

**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: ITALY

Name of the area: Sasso Fratino Integral Nature Reserve

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:
1985 first award, 2010 last renewal – 9 year passed

Central authority concerned:

Name: Arma dei Carabinieri – Raggruppamento Carabinieri Biodiversità

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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.

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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. implement the management plan for the Casentino Forests National Park and reinforce co-operation with the national park in order to co-ordinate all the activities, especially in terms of research;
the research activities are carried out within the integral nature Reserve and in the buffer area represented by the casentinesi biogenetic nature reserves, taking care of the coordination with the Foreste Casentinesi, Monte Falterona and Campigna national park and taking into account the indications coming from the park plan.

2. the nature reserve should continue to stand out as the reference for nature protection in the region;
The Pratovecchio Department (Reparto Carabinieri Biodiversità of Pratovecchio) maintained relations with universities and research institutes for multidisciplinary study of the Reserve. In the context of attending conferences, organized directly by the department and through press and television, we proceeded to inform about the characteristics and significance of the integral reserve at regional and national level.

3. care should be taken to ensure that the Sasso Fratino Integral Nature Reserve and the adjacent biogenetic reserves continue to be managed as a cohesive whole;
The Sasso Fratino Reserve and the surrounding biogenetic Reserves are managed by the Pratovecchio Department which pays particular attention to their integrated management. The interventions on the bands of biogenetic nature Reserves bordering Sasso Fratino are very limited or null, the reserves in this sense constitute a buffer zone.

4. special attention should continue to be given to protecting Monte Falco in order to avoid, in particular, the construction of any new ski slopes;
There are no plans to change the state of places or make ski runs.

5. the necessary funding should be provided in order to maintain the very high standard of scientific research;
In the Integral Nature Reserve and adjacent Reserves, research activities were carried out linked to the loans received with the LIFE projects in progress; in collaboration with research institutions and universities and a specific funding was assigned by Carabinieri for the containment of alien species (Procyon lotor) in the area of biogenetic reserves.

6. any further damage in the buffer zone, such as the laying of new roads or significant improvement work on the ski slopes, should be avoided;
No plans to expand existing ski lifts are planned for the future. There are no changes in the state of places in the Reserves adjacent to the Sasso Fratino integral nature reserve.

7. the number of visits should not be increased and they should be restricted to researchers and people with a genuine interest in the site;
Visits to the integral Reserve have remained contained, they are authorized for reasons strictly linked to research and university-level education related to the conservation of ecosystems. To reduce the number of internal presences and to select the type of visitors, without however affecting a total refusal to some groups, alternative routes of considerable environmental interest have been proposed, but outside the integral nature Reserve.

8. the possibility of extending the European Diploma to include the biogenetic reserves should be studied.
The opportunity to extend the European diploma to adjacent biogenetic reserves has been abandoned.

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 change in management during 2019

It should be noted, however, that some trails commonly used for control and access of researchers have become difficult and in one case, due to the landslide, crossing has become dangerous. It is the opinion of Pratovecchio Department that they should proceed to their arrangement (even if minimal) in order to be able to continue traveling safely.

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 reported

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.

Regarding what has been mentioned in point 2.5, it is specified that: n. 1 individual belonging to the *Procyon lotor* species was spotted, monitored and captured in October in the Lama forest within the Badia Prataglia biogenetic nature reserve. The funding obtained will allow the Reparto Biodiversità, using expert faunal biologists, to continue monitoring the situation.

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
No deterioration

6.2. Flora and vegetation: changes in the plant population and in the vegetational cover; presumed causes
No changes were found to the flora and vegetation of the Reserve.
Four small portions of land have been excluded from the action of ungulates since 2008 and in these areas we are witnessing the return of even rare species: *Bryonia dioica*, *Castanea sativa*, *Poa compressa*, *Vicia dumetorum*, *Streptopus amplexifolius*, *Epipogium aphyllum*. With these six species, the contingent of species that vegetate in the Reserve rises to 386 units.

6.3. Fauna: changes in the sedentary or migratory populations; congregating, egg-laying and breeding grounds
Grazing load of large herbivores (deer, fallow deer, etc.) is monitored. Negative effects, inside the Sasso Fratino Reserve and in the external area of the Reserves (burns of young shoots, barking, etc.), and observations, make it advisable to continue the monitoring activity. The territory of the integral reserve is the object of direct monitoring, whose surveys were conducted from 2013 for the deer and from 2019 for the fallow deer (first year of census of this species).

Even this year sporadic sightings of mouflon (*Ovis musimon*) have been carried out, both inside the Sasso Fratino Reserve and in the neighboring areas. For this reason, surveys will be carried out on the presence and spread of this species.

