
Resolution CM/ResDip(2021)2 on the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the National Park Weerribben-Wieden (Netherlands)

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 7 July 2021
at the 1409th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to Resolution Res(65)6 instituting the European Diploma for certain protected landscapes, reserves and natural features, as amended by Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1 on the revised regulations for the European Diploma for Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution Res(95)20 on the award of the European Diploma to the De Weerribben Nature Reserve (Netherlands);

Having regard to Resolution CM/ResDip(2015)2 on the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the National Park De Weerribben-Wieden (Netherlands);

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas on 5 and 6 March 2019 and the discussions at the subsequent meetings of the Group of Specialists on 18 and 19 March 2020 and 24 February 2021;

Having regard to the proposals of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention;

Noting that holding the European Diploma implies maintenance of the area as one of exceptional European interest, the continuance of exemplary management and compliance with the provisions of Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1, especially with regard to the obligations to report annually and to give appropriate visibility to the European Diploma;

Renews the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the National Park Weerribben-Wieden until 3 June 2030;

Attaches the following condition to the renewal:

the development and use of Lelystad Airport should not jeopardise any of the Natura 2000 targets or the quality of the National Park Weerribben-Wieden;

Attaches the following eight recommendations to the renewal:

1. continue to monitor the effects of the connection between De Weerribben and De Wieden on mammals and invertebrates, paying particular attention to lighting conditions, vegetation continuity and water quality;
2. design and implement a management plan for fish stocks covering all species and continue monitoring their development, with a particular emphasis on eels, to strengthen the ecological function of the reserves and natural reproduction in line with Natura 2000 requirements;
3. monitor the trends in boating activity and their impact on fauna; consider limiting the size and number of boats during peak periods;

4. 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;
5. continue with the renovation works at the Weerribben visitors' centre in Ossenzijl and raise the attractiveness of both this and the De Wieden visitors' centre to foreign visitors by introducing texts in English, at least, and preferably also in German and French, at all exhibitions;
6. anticipating the decision of Dutch authorities to adopt a new definition of national parks, ensure that the National Park Weerribben-Wieden complies with the new criteria for national parks and continues to benefit from this designation;
7. avoid any use of burning practices when managing reed lands whenever an alternative, equally effective, management approach is available and compatible with management goals;
8. give more visibility to the European Diploma logo and raise awareness about its aims and objectives on the website of the National Park Weerribben-Wieden, through social media or information panels in visitors' centres.