

**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 2018

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: Scotland, United Kingdom

Name of the area: Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve

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

Year 1 – renewal 4 July 2018

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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.

N/A

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. Make a comprehensive mid-term assessment of the implementation of the Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve Management Plan (2015-2026) in 2020 and revise the relevant parts of the plan as appropriate;

This recommendation is due in 2020 and we aim to complete a comprehensive assessment in that year. In 2018 we have reviewed our operational habitat management plan to bring it up to date. At the start of each year we set targets on the objectives of the Management Plan to ensure they are appropriate and achievable.

2. Prepare a revised management plan, taking an appropriately long-term view based on adaptation to the effects of climate change, by the end of 2026;

This recommendation is due in 2026 and will follow the mid-term assessment in 2020 and the annual reviews of the plan.

3. Ensure the continuance of monitoring of, and research on, the flora and fauna for the conservation of the native species, to derive appropriate performance and conservation indicators, and to assess the effects of climate change;

We have commissioned a detailed assessment of the deer usage and herbivore impacts of the NNR. This comprehensive study will continue into next year. This will inform our habitat management, including our herbivore management without deer fences, on the reserve for the following 5 years. Our adaptive management will help to improve important habitat and species' resilience to climate change.

This year, we have monitored key species such as black grouse and black-throated divers and support volunteers to undertake butterfly and moth surveys.

We have also supported a number of research projects on the NNR this year, including studies on; the effects of woodland expansion on tick populations; research into the drivers of biodiversity associated with scots pine, and the resistance of scots pine to emerging diseases, and; soil functions under stimulated climate change.

4. Devise and implement with local stakeholders a tourism development strategy and a prioritised action plan so that the infrastructure of facilities can be developed for the benefit of both the national nature reserve and the economic well-being of the people who live in the area;

Our visitor centre was visited by a record number of people in the 2018 season with approximately 20,000 visitors, nearly 1,000 more than 2017. Our visitor centre is focused on promoting the NNR, but it also supports wider tourism in Wester Ross, which is vital for the local rural economy. The NNR forms the core of the new UNESCO Wester Ross Biosphere which works to strengthen local economies and connect people with natural and cultural heritage.

We supported a Master's thesis that looked into people's values, perspectives, motivations and behaviours in relation to the Biosphere Reserve.

5. Develop further awareness-raising and educational activities on the role of biodiversity and ecosystem services, particularly targeting children and youths.

This year we have had 11 education visits totaling 122 students. We are working more closely with the local Primary School where the students have been taking regular visits to the NNR. They are growing their own trees from seed collected in our woodland and have been taken through the process in our nursery and following them through the year to see the different growth stages, which helps them understand the work we are doing and the reasons why we are doing it. We have also supported 604 volunteer days, who help us manage the reserve and gain important skills and experiences. Most of our volunteers are under 26 years old. We support regular visits from the Rural Skills group at the local secondary school, who learn outdoor skills. We have also supported 2 student placements at Beinn Eighe, who undertake a year-long placement as part of their studies to get practical experience.

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 to staff or finances. Management continues as planned, with specific information included below in section 5 below.

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.

N/A

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.

This year we have rolled up and removed 3.8km of the high ring fence as we move towards managing deer without fences. This opens up the woodland to deer which are an important part of a natural woodland at low densities.

We repeated fixed point photography which shows the changes in woodland expansion.

16 hectares of new woodland was planted with 14000 locally grown trees from our nursery. This includes areas planted on adjacent estates where we are working in partnership for landscape scale woodland expansion.

40 hectares of plantation woodland was improved through woodland restructuring and deadwood creation.

226.5 hectares of ground cleared from non-native *Rhododendron ponticum*. Including sweeping for seeded plants spreading onto the reserve and the removal of mature plants on land adjacent to the reserve.
