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**COMMITTEE FOR THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
IN THE FIELD OF BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY**

(CO-DBP)

Group of Specialists– European Diploma for Protected Areas

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**Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve
(Portugal)**

RENEWAL

Expert report by
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*Document established by
the Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage*

The European Diploma for Protected Areas (category A) was awarded to the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve in 1992 and has been renewed regularly since then.

The expert was not accompanied by any members of the secretariat on his visit to the park.

Resolution (97) 19, which was adopted for the previous renewal of the Diploma, appears in Appendix I. Appendix II contains a draft resolution drawn up by the secretariat with a view to extending the validity of the Diploma for a further five-year period.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background information

The Selvagens Islands, which are of volcanic origin, consist of two groups of small islands and are situated in the sub-tropical zone of the north-east Atlantic, 30°10'N, 15°32'W, about 160 miles south of Madeira and 80 miles north of the Canary Islands. The three most important islands are *Selvagem Grande* (245 ha.), *Selvagem Pequena* (20 ha.) and *Ilhéu de Fora* (8.1 ha.). *Selvagem Grande*, which is surrounded by cliffs, rises up to a plateau with an average altitude of about 100m. *Selvagem Pequena* is low and flat, has an irregular shape, and is almost totally covered with calcerous sand except for a huge rock outcrop, which rises into a pinnacle 45m high. *Ilhéu de Fora* is even lower (highest altitude 18m) and is almost totally covered with calcerous sand.

The only inhabitants of the islands are the wardens, who have been posted on Great Selvagens (*Selvagem Grande*) since 1974 and, for the summer months, on Little Selvagens (*Selvagem Pequena*) since 1993.

The whole group of islands is of great scientific importance. They are of considerable botanical interest, particularly *Selvagem Pequena* and *Ilhéu de Fora*, which still hold their original flora, including several endemic Macaronesian plants. More than 10,000 pairs of Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea borealis* (the largest colony in the atlantic) and about 19,000 pairs of White-faced Storm-petrel *Pelagodroma marina hypoleuca* (practically the whole European population) breed on the islands. Three other procellariidae namely, Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis baroli*, Bulwer's Petrel *Bulweria bulwerii* and Madeiran Storm-petrel *Oceanodroma castro* also nest in the archipelago. These, and other facts, including the islands' interesting geology, highlight the importance of this nature reserve, which plays an important role in international nature conservation.

It is most fortunate that the Madeira Nature Park, which supervises and manages the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve, is committed to maintain and enhance the reserve's ecological importance. It is also gratifying to note that most of the original recommendations have or are being implemented successfully.

The Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve was awarded the Council of Europe's European Diploma, category A, in 1992. This was subsequently renewed in 1997 (see Appendix I - Resolution (97) 19 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 30 September 1997 at the 602nd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies). One recommendation was attached to the renewal of 1997, i.e.

- That the necessary measures be taken to monitor the development of non-indigenous species.

The following condition was also attached to the renewal:

- That the Selvagens Archipelago's current status of islands be maintained and that the Madeira Regional Government be supported in its decision to protect them and in all matters concerning the reserve, in accordance with the provisions of Act No. 15/86 of 21st May 1986. The Secretariat of the Council of Europe should immediately be informed of any change of status.

The Group of Specialists - European Diploma of the Council of Europe last met on 1-2 March 2001. On examining the Secretariat's document Annual Report [PE-S-DE (2001) 15] the Group, regarding the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve, Portugal, agreed that no specific points needed adding to the expert's usual terms of reference.

1.2 Terms of reference

The period of validity of the European Diploma awarded to the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve will expire in the year 2002. It is therefore necessary to consider renewing it for a further period of five years. For this purpose, and in accordance with the regulations in force, an on-the-spot appraisal must be carried out to judge whether the conditions of the site are the same as when the Diploma was awarded, or whether they have improved or deteriorated.

The Secretariat of the Council of Europe informed the undersigned that he was entrusted with this task in a letter dated 14 May 2001.

1.3 Details of visit

I arrived at Funchal in the evening of 3 June and was met at the airport by the Director of the Parque Natural da Madeira, Mr Henrique Miguel F.S. Costa Neves, who briefed me about the meetings we were going to have on the following day as well as about the whole programme of the visit to the Selvagens Islands.

