Strasbourg, 4 November 2026 **T-PVS/DE(2026)03e**

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

EUROPEAN DIPLOMA FOR PROTECTED AREAS

Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas

Annual meeting

Strasbourg, 18 March 2026
Council of Europe, Agora, Room G04

MEETING REPORT

Document prepared by
the Secretariat of the Bern Convention

The Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas (EDPA) met on 18 March 2026 in Strasbourg. The Standing Committee/Bureau is invited to:

- Take note of the meeting report of the Group of Specialists;
- Welcome the new applications for the EDPA submitted by Poland and Georgia;
- Welcome the fact that all sites awarded the EDPA submitted their annual reports;
- Take note of the situation in the areas identified in 2025 as requiring particular attention, and take note of the changes made to this list in 2026;
- Take note of the on-the-spot appraisal visits to be carried out in 2026 and 2027.

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1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened by the Chair of the Group of Specialists, Mr. Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic). He welcomed all participants, particularly the four new members of the Group of Specialists: Simon Klingler (Austria), Antonios Barnias (Greece), Simone Remund (Switzerland), Oya Bumin (Türkiye). He thanked the Group for their contributions and the Secretariat for the preparation of the meeting and of the working documents.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The Group adopted the draft agenda (see Annex 1).

3. Role and mandate of the Group of Specialists

The Secretariat provided a concise summary of the main provisions of the Committee of Ministers Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1 on the Revised Regulations for the European Diploma for Protected Areas, with particular reference to the role and mandate of the Group of Specialists.

4. General information on activities presenting an interest for the work of the Group of Specialists

4.a. Short presentation of the report of the meeting of the group in 2025 and of the activities undertaken during the last year

The Chair briefly summarised the outcomes and conclusions of the Group's 2025 meeting and the activities undertaken over the last year.

The secretariat reported on the follow-up to the decisions taken by the Group of Specialists in 2025. On 9 July 2025, the Committee of Ministers formally adopted a resolution awarding the European Diploma for Protected Areas to the Sierra Nevada National Park, Nature Park and Biosphere Reserve (Spain) for a period of five years and renewed the European Diploma awarded to the Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato (Italy) for a period of ten years.

4.b-c. Short presentation of the Granada Declaration adopted by managers of Diploma holding areas and the Strategic Plan of the Bern Convention for the period to 2030

The Chair gave an overview of the Granada Declaration, adopted by managers of Diploma holding areas on 20 May 2025, which sets out a strategic vision for the future of the EDPA community of protected areas, . He also presented theStrategic Plan of the Bern Convention until 2030, adopted by the Standing Committee in December 2023.

Furthermore, he recalled the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the European Diploma, which took place in Granada on 21 and 22 May 2025, followed by the Round Table of Managers of the Diploma holding areas. The award ceremony of the European Diploma for Protected Areas to the Sierra Nevada National Park, Natural Park and Biosphere Reserve, the renewal ceremony for the Regional Park of

Gallipoli Cognato (Italy), and the submission of new applications for the European Diploma submitted by Poland and Georgia demonstrated the strong interest in protected areas in obtaining or maintaining this internationally recognised and prestigious prize. He also expressed appreciation to the Spanish authorities for organising the series of meetings related to the EDPA.

5. New Applications for the European Diploma for Protected Areas

5.a. Park Krajobrazowy Orlich Gniazd**/Eagles' Nests Landscape Park (Poland)**

Mr Paweł Kokoszka, expert from the Silesia Province Landscape Park Complex, and Mr Paweł Ciaptacz, an expert from the Lesser Poland Province Landscape Park Complex, presented the Application of the Eagles' Nests Landscape Park (ENLP).

The ENLP is one of the oldest landscape parks in Poland. Under the Polish classification of protected areas, a landscape park comprises an area protected on account of its natural, historical and cultural values, as well as its landscape qualities, with the aim of preserving and promoting these values in the context of sustainable development. The ENLP is distinguished by its extensive karstic region, the largest of its kind in Poland and Central Europe. The park also includes one of the most picturesque landscapes in Poland, with numerous rocks, ruins of castles and fortifications. The area contains highly representative examples of habitat types and plant communities (e.g. xerothermic grasslands), as well as endemic and threatened wild plant and animal species, protected under the Bern Convention.

