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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**

**29-30 March 1999**

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**Teberda National Biosphere Reserve  
(Russian Federation)**

**Renewal**

**Appraisal report**

*by*

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**(Switzerland)**

The Secretariat did not accompany the expert on his visit.

Appendix I contains Resolution (94) 23 on the award of the European Diploma; in Appendix II, the Secretariat presents a Draft Resolution for a possible renewal in 1999.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The European Diploma, Category A, was awarded to the Teberda National Biosphere Reserve on 5 September 1994. The expert visited the Reserve on 7, 8 and 9 July 1998 with a view to the renewal of this diploma, scheduled for 1999.

This visit proved an opportunity to meet the director of the reserve, Mr Dzhapar S. Salpagarov, the deputy-directors, a number of wardens, the scientific staff of the reserve and a staff delegation. It was possible to see the Arkhiz region, which lies in a relatively distant valley and part of the buffer zones newly established around the core area.

Mrs Eugenia A. Parnasova, of the Department responsible for the management of natural reserves, State Committee for the protection of the environment, accompanied us and gave us the benefit of her linguistic skills and her excellent knowledge of the protected areas.

The situation of the protected area was discussed before the visit with Mr Amirkhan M. Amirkhanov, Deputy Minister for the protection the environment, Mrs Dobrynina, of the international relations department and Mr Picheliev, Deputy-director of the Department responsible for the management of natural reserves and, after the visit, Mr Yuri A. Platonov, Deputy-director of international relations.

The visit was organised perfectly. We wish to express out sincere thanks to the many people who made this assignment so fruitful and enjoyable and to Mr Salpagarov and his assistants for their warm hospitality and their availability.

NB: In Russian, the name of the site is the Teberdinsky Reserve (adjectival form of Teberda). For practical reasons we have kept the name used when the European Diploma was awarded (Teberda in English, Téberda in French).

## **2. SITUATION AND VALUE OF THE RESERVE**

The reserve is located in the Republic of Karachevo-Cherkessia. It occupies the upper valley of the Teberda river, on the northern side of the Great Caucasus. There is a separate site (Arkhyz) in the Kizgich canyon. The altitude ranges from 1,260 to 4,047 m and 95 % of the area of the reserve is over 2,000 m above sea level. The average temperature is  $-7^{\circ}$  in January and  $22.7^{\circ}$  in July. Annual rainfall is some 700 mm, with no dry season. The coordinates of the centre are:  $43^{\circ}30'N$ ,  $41^{\circ}45' E$ .

All the rocks are Precambrian (granites, gneiss, amphibolites and schists). There are moraines and fluvio-glacial or alluvial deposits on some valley floors. The southern boundary of the reserve follows the ridge of the Great Caucasus. The main river, the Teberda, has some thirty tributaries. There are a hundred or so mountain lakes scattered throughout the reserve.

The exceptional interest of the site stems from the following:

- Diversity and quality of the very diversified mountain habitats that have been protected for a long time. The Caucasus being at the convergence of many influences, the region contains species of local, eastern, Arctic and Mediterranean origin and vestiges of the glacial period.
- Great variety of species and presence of many rare species. The flora include 1,260 species, of which 235 are endemic to the Caucasus. The fauna include several rare or vulnerable species of large mammals, birds and insects.

- Magnificent landscape: peaks of over 4,000 m, many glaciers, impressive falls, mountain lakes, wild torrents and the diversity of the vegetation combine to make a landscape of exceptional beauty.

In addition, the Reserve protects water resources that permit the irrigation of very large areas of agricultural land in the neighbouring plains.

### **3. ADMINISTRATION**

The director of the reserve is directly responsible to the State Committee for the protection of the environment of the Russian Federation.

The resources available barely suffice for the minimal functioning of the reserve, which is partly self-financing, as it manages herds, crops, greenhouses, garages, workshops, guest house, etc. The resources are very limited, which considerably complicates the routine management of the reserve and the scientific research. For the past three years only the, very low, salaries have been assured. The Republic of Karachevo-Cherkessia makes a limited voluntary contribution to operating expenses. Entry fees and visitors' permits are another source of very modest financing.

The situation is all the more serious in that basic installations of the reserve, in particular the headquarters, are rather large and therefore generate substantial maintenance costs.