The 4th of June was mainly devoted to meetings in Funchal during which, matters regarding the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve, ranging from *inter alia* the wardening of the islands, the transportation by the navy of wardens and supplies, and the ecological importance and conservation work on the islands, were discussed at length. Meetings were held with Commander José António Mota Teixeira de Aguiar, Comandante da Zona Marítima da Madeira, Capitão do Porto do Funchal, with Dr Manuel António Rodrigues Correia, Secretário Regional do Ambiente e Recursos Naturais and with Dr Frank Zino, who for many years played a leading role in the study and conservation of the birdlife of the Madeira archipelago, and whose father, Mr Alexander Zino, was instrumental in the creation of the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve. Before leaving for the Selvagens I also had the pleasure to be introduced to Mr Alexander Zino himself.

The actual visit to the Selvagens Islands took place from 5 to 6 June 2001. The Portuguese Navy Patrol Boat “Zambeze” P1147 left Funchal on the evening of 4 June and arrived at the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve early on the morning of next day. I was accompanied by Mr Henrique Miguel F.S. Costa Neves, Director of the Parque Natural da Madeira, Dr Manuel José Biscoito, Director of the Museo Municipal do Funchal (História Natural), Dr Susana Sá Fontinha – Biólogo and Chefe de Divisão at the Jardim Botânico da Madeira, and Dr and Mrs Frank Zino. A lady from the media, who joined the group to cover the visit, interviewed me regarding the ecology of the Selvagens and the purpose of my visit. Apart from the patrol boat’s crew there were the wardens who were replacing those who were on the islands as well as three uniformed personnel, who were visiting the islands to service the lighthouses. During the voyage and while on the islands I also had the opportunity to talk with some of the wardens, who were noted to be very keen and enthusiastic on the conservation of the islands.

The first day (5th) was spent on *Selvagem Grande* and on the 6th we spent half a day on each of the other two smaller islands *Selvagem Pequena* and *Ilhéu de Fora*. Apart from appreciating at first hand the islands, their fauna and flora and the ongoing study and conservation of the islands, I was briefed continuously on the ecology of the archipelago, about the conservation work that has been carried out and future projects.

On my return from the Selvagens I had the honour to be the guest of Mr & Mrs Alexander Zino and Dr & Mrs Frank Zino, who shared with me a lot of their knowledge on the history and ecology of the Selvagens.

1.4 References

I have gone through various reports and literature, some of which were made available to me by the Secretariat, and by the members of the Group who accompanied me.

The main references in chronological order (apart from various studies carried out on *Calonectris diomedea borealis* by Zino and others) are:

Zino, P.A. (1985) A Short History of the Shearwater Hunt on the Great Salvage and Recent developments on this Island. *Bocagiana* 84: 1-14.

Monod, T. (1990) *Conspectus Florae Salvagicae. Bol.Mus.Mun.Funchal*, Sup.no.1, 116 pp.

Roux, F. (1992) Application of the Salvage Islands nature reserve for the European diploma – Experts’ report (PE-S-ZP(92) 43). Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

Council of Europe (1993) *Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve Portugal – European Diploma Series No. 36*. Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

Costa Neves, H. M. F.S. (1995) Analysis of the Vegetation of the Ilhéu de Fora – Selvagens Islands. *Bol.Mus.Mun.Funchal*, Sup.no.4:505-510.

Roux, F. (1997) *Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve – Renewal – Expert report (PE-S-DE (97) 54)*. Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

Parque Natural da Madeira (1997) *Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve (Portugal) Annual Report for 1997 (PE-S-DE (98) 36)*. Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

Parque Natural da Madeira (1999) *Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve (Portugal) Annual Report for 1998 (PE-S-DE (99) 36)*. Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

Parque Natural da Madeira (2000) *Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve (Portugal) Annual Report for 1999 (PE-S-DE (2000) 36)*. Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

Parque Natural da Madeira (2001) *Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve (Portugal) Annual Report for 2000 (PE-S-DE (2001) 36)*. Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

1.5 Acknowledgements

I would like to put on record my thanks to the persons mentioned in para 1.3 namely:

