

RESOLUTION ResDip (2008) 1

ON THE REGULATIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN DIPLOMA OF PROTECTED AREAS

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 February 2008
at the 1018th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

APPENDIX 5

MODEL PLAN FOR ANNUAL REPORTS

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2013

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. They should not, without justification, exceed six pages. The report of the year preceding the one in which the validity of the European Diploma of Protected Areas is to be renewed should be more detailed. Any new text or map introducing a change in the situation of the area should be attached to the annual report.

State: Austria

Name of the area: National Park Thayatal

Central authority concerned:

Name: Land Niederösterreich (Province of Lower Austria), Dep. for Nature Protection

Address: A-3109 St. Pölten, Landhausplatz 1

Tel: 0043 2742 9005 14243

Fax: 0043 2742 9005 15220

e-mail: pst.ru5@noel.gv.at

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Authority responsible for its management:

Name: Nationalpark Thayatal GmbH (Ltd.)

Address: Nationalparkhaus, A-2082 Hardegg

Tel: 0043 2949 7005

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e-mail: office@np-thayatal.at

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I. General information

1. Natural heritage (general abiotic description: geomorphology, geology and hydrogeology, habitats, flora, fauna, landscape) — State of conservation

1.1. Environment: changes or deterioration in the environment, of natural or anthropic origin, accidental or permanent, actual or anticipated

The National Park forests are slowly developing towards an uninfluenced ecosystem. The majority of non-native trees has been removed, natural succession is monitored.

A recently planned windfarm close to the National Park might influence both migrating and breeding birds. The project is postponed for further research. The National Park is not called in the planning process, but stated the negative impacts of the planned windfarm on the European Diploma site.

1.2. Flora and vegetation: changes in the plant population and in the vegetational cover; presumed causes

According to the management plan, additional areas with non-native spruce trees have been cleared and left to natural succession, aiming more broad-leaf forest.

1.3. Fauna: changes in the sedentary or migratory populations; congregating, egg-laying and breeding grounds

Research on fish reproduction continued. Spawning of native trout species ongoing. Research work on artificial spawning grounds continued. Sea-eagle breeding in close neighborhood. Mufflons, probably introduced by hunters, are a growing threat on certain habitats.

2. Cultural heritage and socio-economic context

2.1. Cultural heritage

2.1.1. Changes concerning cultural heritage

Not applicable

2.2. Socio-economic context

2.2.1. Changes concerning the socio-economic context

Not applicable

3. Education and scientific interest

3.1. Visitors — Information policy

3.1.1. Arrangements for receiving and informing the public (building, booklets, maps, cards, etc.)

Annual programme 2013 published in January 2013, revised version of school children's program published. Public relation also done jointly with other Austrian National Parks (magazines, TV, events, ...).

3.1.2. Frequentation by visitors and behaviour (number, distribution in time and space)

Approx. 22.000 visitors. High season between May and June and in September. The visitors are obliged to stay on the hiking routes, which are concentrated in the central section of the protected areas. No threats on the environment recorded.

3.1.3. Special visits (distinguished persons, groups, etc.)

Children's University, a privately sponsored German initiative, hosted by the National Park. IUCN Worldwide Transboundary Specialist Group met in the Thayatal National Park for discussion of new definitions of transborder cooperation and other matters. 24 participants.

3.2. Scientific research

3.2.1. Current or completed research (observation, experimentation, etc.; identification or inventory of the species listed in the appendices to the Bern Convention, etc.)

Current Projects

- River ecology and reproduction of the brown trout (*salmo trutta*) (2010/2012 – cont.)
- Game monitoring (2011/2012 – cont.)
- Habitat inventory (ongoing)
- River management (2011-2014; water management authorities from Austria and CZ)

3.2.2. Scientific publications

Reports for internal use only

4. Site description (vulnerability, protection status, ownership, documentation)

4.1. Changes in legislation or regulations

None

4.2. Changes in ownership title (conversion to public property, rentals, etc.)

None

4.3. Extension or transfer, new uses (for example, conversion into total reserve)

Not applicable

5. Site management (management plans, budget and personnel)

5.1. Improvements made

5.1.1. Ecological action affecting the flora and biotopes; controls of fauna

Track mapping (continued, extended to CZ)

Combating neophytes (continued)

ETC project started, Lead partner Czech water administration for the Thaya river; project Partner Province of Lower Austria; other partners National Parks Thayatal and Podyjí. Includes research on the connectivity according to the water framework directive and the European diploma recommendations for both parks.

Working group to reduce the impacts on the fish stock caused by fishery on the Czech side of the river Thaya continued.

5.1.2. Protection against the elements (fire, water regime)

None

5.1.3. Approaches and thoroughfares (paths, roads, car parks, signposting, fencing, etc.)

Maintenance of existing hiking routes.

5.1.4. Field equipment (hides and study facilities)

Not applicable

5.1.5. Waste management

Not applicable

5.1.6. Use of renewable energy systems

Not applicable

5.2. Management

5.2.1. Administrative department: changes made

None

5.2.2. Wardens' department: changes made

None

5.2.3. Internal policing measures

None

5.2.4. Infringement of regulations and damage; legal action

None

II. Influence of the award of the European Diploma of Protected Areas

Recommendations of the European diploma considered in the working programm for the Thaya river (see 5.1.1)

III. Conditions and/or recommendations for award or renewal

Progress with measures taken in order to meet the conditions and/or recommendations defined during the award or renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas.

In the 2008 resolution of the Committee of Ministers seven recommendations were mentioned, which should be fulfilled by the applicant.

1. River ecology
2. Sills across the Thaya
3. The Vranov dam

A bilateral project started in November 2012 (3 years working programme) with special consideration of the water management in the Thaya River and the connectivity (see 5.1.1)

4. Wildlife

There a low number of beavers and the otters in the parks, population monitored regularly. Reserach on the wild cat continued (EU funded).

Research on otter, black stork and sea-eagle initiated for 2014/15

5. Natural and built environment

No changes. Planned windfarm recently postponed for further investigations.

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National Park Thayatal