This year, after a few years of interruption, the monitoring activity on the rare feline wild cat in the Integral Reserve and in the surrounding areas resumed.

It is confirmed, among other evidences, the already reported presence of the black woodpecker (*Dryocopus martius* L. 1758). This confirms the role of the Reserve and confirms the validity of the management choices adopted by Pratovecchio Biodiversity Department, throughout the territory of the Casentino Biogenetic Reserves, based on the general respect of all structural types of forest plants, in order to favor the dynamics of increase of biodiversity. Sightings also continued in 2019, both in the Integral Reserve and in the neighboring areas and also in peripheral areas of the Nature Reserves (Camaldoli, Scodella, Campigna, Badia Prataglia, Lama) always managed by Pratovecchio Biodiversity Department.

Sightings of individuals of golden eagle continued. Once again the hypothesis is confirmed that the Golden Eagle has become permanent in the reserve with a nesting pair. Two other couples have been sighted in the biogenetic reserves bordering the Tuscan side.

7. Cultural heritage and socio-economic context

7.1. Cultural heritage

7.1.1. Changes concerning cultural heritage

The UNESCO recognition of Sasso Fratino as a UNESCO World Heritage Site as a member of the serial site "Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe", has made citizens aware of environmental issues and of the importance of forests in relation to climate change. This is to be considered in the opinion of this Department an important change regarding the attitude towards the cultural heritage of this territory. No other changes.

7.2. Socio-economic context

7.2.1. Changes concerning the socio-economic context

No changes

8. Education and scientific interest

8.1. Visitors – Information policy

Use and visits are limited to researchers, students and various stakeholders (Life projects, Public managers of protected areas, Research Institutions)

8.1.1. Arrangements for receiving and informing the public (building, booklets, maps, cards, etc.)

News and data on the role of the integral Reserve are provided at the Badia Prataglia Forestry Museum "Carlo Siemoni" within which, a room was dedicated to the monitoring technique using the Bioacoustics method and to the soundscape of the reserve.

The news about the Integral Nature Reserve is contained in brochures created by the Biodiversity Department currently being printed, and is provided through the aid of cards, brochures, guides, etc. The short film released in 2018 in collaboration with the national park Authority won the *Festival delle Foreste 2019* in Bergamo.

In particular, in the spring and summer period, the Biodiversity Department organized informative and educational interventions on the naturalistic aspects of the Sasso Fratino Reserve and on the surrounding Reserves.

8.1.2. Frequentation by visitors and behavior (number, distribution in time and space)

Only visits of researchers for scientific purposes and educational excursions at university level or with groups of associations defending Nature are allowed. For this reason no behavior and impact problems emerged.

For the year 2019 the following accesses have been authorized:

- **Università di Firenze – DAGRI – 25 students – June 2019**
- **Unione dei comuni della montagna forlivese – 10 persons – July 2019**
- **Fotografo Rivista Gardenia – 3 persons – August 2019**
- **Fotografo Biancarelli – 3 persons – September 2019**
- **Associazione Gruppi micologici Toscani – 12 mycologists – October 2019**
- **Staff Progetto LIFE4OAKFORESTS (www.life4oakforests.eu) – 10 persons (to be carried out on 20 december 2019)**

8.1.3. Special visits (distinguished persons, groups, etc.)

- **Visit by the expert (Dr. Peter Skoberne) of the Council of Europe for the renewal of the Diploma - 35 people (two excursions) - July 2019**

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.)

a_ the following researches are currently underway:

- LIFE14 NAT/IT/000759 "WetFlyAmphibia"- Aimed in improving the conservation status of five population of species included in Amphibians Community interest (*Bombina variegata* declining at national level, *Salamandrina terdigitata* and *Triturus carnifex*) butterflies (*Euplagia quadripunctaria* *, priority species, *Eriogaster catax*) and their habitats, and also the habitat of Community interest 6430

(Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels) within the Natura 2000 sites included in the Casentino biogenetic National Reserves and National Forest Park. <http://www.lifewetflyamphibia.eu/it/>

- LIFE18 NAT/IT/000931 STREAMS, settembre2019-Dicembre2023. Improve the conservation status of mediterranean trout populations *Salmo cettii* through combined actions aimed at eliminating the sources of introgression and improving the quality of the species habitats.

- LIFE 17ESC/IT/001 ESC360 – Monitoring of saproxylic beetles.

- Project Sabiod - Scaled Acoustic Biodiversity - Study of the soundscape in areas with different levels of protection and anthropization -University of Pavia - Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences - Interdisciplinary Centre for bioacoustics and environmental research in collaboration with 'University of Toulon - LSIS.

- Monitoring of fallow deer population.