Commander José António Mota Teixeira de Aguiar and Dr Manuel António Rodrigues Correia, for giving me the opportunity to meet them and discuss matters relating to my visit;

Mr and Mrs Alexander Zino for being generous hosts on my return from the Selvagens and for sharing with me several episodes on the history and ecology of the Selvagens;

Dr and Mrs Frank Zino, Dr Manuel José Biscoito and Dr Susana Sá Fontinha for accompanying me on my visit, for the kindness they showed me and for all the information that they gave me; and last but not least

Mr Henrique Miguel F.S. Costa Neves, for making all the necessary arrangements for my visit, for his valuable company and for answering all my queries without hesitation. The help given to me by his assistants and his wardens has also been greatly appreciated.

2. CONSERVATION SITUATION & COMPLIANCE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Land tenure and legal status

The islands were acquired by the Portuguese Government in 1971 and now are owned by the autonomous region of Madeira. The annual exploitation of mesembryanthemums, orchids, limpets, rabbits and shearwaters ceased after 1967 and upon acquisition, the islands and their surrounding maritime zone were designated a reserve. In March 1978 a regional decree confirmed this status by banning all activities likely to impair the native flora and fauna and the geological and archaeological aspects. Public access is prohibited, except for the purpose of scientific studies and such studies have to be authorised by the Madeira Natural Park. Ships are allowed to anchor only at specific points and for a maximum of 48 hours. Visitors are not allowed to stay on land overnight. Although applying to the whole archipelago these provisions could only be properly enforced on *Selvagem Grande*, but since 1993 and with the stationing of wardens also on *Selvagem Pequena*, proper enforcement has been extended to the other two islands.

At one time there were some apprehensions that the islands could be declassified with the result that, in spite of having their sovereignty retained by Portugal, their territorial waters would be reduced to 12 nautical miles. If this had to occur, the archipelago would end up as a Portuguese enclave in a Spanish zone, with all the difficulties that this situation would entail, most particularly to maintain it properly as a nature reserve.

The Madeira Regional Government has always asserted the fact that declassification of the archipelago should never be taken in consideration, as the exploitation of the Selvagens Islands had ceased solely for the fact that the islands were made a nature reserve in 1971. Furthermore, since then, the islands have always been inhabited by the wardens. The islands are owned by the autonomous region of Madeira, and being of such great natural importance, the local government have decided, and rightly so, to preserve the islands and their important fauna and flora for posterity, rather than exploit them and develop other commercial activities such as fishing and tourism.

The Portuguese Government have so far always supported the Madeira Regional Government on this matter in accordance with the provisions of Act no. 15/86 of 21 May 1986. This support is very crucial and is reflected in the first recommendation attached to the award of the European Diploma in 1992 which emphasises the fact that the Madeira Regional Government should be supported in all matters concerning the Selvagens Islands nature reserve in accordance with the provisions of the Act mentioned above.

2.2 Logistic support from the Portuguese Navy

The Portuguese Navy continues to provide the necessary transport for the relief of wardens, for technicians to carry out maintenance works on the tower light house on *Selvagem Grande* and the beacon on *Selvagem Pequena*, for members of scientific teams and official visitors, for all supplies, including drinking water and food, and for bringing back to Madeira waste and refuse. This transport is carried out by a patrol boat which is assigned with the surveillance of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the islands. The navy is also expected to enforce compliance with anti-pollution regulations in the waters of the Selvagens Islands, although in practice this is indeed very difficult. Rubbish and waste washed ashore is a regular, chronic problem which the reserves' authorities cannot do anything to prevent it happening. The wardens themselves, with great difficulties, make great efforts to collect oil particles and other waste washed ashore.

2.3 Supervision and management of *Selvagem Pequena* and *Ilhéu de Fora*

Wardens continue to patrol *Selvagem Pequena* and *Ilhéu de Fora* during the crucial period from May to November, during which time it would be not impossible to disembark from sea crafts. The two wardens stationed on *Selvagem Pequena* prevent this, otherwise landing from fishing vessels and pleasure sea-crafts would be detrimental to the unique flora and fauna of these two smaller islands, particularly the colony of the White-faced Storm-petrel *Pelagodroma marina* which nests in burrows in the sand covering most of the two islands.

