

**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: Austria

Name of the area: Thayatal National Park

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

Year: 2018

Number of years since renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas: 1

Central authority concerned:

Name: Land Niederösterreich (Lower Austrian Federal Government) Department of Nature
Conservation

Address: A-3109 St. Pölten, Landhausplatz 1

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www: www.noe.gv.at

Authority responsible for its management:

Name: Nationalpark Thayatal GmbH (Ltd.)

Address: Nationalparkhaus, Merkersdorf 90, 2082 Hardegg, AUSTRIA

Tel: 0043 2949 7005

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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. Set the minimum flow in the river Thaya/Dyje at as large a level as possible; the present minimum levels of 2.8 m³/sec (summer) and 3.3 m³/sec (winter) should be maintained or increased and become legally enforceable; the flow rate should never be permitted to drop below these minimum rates, except at times of absolute necessity (i.e. during a prolonged drought) which should be on the basis of agreement between the Podyjí National Park (Czech Republic), the E.ON Company and the relevant agencies of national, regional and local government;

Ad 1. Due to the very little precipitation in the year 2018, a generally very dry and hot year in Europe, the water levels in the Thaya river are very low. Also the water reservoirs are suffering under those conditions, especially the Vranov Dam upstream of the National Park, which didn't fill up over the winter of 2017/2018. The long term agreement from the year 2016 is still valid, even though in the dry Summer 2017 an exceptional operation of a minimal flow of 2.8m³/s was granted. But because of the drought also in the year 2018, the responsible river agency (Povodí Moravy s.p.) requested to switch to another exceptional operation mode over the winter 2018/2019. Both National Park authorities discussed this matter and compiled statements regarding this situation in collaboration with the commissions and national, regional and local governments. While the Czech National Park Administration Podyjí granted the exceptional handling under their conditions, the National Park Thayatal also gave its statement over to the Austrian-Czech border river commission, only accepting the exceptional operation if 1) monitoring is implemented to evaluate the outcomes of the low water flow (sedimentation, siltation, oxygen content), 2) other water usages from the dam are presented and evaluated and 3) according to natural occurrences high water events are simulated, slow rises to 15m³/s - 30m³/s for a short period of time, in order to prevent siltation and improve the river sole composition.

2. Pursue efforts to bring the river into "good ecological potential" according to the EU's Water Framework Directive; in achieving this aim the fish population needs to be improved and the presence of dead wood (coarse woody debris) in the river should continue to be encouraged and monitored;

Ad 2. In the current INTERREG-Project "Dyje 2020/Thaya 2020" the fish population and their behavior is being studied by Czech researchers (Výzkumný ústav vodohospodářský) in close cooperation with both National Park authorities. Some fish were equipped with a transmitter by the scientific researches, in order to proof the usage of dead wood in the water by fish. The monitoring is still ongoing but first observations indicate positive results regarding the usage of dead wood by fish in the river Thaya. In order to furthermore support the natural reproduction of the strout, one artificial spawning ground was created in the border river in close cooperation with the National Park Podyjí and Povodí Moravy. This artificial spawning ground, consisting of proper sediments which are otherwise hold back by the water dam, is being also monitored in order to evaluate the effects on the natural reproduction of the strout.

3. Avoid strong surges of water as far as possible, consistent with the safe operation of the Vranov Hydroelectric Plant; every effort should be made by the operators of the Vranov Dam to flatten out the peaks by more gradual build-up to higher flow rates, instead of sharp peaks in the flow rate;

Ad 3. Due to the draught of the year 2018 and the resulting low water levels, the operators of the Vranov Dam did not create any strong surges in the Thaya river this year. The exceptional operation of the Vranov Dam because of the lack of water, was accepted by the National Park Podyjí under the condition, that the high peaks will not overcome more than 15m³/s, only on very rare occasions 30m³/s.

4. Monitor periodically the fish stocks in the river by the national park authorities, in co-operation with appropriate stakeholders; management of the fish stocks can then be agreed on the basis of evidence gathered during monitoring; the results of all monitoring and research, irrespective

of who funded it, should be made publically available so that the data are used for the benefit of all stakeholders;

Ad 4. As mentioned at Number 2, the INTERREG-Project “Dyje2020/Thaya2020” is ongoing at the moment and researches a multitude of river ecological questions, also regarding the fish population, which will provide the National Park authorities with scientific data to properly evaluate necessary future actions. Since some fish are being equipped with a transmitter, the monitoring will provide results about the behavior of the fish in the National Park section of the river Thaya. Based on this data transboundary measures and further research will be implemented. Regarding the fish stocking, data and statistics are being taken about every single In- and Output of fish by the National Park Thayatal. Since the National Park Podyjí is not responsible for the fish stocking in this river section, meetings and discussions will be held in 2019 with the south Moravian fishery association, in order to make fish stocking more coherent. The National Park Thayatal has raised a healthy and regional fish tribe which now only has to be coordinated with the South Moravian fishery association in order to achieve a healthy fish population.

5. Set up, in liaison with the Podyjí National Park, a programme for minimising fishing in the Thaya/Dyje River, with the ultimate goal of ending fishing activities there;

Ad 5. The current INTERREG-Projekt “Dyje2020/Thaya2020”, in which the National Park Thayatal is a project partner and the National Park Podyjí a strategic partner, includes a study on the influence of fishing and activities related to fishing on the protection goals of National Parks with the specific focus on the disturbance on protected species from the activities related to fishing. Therefore the study will work out following research questions: 1. What species, which are found in the fishery areas and around their access routes in the Thayatal and Podyjí National Parks, are sensitive to disturbances caused by the presence of humans? 2. Where are actual or potential localities of those species in the study area? 3. Which activities that are related to fishing have a negative impact on the occurring species and what are the specific disturbances and causes? The final result of the research is a conception of a possible National Park compliant fishery regulation in the National Parks Thayatal – Podyjí, based on scientific research.

6. Evaluate the existing agreement on co-operation between the Podyjí and Thayatal National Parks in view of a possible twinning agreement.

Ad 6. Besides the existing agreements such as the “Statement concerning cooperation between the Nationalpark Thayatal (Republic of Austria) and Národní park Podyjí (Czech Republic)” from the “Agreement on Common Objectives, Sources and Basic Principles of the Management in the NP Podyjí-Thayatal” and the “Agreement on mutual exchange of information from information systems” the National Park administration Thayatal and the National Park administration Podyjí will strengthen and manifest the transboundary cooperation by creating coherent management plans that will be valid for the same time period from 2021-2030. Starting in 2019 the two bordering National Park administrations will begin to work on their management plans in close cooperation and create two management plans that will be very articulated. By including common visions and goals in both management plans the execution of transboundary cooperation will become very present in the daily job of the employees of both National Park administrations. This manifestation will also become very visible for the public, since the management plans will be published on the websites of the National Park administrations.

2. 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. The management of the Nationalpark Thayatal continues in accordance with the annual plans that are derived from the longer-range management plans.

3. 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 since the European Diploma was renewed in July 2018.

4. Other information: List here any other information about the European Diploma holding site which you consider should be provided to the Council of Europe.

None. The European Diploma was renewed in July 2018.
