COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE
Committee of Ministers
Comité des Ministres

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 ....

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:
2019, 6 (EDPA adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 10 July 2013)

Central authority concerned:

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

Address: 7 Ely Place, Dublin 2, IRELAND

Tel: 076 1002603 (Dr Andy Bleasdale)

Fax:

e-mail: andy.bleasdale@chg.gov.ie

www: www.npws.ie

Authority responsible for its management:

Name: High Nature Value Services Ltd/ The Burren Programme

Address: Old School House, Carron, Co. Clare, IRELAND

Tel: 065 708 9000 (Dr Brendan Dunford)

Fax:

e-mail: info@burrenprogramme.com

www: www.burrenprogramme.com

[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. 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 participating farmers, some of which will run until 31/12/2022. It now appears likely that the new CAP and National CAP Strategic Plan will be delayed beyond 2020 and, as a result, detailed discussions on its content have not yet commenced.

Details of the successor programme to the BP will be shared with EDPA group of specialists, but details will probably not be available until 2022.

In the meantime, positive preliminary discussions continue to take place with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) regarding the continuation 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 2019.
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 and the BP team continue to ensure that no damage is done to these areas.
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.
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;
The BP, with support from Leader, organised courses for local farmers on 'Setting up your own Business' as a way of encouraging and assisting Burren farmers to explore other business options on their land.
The Burrenbeo Trust worked with a US company, Grand Circle Tours, to bring 80 groups of tourists to the Burren in Summer 2019 to visit one of three Burren farms for a farmer-led walk across the land. This was very successful and additional groups are expected in 2020.
In addition, 2-day training courses for public officials were held in 2019 as part of the Burrenbeo Learning Landscape initiative, with local farmers heavily involved in delivering the training.
The BP has provided support to the Burren farming community to explore the establishment of a Beef Producer Group in the Burren.
4. consider the development of further walking trails throughout the Burren Region.
There are no current plans to extend trails in the Burren.
The focus of Burrenbeo Trust and the BP has been to develop farmer-led walks across the Burren. Training has been provided to farmers and several farmers were supported to hold public walks on their land through Burrenbeo's 2019 Monthly Walks programme.

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 6 FTE working with the 328 farmers in the Programme, farming 23,200ha of habitat.
The Burrenbeo Trust continues its work in the Burren with its 3 P/T staff

The Burren Geopark Team (Project manager and F/T Geologist) and Burren Ecotourism Network (who have recruited a new manager) 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 2019

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 tradition of Winterage, which is so central to the management of the Burren EDPA, was recognised by the Irish Government in July 2019 through its inclusion in Ireland's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The Burren Winterage Weekend was held again in October 2019 and included an international conference on high nature value farming, a national 'farming for nature' awards night, and a widely-publicized cattle drove. The Burren in Bloom festival and Learning Landscape Symposium were also organized by Burrenbeo in 2019, all events supporting the local economy and reinforcing the conservation importance of the Burren.

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.

Burrenbeo and the BP hosted a large number of national and international study groups with a priority given to groups of farmers interested in the conservation of their own landscapes. Visitors in 2019 included the King and Queen of Sweden.

The work of the BBT and BP featured in several National TV, Radio stations and in Newspapers in 2019.

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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 Euroean 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