The wardens live in a small wooden cabin on *Selvagem Pequena*. Electricity is provided by solar panels and Radio links are maintained by a VHF radio set. They are equipped with an inflatable dinghy with an outboard motor which helps them patrol and visit the smaller island *Ilhéu de Fora*. Due to the vulnerability of the *Pelagodroma marina* nesting sites, walking is not allowed on sandy areas and the wardens and any official visitors can only walk from the landing place to the wooden cabin on a very narrow path and along the rocky perimeter of *Selvagem Pequena*. On *Ilhéu de Fora* there is no path crossing the island, and wardens only use the surrounding rocky perimeter. The flora and fauna of both islands are very preserved and precautions are taken to ensure that no species of plants and animals are introduced.

The wardens also clean the shores of the islands where rubbish accumulates. That which is combustible is burnt and the rest (such as metal and glass) taken away. Since stationing the wardens on *Selvagem Pequena* the number of breeding pairs of Cory's Shearwaters *Calonectris diomedea*

borealis have increased. Unfortunately some pairs (ca. 10) of Yellow-legged Gull (Atlantic form) *Larus cachinnans atlantis* were breeding on *Ilhéu de Fora*. This species is not indigenous to the Selvagens. The few nests that we found were littered with remains of *Pelagodroma marina*. These gulls tend to learn very quickly that storm petrels are easy prey even though the latter come to land at night. Their presence will be detrimental to the population of the *Pelagodroma marina* breeding on the islands. My suggestion is that they should not be allowed to settle and breed on the islands.

Eleven species of flora are endemic to the Selvagens and most of these are found on *Selvagem Pequena* and *Ilhéu de Fora*. The vegetation of these two islands is composed of native plants, the populations of which are stable and healthy. No weeds were noted present.

2.4 Management of Selvagem Grande

2.4.a The wardens and official visitors' residence

The presence of the wardens on Selvagem Grande is indispensable. The management and conservation of the whole group of islands rely heavily on them. It is therefore very commendable the fact that their living quarters, as well as the adjoining accommodation for visitors, are excellently maintained and quite comfortable, considering the hostile natural environment of the islands. This is a credit to the Madeira Nature Park management as well as to the wardens themselves who carry out most of the work and maintenance of their residence. The place is kept clean and the whole system has an excellent waste management. Most of the things brought to the Selvagens are recyclable and the material which cannot be re-used and is not combustible is taken back to Madeira. Rainwater is collected into a cistern which can hold 65,000 litres and electricity is provided by the use of solar panels. The wardens on Selvagem Grande are also equipped with an inflatable dinghy and an outboard motor. In 1998 improvements were made in the electrical solar system by the Laboratório Regional de Engenharia Civil and a new Single Side Band radio which provides capacity to make phone calls to Madeira, sponsored by Portugal Telecom, was installed. In 1999 the wardens department was reinforced with 5 new wardens, and a weather station (11th recommendation) was installed.

2.4.b Alien species – *Nicotiana glauca*, *Oryctolagus cuniculus* and *Mus musculus*

The Tobacco plant was introduced on *Selvagem Grande* in the 19th century and in some parts of the island, particularly on the plateau surface, covered relatively large areas. One of the recommendations attached to the award was to control the development of this plant on certain areas. This is being carried out successfully. However if *Nicotiana glauca* is totally eliminated, the rabbits and the mice, which also feed on tobacco plants (mice *Mus musculus* had multiplied to such extent that after summer, when there is no other food source, they began attacking the tobacco plants), may pose various problems. So the management of the Natural Park of Madeira has a plan of the eradication of these two rodent species in the shortest time frame possible during that period when the elimination of the tobacco plant is nearly complete.

The Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* was introduced on *Selvagem Grande* a very long time ago, and although it does not prefer to touch certain species of flora, such as *Suaeda vera* and *Lobularia canariensis*, must have had a considerable impact on the original flora. This was proven when 2 plots of enclosed land were established on the plateau for the purpose of studying how plants can regenerate if they are inaccessible to rabbits. So the total elimination of the rabbits would help the regeneration of the original flora.

Mice *Mus musculus* are detrimental to the chicks of the small petrel species which nest underground and in rubble walls. Their eradication, which is far from an easy task, is therefore desirable.