### **4. MANAGEMENT**

#### **4.1 General**

The Teberda reserve is a "zapovednik", a strict reserve, where scientific research has been carried out regularly even since its creation, the results being entered in the annals each year.

There are therefore virtually no interventions in the central zone and only limited improvements in the peripheral zones. The reserve is very largely left to its natural evolution. The only improvement work, apart from the visitor facilities and a few paths for rambblers, is the maintenance of a network of paths for the wardens and some tracks to facilitate access in the event of forest fires. The wardens' main tasks are regular scientific monitoring and trying to prevent poaching.

#### **4.2 Zoning**

A distinction is made between:

- The reserve itself, covering 84,996 ha (including the Arkhyz area, which is separate).
- The development zones of the towns of Teberda and Dombai, with their tourist facilities, which cover about 1% of the total area.
- A buffer zone, up to 5 km wide, established by a decision of the Karachevo-Cherkessia Government of 20 June 1998. This zone protects the boundaries of the Reserve. It is also used for activities typical of biosphere reserves, such as improved environmental management and the restoration or maintenance of populations of interesting animal and vegetable species. It extends along most of the frontier with Georgia and thus links the two parts of the Teberda reserve.

- The Dausky national refuge of 100,000 ha, which protects the reserve to the northeast.

It should be noted that a protection zone has also been established in the Abkhaze region, on Georgian territory. This is a fine example of international collaboration.

The project for a national park to cover all of the southern part of the Karachevo-Cherkessia Republic, with the aim of both protecting the local natural environment and opening up opportunities for developing tourism, has been shelved due to the lack of resources.

#### 4.3 Fauna

There are sizeable populations of several large mammals in the reserve: *Ursus arctos*, *Lutra lutra*, *Felis lynx*, *Capra sibirica*, *Rupicapra rupicapra caucasica*, *Cervus elaphus maral*, *Sus scrofa*, *Bison bonasus* (reintroduced in the Kizgich valley, in the Arkhyz area), and there is a small population of *Canis lupus*.

The birds include in particular *Gypaetus barbatus*, *Gyps fulvus*, *Aquila chrysaetos*, *Tetraogallus mlokosiewiczii*, *T. caucasicus*. It should be noted that the scientists of the reserve coordinate most of the ornithological observations in the Caucasus.

Among the reptiles we would mention *Vipera ursini*, and among the insects *Carabus caucasicus*, *Rosalia alpina*, *Parnassius apollo*, *P. nordmanni*, *P. mnesmosyne*, *Erebia melancholica*, *Polymattus terberdinus*

The more widespread presence of firearms in the region has led to more poaching, mainly for the purpose of making large mammal hunting trophies.

#### 4.4 Vegetation and flora

From the valley floor up to about 2,400 m there are very diversified forests: spruce, beech, pine (15 different facies are found), birch and alder. Ligneous species include *Abies nordmanniana*, *Fagus orientalis*, *Pinus Kochiana*, *Betula litwinowii*, *Carpinus caucasica*.

There are many marshlands, including a very large area in the Klukhor valley.

At higher altitudes there are meadows, then alpine grasslands with many spectacular or rare species such as *Bromus variegatus*, *Lilium monadelphum*, *Paeonia caucasica*, *P. Wittmanniana*, *Rhododendron ponticum*, *Primula renifolia* (endemic to the reserve).

There are 1280 species of vascular plants, 300 mosses and 90 lichens.

#### 4.5 Forests

There has been no forestry activity whatever since 1936, when the reserve was established. Several forests had virtually not been disturbed at all even before the reserve existed. They are highly interesting, with both very aged trees and fine stages of regeneration. Many trees, especially among the *Abies* and *Picea*, are of impressive size.

The use of trees and dead wood may be authorised to cover local needs. This exploitation is very limited and is restricted to easily accessible sites.

There have been no forest fires for the past five years, except for a very limited one near the town of Teberda.



#### 4.6 Agriculture

Farming is limited to small-scale animal husbandry in the immediate vicinity of the wardens' houses which are scattered around the reserve. Several clearly demarcated meadows are still mown every year. The areas to be mown, the dates and the equipment to be used are decided by the managers of the reserve.

Because of the difficult economic conditions, grazing is now authorised on a narrow non-forest strip of land along the Teberda – Dombaï road. The impact is modest and this use can be justified.

