP team to the Local Authority and/or to DAFM.*

3. work with other stakeholders, especially those involved in tourism predicated on the farm holdings, as well as the natural and cultural heritage, to support communities living and working in the Burren Region;  
*During the past 12 months the BP, with support from The Burrenbeo Trust, planned to work with Grand Circle Tours to bring 120 groups of tourists to the Burren in 2020 to visit one of six Burren farms for a farmer-led walk across the land. BP and Burrenbeo also worked with Air BnB 'experiences' to develop 'farming for nature' visitor experiences. Unfortunately, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, these initiatives had to be paused.*

4. consider the development of further walking trails throughout the Burren Region.  
*There are no current plans to extend trails in the Burren. Burrenbeo Trust and the BP continue to develop and promote farmer-led walks across the Burren but this has proven difficult in 2020 due to the pandemic.*

**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.

*The Burren Programme Team remain in place with 9 staff (6 FTE) working with the 328 farmers in the Programme, farming 23,200ha of habitat. Due to C-19 most staff work in the field or from home, though a staff presence is maintained in the central Burren office during working hours. The Burrenbeo Trust continues its work in the Burren with its 6 (3 FTE) staff, based in the northern Burren village of Kinvara (but mostly working from home). The Burren Geopark Team and Burren Ecotourism Network both continue their work. Two NPWS rangers continue to work in the Burren.*

**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 have been no changes in the EDPA boundary for the Burren in 2020*

**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 Burren Winterage Weekend was held again in October 2020 and included an international conference on high nature value farming, a national 'farming for nature' awards night, and a widely-publicized cattle drive. All of these took place virtually and attracted contributors, and participants, from four continents.*

*The Burren in Bloom festival and Learning Landscape Symposium were also organized by Burrenbeo in 2020, all events took place on-line. Burrenbeo also carried out 10-week heritage-education courses in local schools (8 primary, 2 secondary) and organised monthly heritage walks and a series of Winter talks.*

*The work of the BBT and BP featured in several National TV, Radio stations and in Newspapers in 2020.*

*In mid-2020 the BP successfully submitted an initiative to the CoE on the management of the Burren Region within the framework of the World Forum for Democracy on the theme "Can Democracy Save the Environment?". The BP have been involved in supporting the communication plan for the World Forum by providing interviews and supporting materials.*

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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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