The ENLP protects, above all, extraordinary natural geological and geomorphological formations that are characteristic of the Earth’s history. The upland massif consists primarily of various carbonate rocks, the most characteristic of which are Upper Jurassic limestones, forming numerous monadnocks and rocky valley slopes. These are associated with karst phenomena, the most prominent of which include numerous caves and springs. The area also contains notable palaeontological sites, such as those in the Wodąca Valley, Udorka Valley and the Kroczyce Rocks. Numerous caves across the park form a unique ecosystem and provide hibernation and breeding sites for approximately 21 bat species, some of which reach their northernmost distribution limits in this area.

The area preserves semi-natural communities of xerothermic grasslands and rock greenswards that were established through extensive human economic activity in the latter part of the 20th century. These communities subsequently underwent natural succession and, currently, owing to almost 20 years of active nature and environment protection, are being gradually restored in terms of natural and landscape properties.

This region is an area of high environmental, natural, landscape, historical and cultural value. The Ecosystems found there are among the most precious and endangered components of the European natural environment and form arrangements of landscape and environment patterns, including so-called "wildlife corridors", and support endemic wild plant and animal species subject to species-specific protection. In the ENLP there are habitats and species listed in sub-national and national red lists, as well as in international legislation such as the Bern Convention – Appendix I, natural habitats and species listed in Annexes I, II, III, and IV to the EU Habitats l Directive, in the EU Birds Directive , in the Regulations of the Minister of the Environment on species protection; in the Polish Red Data Book, in regional red lists of threatened species, and others. The vegetation includes around 1,300 vascular plant species(about 60% of all such species

in Poland), complemented by approximately 400 species of mosses, 800 species of fungi, and 400 species of lichens,

The conservation and management of the Eagles' Nests Landscape Park was grounded on a robust statutory legislation at regional/sub-national, at national and at international levels.

The members of the Group of Specialists welcomed the application of the Park Krajobrazowy Orlich Gniazd/Eagles' Nests Landscape Park and declared the application admissible. They entrusted the Secretariat to undertake an on-the-spot expert appraisal in 2026 to confirm the exceptional European interest of the site and assess the effectiveness of existing conservation measures there. The Group of Specialists will analyse the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit at its next meeting in 2027.

5.b. Lagodekhi Protected Areas (Georgia)

Ms Tamar Khakhishvili presented the application of the Lagodekhi Protected Areas (Georgia).

Established in 1912 on the southern slopes of the Greater Caucasus in eastern Georgia, the Lagodekhi Protected Areas are the oldest and among the most outstanding protected areas in the country. Covering 24,255 ha, they comprise the Lagodekhi Strict Nature Reserve (19,755 ha; IUCN category Ia) and the Lagodekhi Managed Reserve (4,500 ha; IUCN category IV). The site preserves one of the last large, undisturbed ecosystems in the region, with landscapes ranging from lowland broadleaf forests to alpine meadows, glacial lakes, and high mountain ridges.

This exceptional diversity of habitatssupports more than 1,200 plant species and over 150 bird species, including rare and emblematic fauna such as the East Caucasian tur (*Capra cylindricornis*), brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), and Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*). Its intact river gorges and hydrological systems further enrich the site’s ecological value.

The international significance of Lagodekhi Protected Areas has been widely acknowledged through multiple global and regional designations. The site is located within the Caucasus Global Biodiversity Hotspot, one of the world’s priority regions for conservation. It has been recognised as an Important Bird Area (IBA 107) by BirdLife International, forms part of the Emerald Network (GE0000001 Lagodekhi) under the Bern Convention, and is included within WWF’s Global 200 Ecoregions of outstanding conservation importance. Lagodekhi also contributes to the Khevi–Tusheti–Lagodekhi conservation corridor and plays a strategic role in maintaining ecological connectivity with neighbouring protected areas, including Azerbaijan’s Zakatala State Reserve and Dagestan’s Tliarata Managed Areas.