Many medium altitude meadows, where grazing ceased some decades ago, are being taken over by the forest only very slowly, if at all. They are particularly rich in flowers, which probably explains the very great abundance of butterflies in the region. It should be recalled that one of the aims of the Reserve, which has been perfectly achieved, was the restoration of meadowland that had been degraded through over-grazing at the beginning of this century.

#### 4.7 Cultural heritage

We were given no precise information other than the mention of an old silk route that is said to have passed close to the reserve. The region has certainly had a rich and eventful history.

### 5. EDUCATION, INFORMATION

The greater part of the reserve is closed to tourism. Only three valleys are accessible, and then only in groups led by guides trained and approved by the Reserve. Private cars in principle have to be left in Teberda, at the entrance to the reserve, from where there is a bus service to take visitors to Dombaï, where there are a number of hotels.

It must be said that the staff of the reserve were not all agreed on the subject of paths for visitors. Some of the scientists would like to reduce them even more, considering that tourists cause too many problems. The director prefers to keep those that exist. The expert considers that it is important that the public should be able to access some of the valleys, even if only to arouse more public support for the protected area.

There are tourist facilities at two points in the reserve itself:

- Outside Dombaï, a series of ski lifts and chair lifts built in the early sixties carry visitors or skiers up to 3,000 m. Their impact can be regarded as moderate. The ski slopes, not greatly changed from their natural state, are virtually invisible in summer. The damage caused by the rough tracks made for the maintenance of the pylons, very visible five years ago, is now healing.

In the Alibek valley, there is an encampment for climbers, with two small ski tows of very simple design. This camp now used less and less. The camp in a valley close to Teberda (?Djemasam), in the peripheral zone, was abandoned several years ago, while that planned for the Kukhlor valley was never completed.

The Arkhiz region is not accessible to the public, except for a short path for visitors.

In the museum located in the headquarters of the reserve there are many slides of the main animal species. The main structure of a much bigger museum was completed some time ago and the finishing work has just started again, thanks to financial support from the GEF. It still remains to find the resources for the internal finishing and arrangement which will be done mainly by the staff of the Reserve.

A branch of the State Ecological University of Stavropol will very shortly be established in Teberda, which will permit a very valuable synergy between the staff of the Reserve and the students.

## **6. RESEARCH**

Scientific research began as soon as the reserve was established in the 30s. It has been pursued regularly ever since, except for some interruption during the war, and the results are consigned each year to the annals of nature. There are 27 people in the scientific department, of whom 8 researchers, some still active despite having long passed retirement age.

Among the main research topics are geomorphology, the history of glaciation, the snow cover, the climate, the mountain lakes, inventories of flora and fauna, the vegetation of the meadows alpine grasslands, forests and marshlands, and ornithology.

The research is carried out partly by the staff of the reserve and partly in cooperation with various Russian universities.

The reports sent to the Council of Europe are concentrated more on the results of the observations and research projects rather than procedures and methods.

The Reserve has been working for a long time to try to develop appropriate methods of growing and propagating ginseng (outside the protected area).

## **7. FOLLOW UP TO THE CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conditions**

1) The tourist installations located in the protected area near Dombai, and the climbers' camp and ski tows Alibek valley shall be neither extended nor developed.

This condition has been respected. The installations have been well renovated since their privatisation and are well used, in both winter and summer. The zone influenced by them remains well delimited and their impact is localised and moderate.

2) Dropping skiers by helicopter remains prohibited.

This is a somewhat theoretical condition given present fuel prices.

3) Any eventual regionalisation or privatisation measures must have no adverse effect on the reserve's present status of protection.

Privatisation has had little effect so far. It has resulted mainly in the modest development of a few food and drink stalls and stands in the more frequented areas.

### **Recommendations**

1) Everything should be done to ensure that the resources necessary for maintaining and, if possible, improving the reserve's operation are made available.

It must be admitted that despite the efforts made in this direction by the director of the Reserve, the situation has deteriorated further in the past five years, in parallel with the economic situation of the country as a whole.

2) Information and education activities should be stepped up as far as possible, one suggestion being that the new museum at Teberda be completed.

The completion of the museum is progressing and the information and education activities are continuing without having been significantly stepped up, due to the lack of resources.

## **9. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In conclusion, we recommend renewing the European Diploma, Category A, for the Teberda National Reserve. The value of the site and its excellent state of protection make it of European interest.

