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T-PVS/DE (2017) 14

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

37th meeting
Strasbourg, 5-8 December 2017

**Group of Specialists on the
European Diploma for Protected Areas**

8 March 2017
Palais de l'Europe, Strasbourg, Room 6

MEETING REPORT

*Document prepared
by the Directorate of Democratic Governance*

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1. WELCOME AND OPENING OF THE MEETING

The meeting was opened on Wednesday 8 March 2017 by the Chair, Mr Jan Willem Sneep (The Netherlands). The Chair welcomed the members of the Group, the experts, and the new members of the Secretariat.

In addition, the Chair greeted the presence of Ms Kaja Lotman and Ms Kadri Möller who attended the meeting in the framework of the upcoming Estonian presidency of the EU as representatives of the Estonian Ministry of Environment and Environmental Board with a view to ensure a fruitful participation of EU member states in the work of the Bern Convention.

The list of participants can be found in the document [T-PVS/DE \(2017\) 7](#).

2. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The Group adopted the draft agenda (see document [T-PVS/DE \(2017\) 3](#))

3. GENERAL INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES PRESENTING AN INTEREST FOR THE WORK OF THE GROUP

3.1 SHORT PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE GROUP IN 2016 AND OF THE ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING THE LAST YEAR

The Chair briefly wrapped up the outcomes of the work of the Group during 2016.

3.2 FOLLOW UP BY THE SECRETARIAT ON THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE 2016 MEETING OF THE GROUP OF SPECIALISTS

Iva Obretenova, Secretary of the Bern Convention, reported on the follow up given to the decisions of the Group of Specialists at its meeting in 2016. She highlighted that:

- There are ongoing discussions to make the monitoring of the European Diploma more systematic (standardising the reporting format, standardising the assessment of the reports, standardising the reports of the on-the-spot appraisal visits) and more transparent (on-line access to all the information);
- The amendment of the regulations of the European Diploma was endorsed by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention in November 2016 and will be submitted to the approval of the Committee of Ministers;
- A list of questions providing guidance for the independent experts visiting European Diploma candidate areas will be designed in 2017;
- The organisation of more regular meeting of Diploma-holding areas managers is subject to securing the necessary resources and so far such meetings were held at the occasion of the 40th and 50th anniversary of the European Diploma. The next meeting could be foreseen in 2020 and linked to the current idea of the Secretariat to launch a new European Nature Conservation Year “Nature for Climate”.
- A study on missing habitat types in the Diploma-holding areas was produced in 2012 which could be a starting point for the study on missing ecosystems and landscapes;
- A short video on the European Diploma will be produced and promoted through a social media campaign in 2017 with a view to raise awareness and increase visibility.

Follow up:

- The Secretariat to draft a list of questions for independent experts carrying out on-the-spot appraisal visits and share it for comments with the Group of Specialists;
- The Secretariat to share with the Group of Specialists the 2012 study on the missing European habitat types from the European Diploma awarded areas.
- The Secretariat to follow up with the approval of the amendment of the European Diploma regulations;
- The Secretariat to ensure the production of the short video on the European Diploma.
- The Group of Specialist to advise the Secretariat on relevant topics/themes with a view to the next meeting of the Diploma-holding areas managers;

4. RESULTS OF THE ADVISORY VISITS, DISCUSSION AND PROPOSALS TO THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Group of Specialist examined the on-the-spot appraisal visit reports of 7 areas whose European Diploma will expire in 2018 and could be renewed.

a. Matsalu National Park (Estonia)

The independent expert, Michael Usher, presented the outcomes of his on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Matsalu National Park to the members of the Group of Specialists. Based on his findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma of the Matsalu National Park for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching one condition and six recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Matsalu National Park as reflected in the draft resolution in the document [T-PVS/DE \(2017\) 9](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat to follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2018.

b. Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve (Germany)

The independent expert, Robert Brunner, presented the outcomes of his on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve to the members of the Group of Specialists. Based on his findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma of the Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching three conditions and eight recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE \(2017\) 9](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat to follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2018.

c. Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park (Spain)

The independent expert, Olivier Biber presented the outcomes of his on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park to the members of the Group of Specialists. Based on his findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma of the Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching three recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE \(2017\) 9](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat to follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2018.

d. Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve (Russian Federation)

The independent expert, Hervé Lethier presented the outcomes of his on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve to the members of the Group of Specialists. Based on his findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma of the Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching seven recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE \(2017\) 9](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat to follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2018.

e. Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)