The area hosts numerous species of European and global conservation concern, many of which are listed in the global IUCN Red List and the European Red List. Approximately 90% of Georgia’s Red List fauna and nearly 50% of its Red List flora are also included in the European Red List, emphasising the site’s continental conservation importance. Lagodekhi encompasses pristine, largely untouched ecosystems, including well-preserved forests, alpine meadows, and glacial landscapes. These ecosystems support flagship European conservation species such as the East Caucasian tur (Near Threatened), Caucasian red deer (*Cervus elaphus*

maral), brown bear, Eurasian lynx (Lynx lynx), and Grey wolf (*Canis lupus*). Important bird species of European interest include the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), lesser spotted eagle (*Clanga pomarina* – Vulnerable, VU in Europe), Caucasian black grouse (*Lyrurus mlokosiewiczi* – Near Threatened, NT), bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*), Giant Noctule (*Nyctalus lasiopterus* - VU), and Barbastelle Bat (*Barbastella barbastellus* - NT). Flora of European concern present in Lagodekhi includes, inter alia, the endemic Lagodekhi gentian (*Gentiana lagodechiana*), *Campanula lagodechiana*, and *Primula heterochroma*.

Furthermore, Lagodekhi serves as a biogeographic bridge between Europe and Asia, supporting ecological connectivity across the continent. Its role in transboundary conservation is evidenced through participation in the “Transboundary Joint Monitoring and Management of Biodiversity in the Eastern Greater Caucasus” programme, and co-operation with the Zaqatala State Reserve.

The conservation and management of the Lagodekhi Protected Areas are entrusted to the Agency of Protected Areas, which already has valuable experience managing the Vashlovani Protected Areas, a European Diploma holding site since 2015.

The members of the Group of Specialists welcomed the application of the Lagodekhi Protected Areas and declared it admissible. They entrusted the Secretariat to undertake an on-the-spot expert appraisal in 2026 to confirm the exceptional European interest of the site and assess the effectiveness of existing conservation measures. The Group of Specialists will analyse the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit at its next meeting in 2027.

5.c. Krzemionki Opatowskie Nature Reserve (Poland)

Mr Łukasz Misiuna, Head of the Nature Department of the Historical and Archaeological Museum in Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, presented the application of the Krzemionki Opatowskie Nature Reserve.

The Krzemionki Opatowskie Nature Reserve preserves the local Neolithic striped flint mines that date back to the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, approximately 4000 BC to 1600 BC. It comprises a unique system of around 4,000 shafts with galleries from 3 to 10 metres deep, covering over 70 ha. These are the best-preserved Neolithic mines of this type in Europe. The total length of the accessible underground passages is around 1.5 km with 500 m of the route open to tourists. The site illustrates the widest range of prehistoric flint mining techniques evidenced in a single location, including unique, technologically advanced chamber mines.

The Neolithic striped flint mines, excavated in limestone rock, were created over several thousand years using bone, wooden and animal antler tools. The primary conservation objectives for Krzemionki are to preserve the Neolithic striped-flint mines as cultural heritage, which includes preventing development in the areas adjacent to the complex and protecting its landscape. More broadly, the aim is to safeguard the region’s natural and landscape resources – including its abiotic features, natural habitats, and the wild plant and animal endangered species that occur there – due to their environmental value and potential usefulness to people.