In order to strengthen the protection of the natural values of the Reserve in the longer term, this renewal should be accompanied by the following conditions and recommendations:

The European Diploma should therefore be awarded with the conditions:

- the tourism facilities located near Dombaï, and the climbers' camp and ski tows located in the Alibek valley be neither extended nor developed;
- any eventual regionalisation or privatisation activities be such as to have no adverse effect on the reserve's present status of protection.

and with the following recommendations:

- Everything should be done to ensure that the resources necessary for maintaining and, if possible, improving the reserve's operation are made available.
- Information and education activities should be stepped up as far as possible, one suggestion being that the new museum at Teberda be completed.

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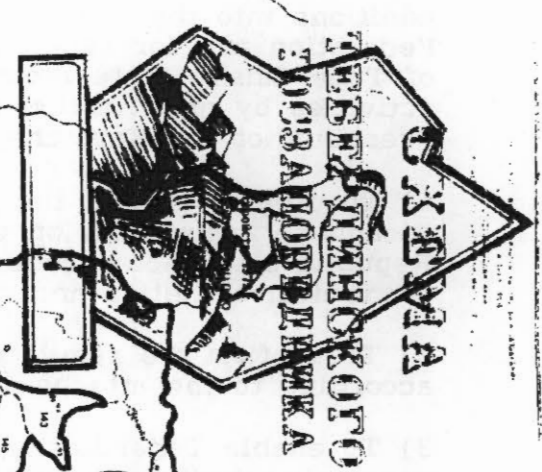
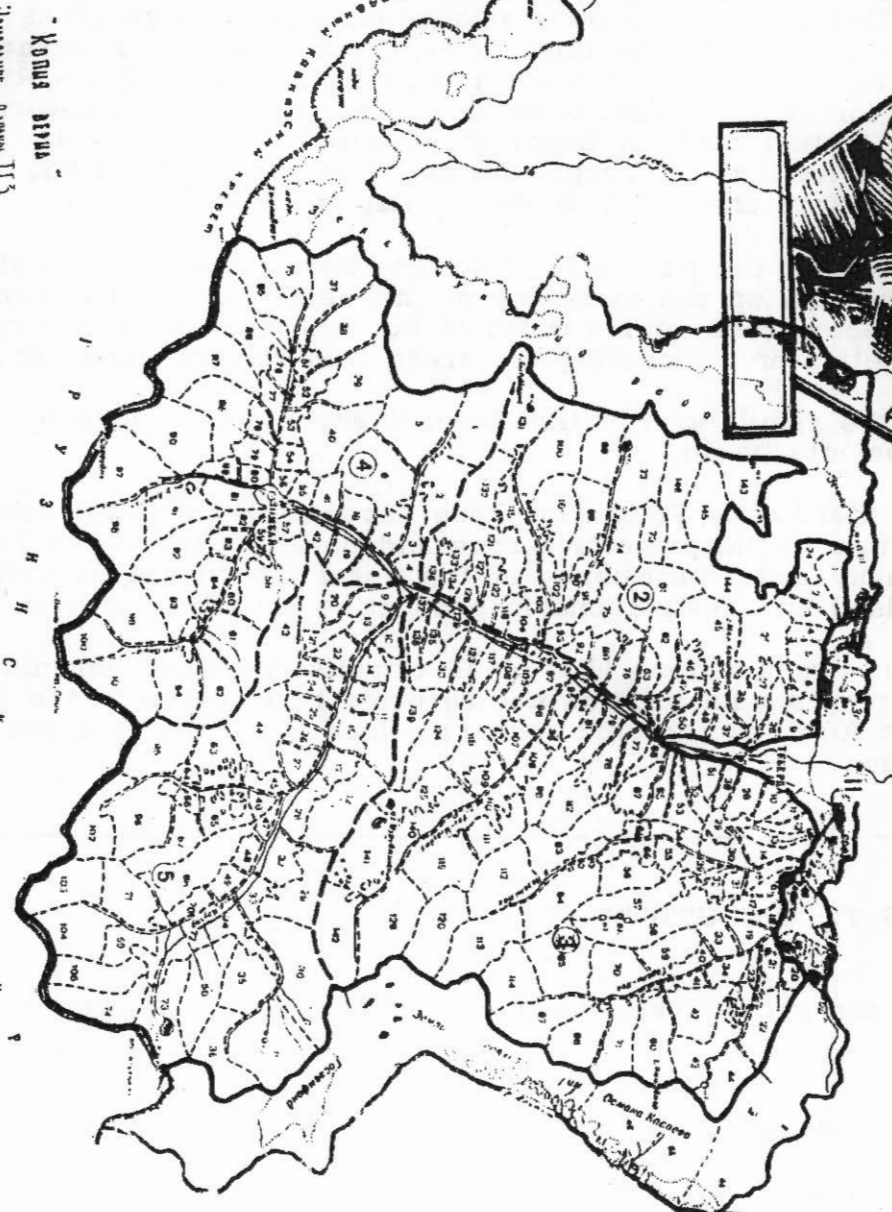
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Копия верна

