

**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 2019

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: Republic of Belarus

Name of the area: Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:
2018, 1 year

Central authority concerned:

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Authority responsible for its management:

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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.

1. by 2020, design and adopt a management plan for the long-term conservation of the area which will include strategic aims and targets, an estimated budget and a time frame for its full implementation, as well as a monitoring mechanism for the assessment of the implemented management measures; the management plan should meet international standards and take into consideration the recommendations attached to the renewal of the European Diploma; the draft management plan should be submitted to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention prior to its adoption;

Actual Management plan of the National park was revised in 2015 broad participation of stakeholders for the period of 2016-2020. The development and approval of the new management plan of the national Park will carry out in 2020 and after elaboration it will be directed to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention for adoption.

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. maintain a high level of human capacities and a skilled and professional staff;
No changes

2. increase and secure the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park budget with State resources, so as to be able to continue to manage the diploma-holding area in an exemplary way, as required by the European Diploma regulation;

The amount of budget funding for the activities of the national park in 2019 remained at the level of the previous year.

3. expand the strict protected zone of the diploma-holding area to the historic Bialowieza forest limits and manage this zone in order to preserve and enhance the ecological and biological natural processes which are key assets of the European interest of the diploma-holding area;

The strictly protected zone of the national park cover 58 thousand hectares, which is 80% of the historical Belovezhskaya Pushcha. The rest of the territory is located in close proximity to settlements or is represented by disturbed natural communities. In the near future, a significant increase in the area of the zone is not planned.

4. totally protect the old-growth tree communities and restore and enhance old natural forest all over the historical Bialowieza forest;

Currently, according to the current legislation, 90% of the high-growth forests of the national park are managed without cutting.

5. pursue the efforts to preserve the ecological character of wetlands and to implement an integrated management of water resources;

In 2019, measures to restore the hydrological regime in part of the Dikoe swamp territory (about 750 hectares) by creating a network of dams on drainage channels was carried out, the natural channel of the Solomenka River, which was straightened in the 20th century, was restored inside the strictly protected zone of the national park. Restoration on some other hydrological objects is at the stage of development of project documentation and will be implemented in the nearest years. In the coming years, it is planned to conduct an inventory of all the objects that require work to restore the hydrological regime.

6. pursue the efforts to reduce the red deer population (*Cervus elaphus*) and to remove all winter feeding places from the diploma-holding area (core and buffer zones);

The layout of feeding sites will be revised when developing a new National Park Management Plan and a Hunting Management Project.

7. assess the state of conservation of the elk (*Alces alces*) and design a hunting regime accordingly;

Additional measures to protect the moose will be provided for in the development of a new national park management plan and the National Park Regulation.

8. pursue the efforts to prevent or fight against the spread of invasive alien species in the diploma-holding area, and especially to eliminate *Quercus rubra*, *Solidago Canadensis* and exotic fish;

*An inventory of the distribution of alien invasive plant species in the territory of the National Park was carried out in 2018. The area in which these species are distributed (the Sosnowsky's hogweed (*Heracleum sosnowskyi*) and the Canadian goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*)) amounted to 355 ha. Measures have been taken to eliminate these species - first of all, manual and mechanical mowing, as well as disking of soil on former agricultural land.*

9. create an overall database including performance indicators, covering both natural resources and socio-economic uses and activities in order to ensure the continuous monitoring of the European significance of the diploma-holding area;

10. adopt a clear and sustainable tourism strategy and engage a more active sustainable development policy together with local stakeholders, and if possible with the authorities of Poland, promoting and supporting extensive farming, manufacture and marketing of green products and services, and the preservation and renovation of cultural heritage; include in the forthcoming management plan a specific programme of activities aiming to preserve or restore local cultural heritage, including architecture, local breeds, traditional uses and activities, as well as all other cultural assets of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park and its buffer zone, so as to strengthen sustainable development in the diploma-holding area;

These issues will be reflected in the new National Park Management Plan.

11. ban hunting in the whole Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park territory and minimise hunting pressure in its buffer zone; with reference to the moratorium on wolf hunting established in 2015, and as foreseen in the current management plan, forbid wolf hunting by law on the territory of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park, as well as in the whole historic Bialowieza forest;

In the near future, the practice of hunting management in the Belarusian part of the World Heritage Property will be reviewed, which will be reflected in the new Management Plan.

12. develop a long-term vision for the European bison population and strengthen scientific and technical co-operation with the authorities of Poland in the whole historic Bialowieza forest;

A long-term vision of transboundary management of bison populations will be developed after the results of studies to determine the genetic status of both subpopulations.

13. consult with the International Union for Conservation of Nature Large Herbivores Commission in order to assess whether the European bison in the diploma-holding area require specific conservation measures.

Not carried out

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.

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