The dual purpose of the Reserve is to protect the exceptionally well-preserved Neolithic striped flint mines and their associated prehistoric mining landscape, and to

conserve the diverse and rich natural heritage. The site was designated as a EU Natura 2000 Site. The nature reserve preserves an extraordinary vascular plant species diversity (510 taxa), including 39 rare and protected plant species. Key protected flora includes two species listed in Annex II to the EU Habitats Directive. The Reserve also hosts rare fauna and serves as wintering grounds/hibernaculum for 14 bat species. In 2019, the expanded Krzemionki Prehistoric Striped Flint Mining Region was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Moreover, the reserve is home to 39 rare and protected plant species, including 37 under strict or partial legal protection in Poland. Two species are listed in Annex II to the EU Habitats Directive. The reserve also hosts three habitat types listed in Annex I to the EU Habitats Directive. The majority of the reserve is covered by Scots pine forest. The faunal diversity of the reserve also includes rare and threatened species. The lepidopteran fauna is particularly rich, with 73 species of diurnal butterflies and 190 species of nocturnal moths recorded there. Four of these species are legally protected, and nine are listed on the Red List of Threatened Animals in Poland. Sixteen butterfly species are regarded as umbrella species and as charismatic representatives/flagship species of the reserve's fauna.

The Krzemionki Opatowskie nature reserve was established by the Minister of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry in 1995. It is a protected area under highest protection regime in Poland, comparable to that of national parks. Most of the area is additionally protected as the EU Natura 2000 site Krzemionki PLH260024 (2012) and as the Dolina Kamienna protected landscape area (1995). At the boundary of the reserve, the Ruda Cultural Park (Rudzki Park Kulturowy) has been established in 2023, as part of the commitment made to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. It serves as a protective buffer for the reserve as a local form of cultural heritage protection.

There are no residential buildings within the reserve, which remains uninhabited and is almost entirely forested. Several small villages are located in the immediate surroundings of the reserve, with a total population of approximately 1,000 residents.

The site is managed by the Historical and Archaeological Museum in Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski. The Nature Reserve is accessible for visitors.

The members of the Group of Specialists welcomed the application of the Krzemionki Opatowskie Nature Reserve and declared it admissible. They entrusted the Secretariat to undertake an on-the-spot expert appraisal in 2026 to confirm the exceptional European interest of the site and assess the effectiveness of existing conservation measures. The Group of Specialists will analyse the conclusions of the on-the-spot appraisal visit at its next meeting in 2027.

6. Presentation of the reporting results by the Secretariat and the Group of Specialists

6.a. Analysis of the annual reports

The Secretariat recalled the objectives of the annual reporting exerciseand the Group's mandate, which are defined by Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1 on the revised regulations for the European Diploma for Protected Areas. As in previous years,

members of the Group of Specialists contributed to the assessment of the annual reports using the assessment forms.

In 2025, annual reports received for all 67 areas included in the 2025 reporting. Document T-PVS/DE(2026)02 presents the conclusions of the Group for each Diploma holding area. The Group discussed the key overall findings of their assessments and highlighted challenges and gaps in the implementation of the recommendations and the fulfilment of the conditions attached to the European Diploma.

The Group of Specialists welcomed the results of the 2025 annual reporting and thanked the managers of the Diploma holding areas for fulfilling their reporting obligations. It welcomed the fact that all reports had been received and the support from the Secretariat to maintain close contact with the site managers to ensure the submission of their reports.

The Group of Specialists considered the annual reports to be of high standard, although some improvements are needed concerning information provided on communication, education and public awareness related to the EDPA. The Group of Specialists invited area managers to improve the quality of their reports when possible, ensuring that all elements included in the recommendations/conditions are fully addressed with sufficient level of detail.

The Group expressed concern about the situation in Muddus National Park (Sweden) in relation to mining activities and requested the Secretariat to add the site to the list of areas requiring particular attention in 2026. It also noted that the UNESCO World Heritage Committee has requested the site managers to submit annual state of conservation reports, highlighting the risks facing the site. The Committee will decide in July 2026 whether to inscribe the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The Group of Specialists also expressed concern about the situation in Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve (Germany) and requested the Secretariat to add the site to the list of areas requiring particular attention in 2026.

The Group also expressed concern over the budget reduction affecting Store Mosse National Park (Sweden) and asked the Secretariat to monitor the situation closely in cooperation with the Swedish authorities.

Finally, the Group of Specialists highlighted the importance of adopting recommendations that are clear, realistic, and actionable. It stressed that the implementation of recommendations depends not only on the commitment of site managers but also on effective cooperation with national, sub-national and local authorities.