- University of Torino – Climate changes – Effects on *Fagus sylvatica* ed *Abies alba*. Surveys in permanent areas in the Sasso Fratino integral nature reserve.

b_Researches closed – Elaboration underway

- Analisis of conservation state and dynamic trends of forests of Foreste Casentinesi, Monte Falterona e Campigna National Park (2018-2019) – University of Bologna Alma Mater Studiorum

- Climbing the oldest Angiosperm trees in Europe: exploring how age and size affect beech shape and growth under contrasting bioclimatic conditions at its southern distribution limit” - Project of research aimed to described deeply structure, biomass and growth of oldest beeches of Unesco Site. Collaboration between University of Tuscia – Viterbo, that carry out the mesurements, and National Geographic Society for promotions by mean their own multimedial channels.

8.2.2. Scientific publications

- Gonnelli V., Zoccola A., Ciampelli P., Rossi B., Gelli L., Bertinelli S., Alterini A. & Brandani S. – *Notulae sulla flora del Parco Nazionale delle Foreste Casentinesi, Monte Falterona e Campigna (Appennino tosco-romagnolo) con integrazioni alla flora della Riserva Naturale Integrale di Sasso Fratino*

9. Site description (vulnerability, protection status, ownership, documentation)

9.1. Changes in legislation or regulations

The Reserve has not been affected by legislative measures or regulations that have altered the regime and consistency.

The only change that has been made regards the recognition as a UNESCO World Heritage Site as a component of the Ancient and Primeval Beech serial site.

9.2. Changes in ownership title (conversion to public property, rentals, etc.)

No change occurred for the title of ownership that is still state.

9.3. Extension or transfer, new uses (for example, conversion into total reserve)

- No change occurred

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

- The ecological aspects, characteristic of the area, have not undergone changes or alterations during the period.
No actions are taken to control the fauna in the integral nature reserve or in the neighboring biogenetic reserves (except for the management of raccoon).

10.1.2. Protection against the elements (fire, water regime)

No specific management interventions were carried out within the integral reserve. In the surrounding areas the biodiversity department continued the usual management of biogenetic reserves, according to naturalistic conservation criteria and following the indications of the park plan. In particular, these are silvicultural interventions aimed at eliminating part of the dried, crushed, standing plants that can constitute a danger for the safety of hikers, especially along roads and paths. Basin hydraulic-forestry works have been

carried out by adopting naturalistic engineering method and works for the maintenance of infrastructures at the service of reserves. These operations do not involve any environmental alteration given the conservative character they cover.

- 10.1.3. Approaches and thoroughfares (paths, roads, car parks, signposting, fencing, etc.)
Steps were taken in the surrounding areas to maintain the biogenetic reserve pathways and to maintain and integrate the signs and the tabulation of the integral Reserve and the surrounding areas.
- 10.1.4. Field equipment (hides and study facilities)
The Carabinieri Biodiversity Department of Pratovecchio has made available to researchers staff for the accompaniment and guest rooms located not far from the boundary of the Sasso Fratino integral reserve.
- 10.1.5. Waste management
This aspect, which does not directly concern the integral Reserve but may concern the surrounding areas (biogenetic reserves), does not represent an emergency. Waste collection bins are placed by the Municipalities in the parking areas, starting point for excursions, the workers employed by the forest worksites of the Pratovecchio Biodiversity Department deal, in the rare cases in which the need arises, of collecting waste eventually abandoned and disposed of properly.
- 10.1.6. Use of renewable energy systems
At the moment there is no provision for an efficiency of the energy systems or of the heating systems of the structures located in the biogenetic Reserves or of the service vehicles.
- 10.2. Management
- 10.2.1. Administrative department: changes made
According to the D.L. n. 177 of 08/29/2016 the State Forestry Corps was suppressed and merged with the Carabinieri, transferring the management of the public domain to the Carabinieri Biodiversity Department of Pratovecchio.
- 10.2.2. Wardens' department: changes made
Administrative service: The service is provided by the personnel of the Carabinieri Biodiversity Department of Pratovecchio.
Maintenance service: the service is provided by the forestry workers who work in the sites dependent on the Biodiversity Department
- 10.2.3. Internal policing measures
The surveillance service is entrusted to the Carabinieri Biodiversity Department of Pratovecchio, which uses the "Nucleo Carabinieri Tutela Biodiversità di Camaldoli", whose jurisdiction is the territory of the Reserve. The service is also carried out by the staff of the stations employed by the Carabinieri Department Foreste Casentinesi Park.
- 10.2.4. Infringement of regulations and damage; legal action
No infringement was detected within the Reserve in 2019.
11. **Influence of the award of the European Diploma for Protected Areas**

Strengthens the protection status of the area
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