ИЗДАНИЕ 113  
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**ЭПЛИКАЦИЯ**

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## TEBERDA NATIONAL BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Rough translation of the statment establishing a buffer zone

Dictated by Mrs Eugenia Parnasova, noted and written by Pierre Hunkeler

Statment of the Governement of the Karatchayevo-Tcherkessk Republic No 203, 20.06.1998.

on organisation of protected zone and establishment of scientific research activities in the Teberdinsky State Biosphere Zapovednik.

For the fullfillment of the programme MAB UNESCO of the Federal Russian Federation No 33-3 of 14.02.95 on specially protected nature areas, State-ment of the Governmeent of the Russian Federation No 527 on changes and additions into the regulations of State nNature Zapovednik of the Russian Federation and for reducing anthropogenic loads on protected nature complex of Teberdinsky State Biosphere Zapovednik, extension of scientific research activities by organisation of background and ecological monitoring, the Presidium of the Karatchayevo-Tcherkessk Republic states :

- 1) To create, around the perimeter of he boarder of the Teberdinsky State Biosphere Zapovednik on the territoiry of the Karatchayevo-Tcherkessk Republic a protected zone with a width of up to 5 km without restricting economical activities and alienating the areas from general land-users.
- 2) To confirm the regulations of the Teberdinsky State Biosphere Zapovednik according to the attachment.
- 3) To enable Teberdinsky State Biosphere Zapovednik to fullfill scientific research activities in the protective zone and natural pastures of collective farms Teberdinsky and ?Kummunsky of the Karatchayevo region without alienating the land and restrictions in productive activities of land users.
- 4) The following organisations [list of all organisations and administrations active in the area] should provide nature protection regime in the protective zone as well as fulfilling the said research work all levels of experimentation and of production.

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## ATTACHMENTS TO THE STATMENT

Regulations on the protective zone of Teberdinsky State Biosphere Zapovednik.

### I. General Regulations

- 1) According to the decision of the Presidium of the international Coordinating Council of the Programme MAN UNESCO, the Teberdinsky State Biosphere Zapovednik has been since 1997 a part of the international network of biosphere reserves.

.....

A protective zone is a buffer zone and has the objective of reducing anthropogenic influence on the strictly protected zone of the Zapovednik itself. ... Reference to scientific research, including rational nature use and ecological educational activities of the population.

2) The protective zone of Teberdinsky Zapovednik is established on the base of art. 90 of the land law of the Soviet Union of 25.04.91 [name of law]. ... Ref. to reduction of influence on protected zone.

3) The protective zone of Teberdinsky Zapovednik is a territory with a width of up to 5 km adjusted to the strictly protected territory and is a natural bio-ecological continuation without alienation of this land from the general land users or restriction of their interests.

## II. Objectives of the protective zone of Teberdinsky Zapovednik

1) Improving the conditions of habitats of protected animals of the Zapovednik through the creation of additional areas of habitats of rare and .... species of animals.

2) Improving the conditions of growing of protected and rare species of valuable wood, bushes and grass and particular species of plants included in the Red Data Book of the Russian Federation and which are not enough represented within the limits of the Zapovednik and demand special protection.

3) Fulfilling of a complex of biotechnical arrangements to increase the populations and distribution of economically valuable species of animals and plants, by fulfilling biotechnical arrangements for further extension through the hunting areas as well as regulating animals populations in the protected zone, by catching or shooting for scientific purposes in agreement with hunting and fishery inspections.