6.b. Follow up on the areas identified in 2025 as requiring particular attention:

- Wurzacher Ried Nature Reserve (Germany)

The Secretariat recalled that, with regard to the proposed wind turbine project, no further development had taken place and that the issue is no longer considered a matter of concern (see national report 2025). The investor withdrew the application following

significant public opposition and the negative opinion issued by the nature conservation authority, which referred to the recommendations of the European Diploma appraisal.

The Group of Specialists thanked the managing authorities for submitting the report in 2025.

The Group considered that the situation should continue to be monitored annually through the assessment of annual reports. However,given the withdrawn of the authorisation of the wind turbine project, it no longer considered this site to be problematic,

- Scandola Nature Reserve (France)

The Secretariat recalled that, in 2020, the Group of Specialists had unanimously recommended that the Diploma awarded to the Scandola Nature Reserve should not be renewed, due to the considerable lack of progress and limited efforts to communicate with the Secretariat and, consequently, with the Group, despite several warnings issued by the Group in previous years.

The Group of Specialists welcomed the submission of the 2025 annual report by the site managers but highlighted that it was difficult to assess the current state of protection, as the report is based on previous recommendations and the award has not been renewed.

The Group of Specialists thanked the managing authorities for submitting a report in 2025.

The members of the Group of Specialists requested the authorities to implement the recommendations addressing the need to reduce tourism pressure, extend the reserve area, and establish a marine park. They also requested the park managers and French authorities to relaunch the process for the renewal of the EDPA and asked the Secretariat to liaise with them in this regard.

- Doñana National Park (Spain)

It was recalled that, in 2020, the Group of Specialists decided to postpone the renewal of the Diploma awarded to Doñana National Park.

In addition, the Secretariat informed the Group of its recent exchanges with the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention and of the additional information received from the Spanish authorities. According to these sources, the situation at the site has slightly improved due to the heavy rainfall recorded at the beginning of the year. The Secretariat also highlighted the existing plans adopted by the Spanish authorities to address the situation from both ecological and socio-economic perspectives, as well as the allocation of EUR 356 million to support these measures.

The Group of Specialists thanked the managing authorities for submitting the 2025 annual report and for providing additional information.

The Group expressed renewed concern about the situation at the site. It also expressed interest in the joint IUCN/UNESCO mission to Doñana, scheduled to take place in 2026, and requested the Secretariat to liaise with these partner organizations and inform the Group of the outcome of the mission at its 2027 meeting.

- Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve (Germany)

The Group of Specialists considered that the conditions and recommendations had been adequately addressed and that the annual report could therefore be assessed positively. The members of the Group continued to identify tourism pressure and boat traffic as the main threats to the conservation of the site.

The Group of Specialists thanked the managing authorities for submitting the 2025 annual report.

The Group of Specialists welcomed the improvements in the management of tourism activities, in particular the further regulation of tourist ships, barges, and private boats in general.

The Group considered that the situation should continue to be monitored annually through the assessment of annual reports. However, it no longer considered the site to be problematic.

- Krimml Waterfalls Natural Site (Austria)

The Secretariat informed the members of the Group of Specialists that no significant developments have taken place regarding the possible construction of retention basins and dams in the valleys of Hohe Tauern National Park, which overlap with the Diploma holding area and Natura 2000 sites.

The Group of Specialists thanked the managing authorities for submitting the 2025 annual report.

The members of the Group of Specialists welcomed the detailed annual report presented by the park managers. They also requested the Secretariat to closely monitor the plans for the possible construction of retention basins and dams that may affect the EDPA site during the 2026 EDPA renewal visit, and to include the findings of this assessment in the appraisal mission report to be submitted to the Group for consideration in 2027.

- Purbeck Heritage Coast (United Kingdom)

The Group was informed that no new quarries have been permitted in 2025 and that the park managers continue to work with Dorset Council on the compensation mechanism for Swanworth Quarry which was given permission to expand in 2024.