The independent expert, Hervé Lethier presented the outcomes of his on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve to the members of the Group of Specialists. Based on his findings he suggested the renewal of the European Diploma of the Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve for an additional period of 10 years.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching one condition and four recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE \(2017\) 9](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat to follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2018.

f. Store Mosse National Park (Sweden)

In the absence of the independent expert, Pierre Galland, the Secretariat presented the outcomes of Pierre Galland's on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Store Mosse National Park to the members of the Group of Specialists. Based on Pierre Galland's findings, the renewal of the European Diploma of the Store Mosse National Park for an additional period of 10 years was suggested.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching five recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Store Mosse National Park as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE \(2017\) 9](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat to follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention and its possible official adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2018.

g. Bullerö and Långviksskär Nature Reserves (Sweden)

In the absence of the independent expert, Pierre Galland, the Secretariat presented the outcomes of Pierre Galland's on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Bullerö and Långviksskär Nature Reserves to the members of the Group of Specialists. Based on Pierre Galland's findings, the renewal of the European Diploma of the Bullerö and Långviksskär Nature Reserves for an additional period of 10 years was suggested.

The members of the Group of Specialists agreed with the expert's proposal and following their discussion endorsed a draft resolution attaching one condition and four recommendations to the renewal of the European Diploma of the Bullerö and Långviksskär Nature Reserves as reflected in the document [T-PVS/DE \(2017\) 9](#).

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat to follow up on the endorsement of the draft resolution by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention and its official possible adoption by the Committee of Ministers in 2018.

5. FOLLOW UP ON THE 2016 CONCLUSIONS OF THE GROUP OF SPECIALISTS REGARDING POLONINY NATIONAL PARK AND BIALOWIEZA NATIONAL PARK

a. Poloniny National Park (Slovak Republic)

Background

Poloniny National Park had been under scrutiny of the Group of Specialists particularly due to the long-term absence of a management plan and forestry management issues. In 2015, the Group submitted to the Standing Committee a draft resolution on the withdrawal of the EDPA awarded to the park in 1998 before the period of validity, i.e. 18 September 2018.

In December 2015, the Standing Committee decided to grant a last stay to the Slovak authorities to finalise the adoption of its management plan.

In March 2016, the Group of Specialists had been given to understand that the expected management plan would be adopted in April-May 2016.

The Group decided to postpone a decision on the possible withdrawal of the EDPA awarded to Poloniny National Park. It requested the authorities to provide the Secretariat with a copy translated into English of the management plan of the Park after its adoption.

In December 2016, the authorities of the Poloniny National Park submitted their annual report enclosing a copy in English of the management plan adopted in July 2016.

The Secretariat asked the independent experts Hervé Lethier and Robert Brunner who respectively visited Poloniny National Park in 2013 and 2015, to assess whether the management plan met the requirements of the European Diploma.

Outcomes of the discussion and follow up

While Hervé Lethier's and Robert Brunner's opinion stressed that the management plan was very general and did neither contain operational objectives, nor implementation measures, nor funding scheme, the representatives of Poloniny National Park – Ivan Koubek and Mario Perinaj – brought to

the attention of the members of the Group of Specialists a comprehensive set of Action Plans appended to the Management Plan.

In the light of Ivan Koubek's and Mario Perinaj's presentation and of the discussion which followed, the Group of Specialists acknowledged the work done by the Slovak authorities and praised the fact that the management plan was adopted at the level of the Government. The Group also took note that a Forest Management Plan which was repeatedly requested in the resolutions awarding and renewing the European Diploma to the area was finally adopted in 2016. Finally, the Group of Specialist decided to look more in detail in the over 20 annexes to Management Plan and to visit the area again to ensure that the representative elements of the biological, geological and/or landscape heritage of exceptional European importance which motivated the award of the European Diploma to the area in 1998 are still present and preserved.

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat to organise an on-the spot appraisal visit to Poloniny National Park in 2017.

The Group of Specialists requested from the authorities of the Diploma-holding area to receive the complete copy of the management plan (including the 25 appendices) translated into English.

b. Białowieża National Park (Poland)

Background

The renewal of the European Diploma of Białowieża National Park had been suspended since 2007 particularly due to the absence of a management plan.

Following the adoption of the management plan in 2014, the Group decided to organise a fresh on-the-spot appraisal. Based on the overall positive outcome of the visit which took place in October 2015, the independent expert suggested the renewal of the European Diploma to the area.

In January 2016, the Secretariat was alerted by NGOs and press reports that logging of the Białowieża Primeval Forest was to be restarted under a Government Forest Management Plan for 2012-2021.

