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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
TO PROVIDE INTELLECTUAL PRO BONO SERVICES TO
THE EUROPEAN DIPLOMA FOR PROTECTED AREAS**

*Document prepared by
the Directorate of Democratic Participation*

Background

The [European Diploma for Protected Areas](#) is a prestigious international award granted since 1965 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. It recognises natural and semi-natural areas and landscapes of exceptional European importance for the preservation of biological, geological and landscape diversity and which are managed in an exemplary way.

Protected areas may receive the diploma for their outstanding scientific, cultural or aesthetic qualities, but they must also be the subject of a suitable conservation scheme. Since its creation in 1965, 74 protected areas have been granted the European Diploma. They are located in 29 European countries, both member and non-member states of the Council of Europe.

The Diploma is awarded for an initial period of five years. It may be renewed for a period of 10 years, renewable for successive 10-year periods.

The Diploma has a unique supervisory mechanism. An annual report must be sent to the Council of Europe by the authorities responsible for the management of each Diploma holding area and aimed to present the actions and measures taken by the managing authorities over the past year in order to comply with the recommendations and/or conditions attached to the European Diploma.

The year before the validity of the European Diploma is about to expire or in the event of a serious threat to an area or a substantial deterioration of the site, an on-the-spot appraisal may be decided by the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas and conducted by independent experts.

The on-the-spot appraisal visit reports are examined by the Group of Specialists and ground its decisions for renewing the European Diploma or for keeping areas under scrutiny.

The present open call aims to identify experts to assist the Secretariat of the Bern Convention in monitoring the European Diploma for Protected Areas.

The Council of Europe will select, through this procedure, a maximum number of 25 experts, provided enough offers meet the criteria. The validity of the pool of experts resulting from the selection procedure will end on 31 December 2024 and may be prolonged if there is a need for it.

The Council of Europe will conclude a collaboration agreement with each chosen expert. Whenever the Council of Europe requires the assistance of an expert, the Organisation will select an expert from the pool of experts that seems to be the best suited for the assignment. Please be advised that the conclusion of a collaboration agreement does not entitle the experts to an assignment.

Expected services

- Carry out 2-3 monitoring visits per year and prepare monitoring reports within the framework of the European Diploma for Protected Areas;
- Provide advice to the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas on the extent to which areas monitored comply with requirements of the European Diploma;
- Provide advice to the Secretariat in drafting resolutions awarding or renewing the European Diploma.

Fees

Applicants are informed that their provision of intellectual services to the monitoring of the European Diploma is pro bono and will not be paid. Only travel and subsistence expenses will be reimbursed according to the rules of the Council of Europe.

Exclusion criteria

Applicants shall be excluded from participating in the open call if they:

- have been sentenced by final judgment on one or more of the following charges: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, money laundering, child labour or trafficking in human beings;
- are in a situation of bankruptcy, liquidation, termination of activity, insolvency or arrangement with creditors or any like situation arising from a procedure of the same kind, or are subject to a procedure of the same kind;
- have received a judgment with res judicata force, finding an offence that affects their professional integrity or serious professional misconduct;
- do not comply with their obligations as regards payment of social security contributions, taxes and dues, according to the statutory provisions of their country of incorporation, establishment or residence;
- are retired staff from the Council of Europe

Eligibility criteria

- A Master's degree in one of the following fields: biodiversity conservation, environmental law, environmental management, ecology, protected areas and sustainable development, natural resources management;
- Proven record of at least 5 years' professional experience in environmental protection and management at the international level;
- Professional fluency in oral and written English (level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

Only applications submitted in English shall be deemed eligible.

If there are more than 25 eligible candidates, each candidature will be evaluated against the following award criteria. Each criterion will be assessed by awarding between 0 and 5 points. The 25 candidates with the highest number of points will be admitted to a pool of experts.

Award criteria

- Proven thematic knowledge and related experience (30 % weighting)
- Proven record of professional experience in monitoring mechanisms (30 % weighting)
- Proven previous experience working in the context of the Bern Convention (20 % weighting)
- Ability to write clearly and concisely (20 % weighting)

Documents to be provided

- A signed declaration of honor in English stating that the applicant does not fall under any of the of exclusion criteria;
- A motivation letter in English, demonstrating experience and expertise required;
- A detailed CV, preferably in Europass Format, demonstrating clearly that the applicant fulfils the eligibility criteria;
- A writing sample (recent published article, legal expertise, report or opinion in English);
- Three relevant references, from current or previous employers or clients (name, surname, title, phone number or e-mail).

The Council of Europe reserves the right to reject incomplete applications.

Your application should be sent by email to the following europaen.diploma@coe.int before midnight (CET) on Monday 3 May 2021.

Please send any questions you may have by 26 April 2021 to the following marc.hory@coe.int. You will receive a reply at the latest by 30 April 2021.