The Group of Specialists was informed that the Dorset and East Devon Coast, of which Purbeck Heritage Coast is part, was assessed by the IUCN in 2025 and its conservation status was considered as 'good' with quarrying identified as a low threat.

The group was also informed that the site is not on the list of UNESCO World Heritage in Danger.

The Group of Specialists thanked the managing authorities for submitting the 2025 annual report.

The Group of Specialists welcomed the fact that no new quarries were permitted in 2025. At the same time, it requested the park managers to provide further details on the compensation mechanism established for the Swanworth Quarry extension and its expected impacts in the next annual report.

- Minsmere Nature Reserve (United Kingdom)

The Group of Specialists was informed of the commencement of construction of the nuclear power plant and of the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

It was also informed that the site is not on the list of UNESCO World Heritage in Danger.

The Group welcomed the annual report, particularly the additional documentation provided by the park managers, but expressed concern regarding the ongoing construction of a new nuclear reactor in the vicinity of Minsmere Nature Reserve (United Kingdom).

The Group of Specialists requested the managers of the Minsmere Nature Reserve (United Kingdom) to provide further details on the mitigation and compensation measures in place in its next annual report.

7. On-the-spot appraisal visits in 2026 and 2027

The Secretariat referred to document T-PVS/DE(2025)09 which presented the state of play of the on-the-spot appraisal visits. The Secretariat recalled that three areas are scheduled to be visited in 2026 as well as three applicant sites in respect of Poland and Georgia.

The Group of Specialists agreed that an on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine), due in 2026, cannot currently be planned on account of the security situation in that country. In addition to these six areas included in the 2026 workplan, 18 further areas should receive appraisal visits in 2027.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the suggestions of the Secretariat that four on-the-spot appraisal visits be scheduled to take place in 2026: Krimml Waterfalls Natural Site (Austria), Selvagens Islands Nature Reserve

(Portugal), Eagles' Nests Landscape Park, and Krzemionki Opatowskie Nature Reserve (Poland - combined visit of two candidate sites) and Lagodekhi Protected Areas (Georgia - candidate site). The Group of Specialists decided to postpone to a later date the visit to the Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine) on account of the ongoing Russian war of aggression against that country.

8. Cooperation with partners

Participants exchanged views on cooperation with partners, in particular with the Secretariat of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and UNESCO World Heritage Centre , as well as on recent efforts to strengthen coordination between the EDPA and Multi-Internationally Designated Areas. One of the experts also shared an invitation to participate in the workshop on “Enhancing Conservation Outcomes in Multi-Internationally Designated Areas”, scheduled to take place in Germany in 2026.

9. Election of the Chair

In the light of the fact that no candidatures were proposed, the Chair of the Group of Specialists, Mr. Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic) agreed to carry on in this function for another year. The Secretariat encouraged other members of the Group of Specialists to seriously consider coming forward at the next meeting with the view to taking over the Chairmanship.

10. Any other business

No other business was raised.

11. Date and place of the next meeting

The Secretariat, in liaison with the Chair, will notify members of the date of the next meeting in 2027.

The Secretariat and the Chair appreciated active participation of members of the Group of Specialists during the meeting.

ANNEX 1: ADOPTED AGENDA

		Documents	Expected results
Wednesday, 18 March			
9.00	**1. Opening of the meeting** *Mr Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic), Chair of the Group of Specialists*		
9.10	**2. Adoption of the agenda** *Presentation by the Secretariat (Alessandra Siino)*	Meeting agenda T-PVS/Agenda(2026)03 **For adoption**	Members of the Group of Specialists are informed of the aims of the meeting and adopt the agenda.
9.15	**3. Role and Mandate of the Group of Specialists** *Presentation by the Secretariat (Krzysztof Zyman)*	Resolution CM/ResDip (2008)1 on the revised regulations for the European Diploma for Protected Areas **For information**	Members of the Group of Specialists are informed of and discuss the role and mandate of the Group of Specialists.
	4. General information on activities presenting an interest for the work of the Group of Specialists		
9.30	**4.a Short presentation of the report of the meeting of the group in 2025 and of the activities undertaken during the last year** *Mr Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic), Chair of the Group of Specialists* *Presentation by the Secretariat (Alessandra Siino)*	Report on the 2025 meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas T-PVS/DE(2025)07 Extract from the list of decisions and adopted texts on the European Diploma for Protected Areas, at the 45th meeting of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention T-PVS/DE(2026)01	The salient points of the 2025 meeting of the Group of Specialists are recalled. Information is provided about EDPA renewal and new award.