At its 2016 meeting, the Group of Specialists decided to defer a decision as to the renewal of the European Diploma to its next meeting in 2017 and requested in the meantime the competent Polish authorities to provide explanations about the situation.

Beginning of March 2017, a coalition of Polish environmental NGOs informed the Secretariat of the intensification of logging within the site.

Outcome of the discussion and follow up

The Secretariat pointed out that the European Commission has initiated an infringement procedure against Poland relating to plans that would see an increase in logging in the Białowieża Forest.

Under these circumstances the Group of Specialists decided that it is inappropriate to consider the possible renewal of the European Diploma to this area.

In consequence the Group of Specialists called on the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention to request from the Polish authorities a regular report on the state of conservation of the area.

The Group of Specialists decided not to renew the European Diploma of Białowieża National Park, to remove the Białowieża National Park from the Diploma awarded list of areas and to inform the authorities of the National Park of this decision.

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention to monitor the situation and to request the Polish authorities to report on the situation and on the state of conservation of the area.

6. PRESENTATION OF THE REPORTING RESULTS BY THE SECRETARIAT AND THE GROUP OF SPECIALISTS

The Secretariat reminded the objectives of the annual report and the Group's mandate, which are defined by the Resolution [CM/ResDip\(2008\)1](#) on the revised regulations for the European Diploma for Protected Areas.

The Secretariat further informed that the purpose of the analysis was to examine the 2016 annual reports received, and more specifically the information on measures implemented to comply with the conditions and/or recommendations for the award or the renewal of the European Diploma.

In 2016, a total of 63 reports were received which amounts to 85% of the Diploma-holding areas.

The rate is slightly lower than in 2015 (88%) but seems to remain stable since the change in the annual report model form in 2015.

The Secretariat stressed the very diverse quality of reports and the liberty some managers took with the structure of the reporting template by skipping – especially the item regarding the visibility and the

The Secretariat also informed the Group of its intention to look into the reporting process with a view:

- To streamline the information related to each of the Diploma-holding areas,
- To improve the efficiency of the monitoring process enabling comparative and progress assessments;
- To increase the transparency of the monitoring process.

For this purpose the Secretariat will:

- explore the feasibility of an on-line reporting,
- systematically include in the template the conditions and/or recommendations conditioning the award or the renewal of the European Diploma,
- make the annual reports public.

use of the European Diploma logo - or removing several items from the reporting template.

The document [T-PVS/DE \(2017\) 12](#) provides the decision by the Group for each Diploma-holding area.

7. DISCUSSION OF THE AREAS IN NEED OF PARTICULAR ATTENTION BY THE GROUP AND FUTURE RENEWALS

At its 2016 meeting, the Group of Specialists paid specific attention to the situation of four Diploma-holding areas and followed up on its discussions.

a. Central Balkan National Park (Bulgaria)

Background

The renewal of the European Diploma to the park has been suspended since 2014, pending the official adoption of a new management plan.

In 2016, the Group again decided to defer the EDPA renewal to the Central Balkan National Park pending the official adoption of the management plan. The Group took note of the information provided by the authorities that the adoption of the management plan was foreseen in February 2016 and requested the authorities to provide a copy of the management plan along with its English translation.

The expected adopted management plan was finally submitted to the Secretariat with the 2016 annual report of the area.

Outcome of the discussion and follow up

According to the independent expert – Pierre Galland – who carried out the last on-the-spot appraisal visit to the Central National Park, the management plan is comprehensive and consistent and meets the requirements of the European Diploma. Pierre Galland strongly supported the renewal of the European

Diploma awarded to the area.

However as his visit goes back to 2013, Pierre Galland was uncertain about whether the conditions and recommendations he suggested at that time were still relevant or not.

The Group of Specialists agreed on the need of an on-the-spot appraisal visit before considering the renewal of the European Diploma of the Central Balkan National Park and entrusted the Secretariat to follow up on this.

b. Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve (Germany)

Background

The area is under scrutiny because the regional authorities (Landkreis Heidekreis) are planning the Volkwardingen Wind Park which would spoil the unique landscape and biodiversity of Lüneburger Heide, block an important migration corridor for the black grouse and the black stork and destroy an important habitat for bats, including red kites (*Milvus milvus*).

While in 2014, the Higher Administrative Court of Lower Saxony declared the planning document inaccurate and removed the zoning for Volkwardingen Wind Park, the regional authorities pursued the works on a zone for wind energy in the same area.

In 2016, the Group of Specialists expressed concern over the allegedly ongoing windmill zoning for Volkwardingen Wind Park despite the court decision of 2014 to remove it. It asked the authorities to report on the issue and to keep it under review.