4) Fulfilling of measures from protection and restoration of species of valuable wood and other wild plants characteristics for the natural areas.

## III. Regime of the protective zone of Teberdinsky Zapovednik

1) In the buffer zone (ref. art ..) are forbidden all activities which disturb the territory of the Zapovednik, the natural balance of ecological nature systems, reduce the population of animals, the ... of disappearing species of wood and wild herbs, leading to the reduction of the surface of glaciers through the negative change of the gas composition of the atmosphere, the structure and composition of soil, the negative changes of existing natural landscapes and other environmental changes of the nature complex.

2) In the protective zone it is forbidden to

- clearcut the forests of general use;
- produce minerals, if it disturbs significantly the ecological balance;
- collect medical herbs, berries, mushrooms, flowers and seeds of wild cultures, unless planned by the Zapovednik;
- graze if this leads to degradation of meadows;
- hunt and fish with the exception of what is included in the hunting and fishing plan of the Karachay-Cherkess Republic;
- construct industrial and agricultural enterprises, communication and other objects without the agreement of the Zapovednik.

3) All aspects connected with the fulfillment of the tasks of the protective zone, including the biotechnical ones, are done in accordance to the plans developed by the Zapovednik and agreed with the interested land users and organisations and confirmed by the State Committee for Ecology of the Russian Federation.

4) The law of hunting of the Russian Federation transmits to the Teberdinsky Zapovednik the ... of the area and regulates the hunting according to the regulations for reconstruction areas.

5) The Board of Hunting of the Karatchayevo-Tcherkessk Republic and the Director of the Teberdinsky Zapovednik provide the common protection and biotechnical arrangements for raising the productivity of hunting plans in the frame of the protective zone.

#### IV. Managment

1) The regime of protective zone is provided by land users, hunting groups and Teberdinsky Zapovednik.

2) [penalties]

3) The control of the regime is made by all interested organisation [boards], Teberdinsky Zapovednik, State inspectors and all other persons ... for this on the base of federal law on specially protected areas.

PH/14.08.98

# COUNCIL OF EUROPE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

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## RESOLUTION (94) 23

### ON THE AWARD OF THE EUROPEAN DIPLOMA TO THE TEBERDA NATIONAL RESERVE (Russian Federation)

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 5 September 1994  
at the 516th 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 the proposals of the Steering Committee for the Conservation and Management of  
the Environment and Natural Habitats (CDPE);

Having noted the agreement of the Government of the Russian Federation;

After having deliberated,

Solemnly awards the European Diploma, Category A, in accordance with the regulations for the  
European Diploma (Resolution (91) 16), to the Teberda National Reserve;

Places the aforesaid area under the patronage of the Council of Europe until 5 September 1999;

Attaches the following conditions to the award:

1. that the tourism facilities in the protected area near Dombay, and the climbers' encampment and ski  
tows located in the Alibek valley, be neither extended nor developed;
2. that the practice of dropping skiers by helicopter continue to be prohibited;
3. that any eventual measures of regionalisation or privatisation be such as to have no adverse effect on  
the reserve's present status of protection;

Attaches the following recommendations to the award:

1. everything should be done to ensure that the resources necessary for maintaining and, if possible,  
improving the reserve's operation are made available, in particular such funding as will ensure the daily  
management of the reserve and scientific research;
2. information and education activities should be stepped up as far as possible, one suggestion being  
that the new museum at Teberda be completed.



APPENDIX II

**DRAFT RESOLUTION**

on the renewal of the European Diploma  
to the Teberda national biosphere reserve (Russian Federation)

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

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 instituting the European Diploma,

Having regard to Resolution (94) 23 awarding the European Diploma, Category A, to the Teberda national biosphere reserve,

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

Renews until 5 September 2004 the European Diploma awarded to the Teberda national biosphere reserve

Attaches the following conditions to the renewal:

- the tourism facilities located near Dombai, and the climbers' camp and ski tows located in the Alibek valley be neither extended nor developed;
- any eventual regionalisation or privatisation activities be such as to have no adverse effect on the reserve's present status of protection.

Makes the following recommendations

- Everything should be done to ensure that the resources necessary for maintaining and, if possible, improving the reserve's operation are made available.
- Information and education activities should be stepped up as far as possible, one suggestion being that the new museum at Teberda be completed.