		CM/ResDip(2025)1 - Resolution on the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato (Italy) (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 9 July 2025 at the 1534th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies) CM/ResDip(2025)2 - Resolution on the award of the European Diploma for Protected Areas to the Sierra Nevada National Park, Nature Park and Biosphere Reserve (Spain) (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 9 July 2025 at the 1534th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies) **For information**	
9.50	**4.b Short presentation of the Granada Declaration adopted by managers of Diploma holding areas** *Mr Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic), Chair of the Group of Specialists*	Granada Declaration T-PVS/DE(2025)06 final **For information**	The principal points of the Granada Declaration are recalled.
10.10	**4.c Strategic Plan of the Bern Convention for the period to 2030** *Mr Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic), Chair of the Group of Specialists*	Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 T-PVS(2023)18 **For information and discussion**	Members of the Group of Specialists take note of the ongoing work under the Strategic Plan of the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 and identify the targets of the Strategic Plan to which the monitoring of the European

			Diploma could contribute to.
10.30	**5. New Applications for the European Diploma for Protected Areas** *Presentation by the Secretariat (Alessandra Siino)*		
10.40	**Coffee-break**		
11.00	**5a. Eagles' Nests Landscape Park (Poland)** *Presentation by the applicants - Mr Paweł KOKOSZKA and Mr Paweł CIAPTACZ*	Application form – Eagles'Nests Landscape Park **For discussion**	Applicants present their application and exchange with the members of the Group of Specialists on the possible exceptional European interest of the area in question.
11.40	**5b. Lagodekhi Protected Areas (Georgia)** ***Presentation by the applicants – Ms Tamar KHAKHISHVIL***	Application form – Lagodekhi protected Areas **For discussion**	Applicants present their application and exchange with the members of the Group of Specialists on the possible exceptional European interest of the area in question.
12.20	**5.c Krzemionki Opatowskie Nature Reserve (Poland)** *Presentation by the applicants – Ms Anna JUNIEWICZ and Mr Łukasz MISIUNA*	Application form - Krzemionki Opatowskie Nature Reserve **For discussion**	Applicants present their application and exchange with the members of the Group of Specialists on the possible exceptional European interest of the area in question.
13.00	**Lunch break**		
	6. Presentation of the reporting results by the Secretariat and the Group of Specialists		
14.00	**6.a Analysis of the annual reports**	2026 Compilation of the analysis of the annual reports	The compliance of the EDPA holding areas with the conditions and/or

	Introduction by the Secretariat (Krzysztof Zyman) *Members of the Group of Specialists are invited to share their comments on and discuss the outcomes of the annual reports and exchange views on possible follow-up*	T-PVS/DE(2026)02 Methodological note on the usage of the assessment forms of the annual reports T-PVS/DE(2024)02 Link to the dashboard of the European Diploma for Protected Areas **For discussion and decision**	recommendations attached to the award/renewal of the EDPA is assessed and possible areas at risk requiring closer monitoring or even an exceptional on the-spot appraisal visit are identified.
16.00	**Coffee break**		
16.20	**6.b Follow up on the areas identified in 2025 as requiring particular attention and update :** *Introduction by the Secretariat (Alessandra Siino)* *and feedback from the participants* • *Wurzacher Ried Nature Reserve (Germany)* • *Scandola Nature Reserve (France)* • *Doñana National Park (Spain)* • *Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve (Germany)* • *Krimml Waterfalls Natural Site (Austria)* • *Purbeck Heritage Coast (UK)*	**For discussion and decision**	Follow up on the monitoring of EDPA holding areas requiring particular attention is agreed on. Specialists update the list of areas requiring particular attention.