2.4.c The Drystone Rubble Walls

One of the interesting features of *Selvagem Grande* is provided by ancient drystone rubble walls, which are found on the plateau surface. These were probably built to prevent the soil from erosion.

Some of them have regular square-shaped holes seemingly built to provide nesting sites to the Cory's Shearwaters. These rubble walls also provide nesting sites to the small petrel species. In fact one of the recommendations attached to the award was to rebuild the drystone rubble walls, referred to as dykes in previous reports, of the plateau. The restoration of these walls would greatly benefit the breeding sea birds, particularly the small petrels.

3. RESEARCH, ADVOCACY & PUBLIC ACCESS

3.1 Research

Since the Diploma's renewal in 1997 various research programmes on the flora and fauna and other related subjects of the islands have been carried out. Some of these are ongoing projects. These include *inter alia*:

- the monitoring of the breeding seabirds, particularly *Calonectris diomedea* and *Pelagodroma marina* and control of the Yellow-legged gull *Larus argentatus atlantis* by the Parque Natural da Madeira.
- A study of demographic parameters of *Calonectris diomedea* - mate and nest-site fidelity, age of first breeding, survival of adults, and non-breeding years by the Natural History Museum of Paris.
- The use on non-intrusive techniques on the study of breeding marine birds by Instituto da Conservação da Natureza.
- Contribution for the geological characterisation of *Selvagem Grande* by the Oceanographic Boat *Poseidon*.
- Quantitative evaluation of rabbit impact on the natural flora on *Selvagem Grande* by the Parque Natural da Madeira.
- Investigation of the control of the invasive Tobacco plant *Nicotiana glauca* by a scientist from the University of Sheffield, to whom samples of roots were made available.
- Monitoring of the long-spine sea urchin *Diadema antillarum* by Dr. Eeleco Leemans from the Netherlands with the collaboration of the Parque Natural da Madeira.
- Geological research on the Volcanic Evolution of the Madeira Archipelago – Geomar Research Center.
- Macaronesia 2000 Expedition with specialists from various fields.
- Satellite tracking of the Cory's Shearwater during incubation and migration carried out by the Parque Natural da Madeira, the Municipal Museum of Funcha and Frank Zino

3.2 Scientific Publications (in chronological order)

- Mougin, J.L. (1996) Croissance et alimentation chez le poussin de Pétrel-frégate *Pelagodroma marina* de Selvagem Grande (30°09'N, 15°52'W), *Boletim do Museu Municipal do Funchal*. No. XLVIII, Arts.264-272.
- Mougin, J.L., Granadeiro, J.P. et Oliveira, P. (1996) L'évolution des effectifs des reproducteur chez le Puffin cendré *Calonectris diomedea borealis* de Selvagem Grande (30°09'N, 15°52'W),- de 1992 à 1995. *Boletim do Museu Municipal do Funchal*. No. XLVIII, Arts.264-272.
- Mougin, J.L., Defos du Rau, P. Jouanin, CHR., Mougin, M.-C., Roux, F. et Seconzac, M. (1996) Croissance et alimentation chez le poussin du Puffin cendré *Calonectris diomedea borealis* de Selvagem Grande (30°09'N, 15°52'W),- de 1992 à 1995. *Boletim do Museu Municipal do Funchal*. No. XLVIII, Arts.264-272.
- Batista-Marques, M.I., Carvalho, J.A. & Neves, H.C. (1998) Restoration of the Selvagem Grande – reintroduction of indigenous plant species and exclusion of a weed, *Nicotiana glauca* Graham by VA Mycorrhizal Fungi. Presented on the III Symposium of Atlantic Fauna & Flora, Ponta Delgada, Açores.
- Campos, A.C. (1998) Biologia de reprodução do calcamar *Peladogroma marina* na Selvagem Grande, probation report on applied biology in land animal resources Faculdade de ciências de Lisboa.

