

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: The Netherlands

Name of the area: **Weerribben-Wieden National Park**

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

Award in 1995 Latest renewal 2015. number of years since renewal: 4

Central authority concerned:

Name:	Staatsbosbeheer	Name:	Natuurmonumenten
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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. urge the responsible authorities to adopt the joint Natura 2000 management plan, by the end of 2016, as an official and binding document which will be considered as covering the requirements of the European Diploma;

The Natura 2000 Management Plan was completed and sent to you in 2017 in the previous report. For De Wieden, the budget, which is part of the measures, was set by the Provincial Executive of the Province of Overijssel.

In 2019, Natuurmonumenten started implementing a number of measures from the management plan. Sods were cut to improve the peat moss reed-land; a start was made with converting the marsh woodland into floating vegetation mats (peat moss reed land and floating fens); ditches were dug to restore the hydrology in the drought-promoting and acidifying weather, and the preparation for the digging of a 10 ha bog pit is almost completed. The tender will be submitted at the end of 2019.

The Province of Overijssel has started constructing environmentally-friendly banks for the Large Copper around Dwarsgracht. They have done this together with the cooperation of private individuals and also together with Natuurmonumenten.

Last year, Natuurmonumenten focused on preparing other measures in the Management Plan and we already have an overview of the next Management Plan period. Staatsbosbeheer and the Province of Overijssel are now preparing plans for the restoration of the bog moss reed lands around the Kooi van Pen (decoy) pond. The implementation of the first measures will start in 2020.

2. 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. implement a monitoring programme to evaluate the effects of the new connection between De Weerribben and De Wieden, the construction of which was finished by the end of 2014, at least on important and/or endangered species, considering the exemplary role of the project;

In the winter of 2017/2018, research was carried out with lift traps and photo-trap cameras after the nature bridge had been put into use. Catches revealed field mice, red-headed voles and wood mice in or near the nature bridge. Among the larger mammals, deer, foxes, pine martens and hares were recorded as users of the nature bridge. Particularly special was the sighting of a barn owl flying under the bridge.

2. monitor the further development of fish stocks, with an emphasis on eels, to strengthen the ecological function of the reserves and natural reproduction in line with Natura 2000 requirements;

No additions to the last time.

3. Limit the impact of fishing by defining a maximum number of licenses or limiting the catch; define methods to avoid secondary catches of otter or other species; and ensure the further development of a Management Plan for fish stocks covering all species, as requested in the previous resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma;

Last year, a lawsuit was filed concerning fishing for the almost extinct eel species. Natuurmonumenten lost the lawsuit because the Fisheries Act only tests for effectiveness and not for sustainability. Natuurmonumenten has started a lobby in The Hague to amend the Fisheries Act for sustainability. We will ensure fishermen comply with the terms of the contract, in particular with regard to transparency of catches.

4. carefully observe the development of boating on the Kalenberger Gracht and set limits (for example a maximum number and/or size of boats) or provide for measures in case of increasing numbers of larger boats;

There is no increase in larger boats in the Kalenbergergracht (the nationwide trend that there is a decrease in large pleasure craft is clearly noticeable in De Weerribben). The number of moorings for larger vessels along the Kalenbergergracht and the Heuvengracht has been reduced.

5. continue with the designation of adjoining areas as extensions of, or buffer zones to, the protected areas, especially to the north (Rottige Meente) and south-east (Staphorster Veld), and create a connection between the two separate parts of De Wieden Nature Reserve between the Zuideindiger Wiede and the Bovenwiede;

The Rottige Meente Weerribben connection will be constructed in 2021. The plans for this have recently been changed because, due to the clustering of nature development, the connection can be slightly moved and enlarged. The buffer zone will mainly be set up for the Large Copper, but area adjustments will also be made for marsh birds such as the Purple Heron, the Spotted Crake and the Great Reed Warbler. Once established, Staatsbosbeheer will take over the management of these areas.

There are no developments for De Wieden as yet, but it is expected that this may change as a result of the Sovon research. It appears that the N2000 'Whinchat' target species may have the only chance of success on that location in De Wieden. If the Province of Overijssel decides that this location should be developed for the Whinchat, it could very well become a good ecological buffer zone between the Zuideindiger Wiede and the Bovenwiede areas. Natuurmonumenten will approach the Province with arguments for the implementation of the Sovon plan.

In the spring of 2020, the Province of Overijssel will construct a few fauna passages under the N334 and the N375; this will create a better connection with Staphorsterveld and De Wieden.

6. review contracts with business owners and landowners with regard to habitat management, and especially the duration of these contracts, to ensure that management can be directed by the responsible authorities and to prevent long-term and irredeemable contracts through which the reserve authorities have limited leverage;

No changes compared to last time.

7. observe possible threats which may occur due to the intensification of agriculture, changes in water management or construction of wind farms;

The whole climate-nitrogen and peatland discussion provides many opportunities for reducing the intensification of agriculture in the immediate vicinity. It is not yet known how this will develop. This will play a major role in the coming years and offer opportunities for the Weerribben-Wieden National Park.

8. secure adequate funds to convert the Ossenzijl Information Centre, at least in part, into an educational centre geared towards young people.

For financial reasons, Staatsbosbeheer-National (Outdoor Affairs dept.) has decided to close the current Centre as of December 2019.

The Staatsbosbeheer Overijssel Provincial Unit is making a restart and plans are being worked out with the municipality of Steenwijkerland and with entrepreneurs to build a new European Wetland Centre. Thanks to the integrated approach and the cooperation with the municipality of Steenwijkerland, the Wetland Centre will become a gateway to the National Park, which will contribute to a better zoning and distribution of visitors to the Park and its surroundings. This plan is part of the new vision on recreation and tourism that is currently being worked out by the Weerribben-Wieden Foundation, the TBOs and the municipality of Steenwijkerland.

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 Board of the Weerribben-Wieden Foundation is considering the future and its own role in the area. The Foundation decided in November 2019 not to extend its contract with Director Jurr van Dalen and is now looking for an independent interim chairman for the short term and at the cooperation with the municipality.

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.

Natuurmonumenten has purchased a number of areas around De Wieden to develop for natural purposes. These areas are all within the N2000 (NNN) boundary, so the boundary of the nature reserve will not be extended.

Meanwhile, there are many discussions ongoing about the development and the division of land on the southwest side of De Wieden. The plot will become available in 2021, after which the boundary will be redrawn in some places. In De Weerribben, on the north side, the buffer zone to the nearby Rottige Meente nature reserve will be adjusted in 2021 and the boundary redrawn.

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.

In the meantime, the entire management planning of De Wieden and De Weerribben is now in CMSi and QGIS. The Dwingelderveld, Drents-Friese Wold and Weerribben-Wieden National Parks form a coherent area at landscape level; the water from the more highly-situated Drents plateau flows via the brook valleys to the lowland of Overijssel. In fact, you could say that this is a 'miniature Holland'. All types of landscape are contained in a small area and a rich piece of cultural history is concentrated here.

Talks are on the way with representatives of the National Parks of the Province of Drenthe. There are clear areas of overlap with adjacent nature reserves in the neighbouring provinces. Connection with the region is one of twelve, nationally-formulated conditions for the new standard of a National Park. What can we do together? Where is the common winning factor? Where can we reinforce each other? These are questions that will be central in the coming period.

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.

The answers to the questions below were provided in the 2018 report, because the expert visited in 2018.

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