	• *Minsmere Nature Reserve (UK)*		
16.50	**7. On-the-spot appraisal visits in 2026 and 2027** *Presentation by the Secretariat (Krzysztof Zyman)*	List of areas which could benefit from an on-the-spot appraisal visit in 2026 and 2027 T-PVS/DE(2025)09 **For discussion and decision**	The list of EDPA holding areas and for which an on-the-spot appraisal visit is to take place in 2026 and 2027 are presented. Participants agree on the division of tasks and calendar for these visits in 2026 and on the approach to be taken for visits in 2027.
17.10	**8. Cooperation with partners** *Presentation by Cigdem Adem (Researcher at the Middle East Technical University in Turkey and member of IPBES Capacity-Building Task Force)*	**For discussion**	Participants exchange on cooperation with partners (UNESCO World Heritage Convention, Ramsar Convention, IUCN).
17.25	**9. Election of the Chair**	**For decision**	Members of the Group of Specialists elect the Chair of the Group.
17.35	**10. Any other business**		
17.40	**11. Date and place of the next meeting**	**For discussion**	Members of the Group of Specialists discuss possible dates and venue for the next meeting.
17.45	**12. End of the meeting**		

ANNEX 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF SPECIALISTS	
Czech Republic	**Mr Jan PLESNIK** Advisor to Director Nature Conservation Agency

SPECIALISTS/SPECIALISTES	
Austria	**Mr Simon KLINGLER**
Georgia	**Ms Mariam MACHARASHVILI (*online*)**
Greece	**Mr Antonios BARNIAS**
Luxembourg	**Mr Christian KAYSER** Director Nature Park Our
Switzerland	**Ms Simone REMUND**
Türkiye	**Ms Oya BUMIN**

EXPERTS	
Austria	**Mr Michael SCHIMEK** Schimek plant, Ingenieurbüro für Raumplanung und Raumordnung
Poland	**Ms Renata KRZYŚCIAK-KOSIŃSKA** Independent consultant
Slovenia	**Mr Peter SKOBERNE *(online)*** Independent consultant
Switzerland	**Mr Pierre GALLAND** Independent consultant
Türkiye	**Ms Cigdem ADEM** Researcher Middle East Technical University, Turkey IPBES Capacity-Building Task Force member
United Kingdom	**Ms Carol RITCHIE *(online)*** CSGN Programme Manager Green Action Trust Scotland

INVITED SPEAKERS

Georgia	**For the application of the Lagodekhi Protected Areas:** **Ms Tamar KHAKHISHVILI** Deputy Chair Agency of Protected Areas of Georgia Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia
Poland	**For the application of the Krzemionki Opatowskie Nature Reserve:** **Mr Łukasz MISIUNA** Head of the Nature Department of the Historical and Archaeological Museum **Ms Anna JUNIEWICZ** Interpreter **Ms Iwona KĘDZIERSKA-GĘBSKA *(online)*** Regional Director for Environmental Protection in Kielce
	For the application of the Eagles' Nests Landscape Park: **Mr Paweł KOKOSZKA** Expert from the Silesia Province Landscape Park Complex **Mr Paweł CIAPTACZ** Expert from the Lesser Poland Province Landscape Park Complex **Ms Hanna POMPA-OBONSKA *(online)*** Director of the Landscape Parks of the Silesian Voivodeship **Mr Marcin GUZIK *(online)*** Director of the Landscape Parks of the Małopolska Voivodeship **Ms Dorota OKON *(online)*** Chief Nature Conservation Specialist of the Landscape Parks of the Silesian Voivodeship

COUNCIL OF EUROPE SECRETARIAT	
Directorate of Social Rights, Health and Environment	**Ms Grazia Alessandra SIINO** Secretary of the Bern Convention
	Mr Krzysztof ZYMAN

Bern Convention	Administrator
	Ms Lilas HEULLANT Administrative Assistant
	Ms Emma GARNIER-CARREL Junior Lawyer