- Granadeiro, J.P., Burns, M.D. & Furness, R.W. (1998) Patterns of activity and burrow attendance in Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea* as revealed by a novel logging technique. *Ibis* 140:458-466.
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- Mougin, J.L. (1998) factors affecting egg dimensions and breeding success in the Cory's shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*) of Selvagem Grande. *J. Ornithol.* 139:179-184.
- Mougin, J.L. & Mougin, M.C. (1998) Les profondeurs maximum atteintes en plongée par le Puffin Cendré *Calonectris diomedea* au cours des ses voyages alimentaires de la periode d'incubation. *Ver.Ecol.(Terre Vie)* vol. 53:69-76.
- Nogales, M.M. López, Jiménez-Asensio, J., Larruga, J.M., Hernández, M. & Gonzáles, P. (1998) Evolution and Biogeography of the genus tarentola (Sauria:Gekkonidae) inferred from mitochondrial DNA sequences. *J. Evol. Biol.* 11:481-494.
- Carvalho, J.A., Vargas P. & Batista-Marques, M.I. (1999) Diversity, endemism and evolution of Madeira and selvagens Islands flora. Presentation at the XVI International Botanical Congress, St. Louis, Missouri, August 1999.
- Batista-Marques, M.I., Carvalho, J.A. & Neves, H.C. (1999) Vesicular-arbuscular (VA) mycorrhizal fungi and control of *Nicotiana glauca* Graham, an infestant on Selvagem Grande. Poster presented at the XVI International Botanical Congress, St. Louis, Missouri, August 1999.
- Batista-Marques, M.I., Carvalho, J.A. & Neves, H.C. (1999) Control of *Nicotiana glauca* Graham by vesicular-arbuscular (VA) mycorrhizal fungi on Selvagem Grande, Madeira, Portugal. I Encontro de Invasoras lenhosas, Gerês, Novembro, 1999.
- Monteiro, L.R., Granadeiro, J.P., Furness, R.W. & Oliveira, P. (1999) Contemporary patterns of mercury contamination in the Portuguese Atlantic inferred from mercury concentration in seabird tissues. *Marine Environmental Research* 47:137-156.
- Oliveira, P. (1999) A conservação e gestão das aves do arquipélago da madeira. Parque Natural da Madeira.
- Oliveira, P. & Zino, F. (1999) La Conservacion de las aves del archipélago de Madeira y Selvagens. Proceedings de las XV Jornadas ornitologicas de espanha, tenerife. Novembro 1998.
- Siva, M.C. & Granadeiro, J.P. (1999) Genetic variability and isolation of Cory's Shearwater colonies in the Northeast Atlantic. *The Condor* 101:174-179.
- Carvalho, J.A., Vargas, P., Batista-Marques, M.I. & Culham, A. (2000) Endemism, Evolution and Conservation of the flora from the Arquipelagos of Madeira and Selvagens. Presentation at the II Jornadas Florestais Insulares (Laurissilva da Madeira – Património Mundial) Congress, Funchal, Madeira. 6-9 September 2000.
- Batista-Marques, M.I., Carvalho, J.A., Silva M.L. & Neves, H.C.(2000) Efeitos de um Herbicida Orgânico e de 'Ecoplug' no Controlo de uma Infestante, *Nicotiana glauca* Graham *in situ*. Presentation at the II Jornadas Florestais Insulares (Laurissilva da Madeira – Património Mundial) Congress, Funchal, Madeira. 6-9 September 2000.
- Batista-Marques, M.I., Carvalho, J.A. & Neves, H.C. (2000) Interaction between Mycorrhizal Vesicular-arbuscular (VA) and *Nicotiana glauca* Graham on Selvagem Grande, Madeira, Portugal. Poster Presentation at the II Jornadas Florestais Insulares (Laurissilva da Madeira – Património Mundial) Congress, Funchal, Madeira. 6-9 September 2000.

3.3 Advocacy

Since 1997, five television programmes by the national television (RTP) and 1 by the German NDR about the importance of the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve were produced and broadcasted, and since 1998 information to visitors was supplemented by brochures and T-Shirts. The first regatta, with the participation of five sailing boats, took part from Funchal to the Selvagens and was organised by the Parque Natural da Madeira to arouse nature conservation awareness.

3.4 Public Access

During the 4-year period, 1997-2000 permits were issued to 333 sailing boats to visit the reserve involving 1,308 visitors. Each permit was valid for 48 hrs and visitors were not allowed to stay overnight on shore. During this period there were many official visits by several distinguished persons including:

- Deputies from the National Defence Commission of the Republic Assembly;
 - The representative of the Regional Government, Mr Secretario Regional do Equipamento Social;
 - Recognised ornithologists and naturalists from the Natural History Museum of Paris and from the Instituto da Conservação da Natureza (ICN) of Lisbon;
 - The Madeiran representative of BirdLife International;
 - Representatives of Deputies of the Socialist Party of the Regional Parliament of the Autonomous Region of Madeira;
 - The Ministry of the Portuguese Republic in the Autonomous Region of Madeira;
 - The Commander of the Portuguese Navy in Madeira; and
 - The Secretary of the Human Resources of the Regional Government of Madeira.
- The Director of the Parque Natural da Madeira also visits the reserve regularly.

3.5 Infringements

Various infringements of regulations have occurred during the 4-year period 1997-2000. The islands were flown over several times on 24 September 1997 by three Spanish military aircraft. These were reported to the regional and national civil and military authorities. There were at least 5 other occasions when foreign military aircraft were flown over the islands. Some civil aircraft have also been noted flying over the islands. In 1998 a Portuguese fishing boat was caught illegally with 50 Cory's Shearwaters captured at sea and the crew was taken to court.

4. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

All the original recommendations have either been adopted or their adoption is being fulfilled. The Parque Natural da Madeira has been consistent in upholding and maintaining the standards of the reserve. The Madeira Regional Government is giving the required support to the Parque Natural da Madeira, financing staff recruitment and operational costs. The assistance of the Navy, which is indispensable for the transport and provision of supplies, has always been given to the PNM and this is highly commendable.

The Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve is of great international, ecological importance and, in my view, the Portuguese Government should further give support to the Madeira Regional Government by starting the process of having the islands declared a World Heritage Site. I have no hesitation in recommending the renewal of the European Diploma. It should however attach once again the recommendation:

That the Portuguese Government continues to take the necessary steps to preserve the current islands status of the Selvagens Islands and to unequivocally support the Madeira Regional Government in all matters concerning the nature reserve, in accordance with the provisions of Act No. 15/86 of 21 May 1986.

The Parque Natural da Madeira is encouraged to continue its excellent programme for the maintenance of the reserve and for the fulfilment of all the original recommendations. Further efforts should be made to prevent the *Larus cachinnans atlantis* to breed on the islands, particularly on *Selvagem Pequena* and *Ilhéu de Fora*, and to give an impetus to the restoration of the drystone rubble walls on *Selvagem Grande*.

Joe Sultana
July 2001

Appendix I
RESOLUTION (97) 19
CONCERNING THE RENEWAL OF THE EUROPEAN DIPLOMA
AWARDED TO THE SELVAGENS ISLANDS NATURE RESERVE
(PORTUGAL)

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 30 September 1997

at the 602nd 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 (65) 6 instituting the European Diploma;

Having regard to Resolution (92) 18 awarding the European Diploma to the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve;

Having regard to the proposals of the Bureau of the Committee for the activities of the Council of Europe in the field of biological and landscape diversity,

Renews the European Diploma in category A, awarded to the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve until 18 May 2002;

Attaches to the renewal the following condition:

that the Selvagens Archipelago's current status of islands be maintained and that the Madeira Regional Government be supported in its decision to protect them and in all matters concerning the reserve, in accordance with the provisions of Act No 15/86 of 21 May 1986. The Secretariat of the Council of Europe should immediately be informed of any change in status;

Attaches to the renewal the following recommendation:

that the necessary measures be taken to monitor the development of non-indigenous species.

Appendix II

Draft Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas to the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve (Portugal)

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

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 instituting the European Diploma for Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution (92) 18 awarding the European Diploma for Protected Areas to the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve;

Taking into consideration the expert's report submitted to the Group of Specialists – European Diploma for Protected Areas at its meeting on 28 and 29 January 2002;

Having regard to the proposals of the Committee for the activities of the Council of Europe in the field of biological and landscape diversity (CO-DBP);

Renews the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve until 18 May 2007;

Attaches to the renewal the following condition:

- that the Portuguese Government continues to take the necessary steps to preserve the current islands status of the Selvagens Islands and to unequivocally support the Madeira Regional Government in all matters concerning the nature reserve, in accordance with the provisions of Act No. 15/86 of 21 May 1986.