The Group highlighted also the possibility of submitting a complaint under the case-file system of the Bern Convention.

Outcome of the discussion and follow up

The Group of Specialists expressed its concern again since – according to the annual report submitted by the authorities of the Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve - the situation has not changed.

The Secretariat confirmed that no complaint was submitted under the case-file system of the Bern Convention regarding this issue.

The Group of Specialists invited again the authorities of the Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve to use all Bern Convention means to ensure the issue is brought to the attention of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention.

c. Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park (Italy)

Background

The main issue continues to be the official adoption of a new management plan, due by 2013. In 2016 the Group of Specialists exhorted the authorities to adopt the management plan for the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park and to define the contiguous areas.

Furthermore, in the light of the information received in 2015, the decline of the Marsican brown bear (*Ursus arctos marsicanus*) classified as strictly protected under Appendix II to the Bern Convention continues to remain an issue of concern.

Outcome of the discussion and follow up

Despite the adoption of the management plan is still pending, the authorities reported on significant improvement in terms of conservation measures (ie Natura 2000 Management Plan, Pastures Management Plan, and the setting up of Zones of Special Conservation).

They also engaged in a control and monitoring scheme for the Marsican brown bear.

The Group of Specialists welcomed the progress in implementing the recommendations but still stressed the need for a drastic speed-up in the national and regional processes leading to the official adoption of a Management Plan for the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park. It asked the authorities to report on the progress thereof in 2017 and on the results of the monitoring scheme for the Marsican brown bear and specifically on sanitary measures taken to protect it.

d. Oka National Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)

Background

The Diploma-holding area is under scrutiny since several years because of the pending adoption of management plan of the Reserve devised in 1997.

Furthermore, it was stated in the annual report submitted by the authorities of the Oka National Biosphere Reserve that the management plan has a “recommendatory character.”

Outcome of the discussion and follow up

Although the Group of Specialists expressed repeatedly its concern regarding the formal adoption of the management plan and requested the authorities of the Diploma-holding area to report on the progress and to clarify the rules of the procedure related to its adoption, the annual report submitted in 2016 does not address the Group’s requests.

It was even stressed that the report is weak and provides little information on the implementation of the recommendations conditioning the renewal of the European Diploma.

The Group took note of the progress in implementing some of the recommendations, and reiterated the requests highlighted in its 2016 assessment, namely:

- requests further information about participatory management of stakeholders and landowners
- is concerned that the management plan devised in 1997 has not been formally adopted.
- requests the authorities, including the Ministry concerned, to clarify the rules of procedure related to the adoption of the management plan for the Oka National Biosphere Reserve.

Note: an on-the-spot appraisal visit to Oka National Biosphere Reserve is planned in 2017 with a view to the renewal of the European Diploma in 2019.

e. List of areas to be visited in 2017 and 2018 with a view to a renewal of their Diploma in 2019

The Secretariat informed the Group of Specialists that in 2017, 9 on-the-spot appraisal visits are already planned with a view to the renewal of the Diploma of the areas concerned in 2018. These 9 visits complement the 7 visits already carried out in 2016.

In 2018, there are 13 such areas (see document [T-PVS/DE \(2017\) 8](#)) for possible renewal of their Diploma in 2019.

The Secretariat suggested to the Group of Specialist to identify among the 13 areas, priority areas to be visited in 2017 in anticipation to the usual planning of on-the-spot appraisal visits.

Based on the annual reports and their assessment, the Group of Specialist endorsed the proposal of the Secretariat and agreed to anticipate the visits to following areas with a view to the renewal of their Diploma in 2019:

Name of the area	Country	Expert proposed	Award date	Next visit
Oka National Biosphere Reserve	Russian Federation	Ms Blanca Ramos	05.09.94	2017
Teberda National Biosphere Reserve	Russian Federation	M. Hervé Lethier	05.09.94	2017
Naardermeer Nature Reserve	Netherlands	Ms Ana Rainho	05.05.04	2017

These 3 visits complement the exceptional on-the-spot appraisal visits decided by the Group of Specialists to Poloniny National Park (item 5 of the report) and to Central Balkan National Park (item 7 of the report).

8. VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION

a. Videos on the Bern Convention and the Emerald Network

The Secretariat in its introductory address informed the Group of Specialists that it plans to produce a promotional video on the European Diploma. A contract with a communication company is already concluded.

The Secretariat broadcasted both the [videos](#) on the Bern Convention and on the Emerald Network as examples of how the video could look like.

b. Use of the Diploma logo

Based on the annual reports, there are many Diploma-holding areas which either do not give visibility to or even not use the logo of the European Diploma.

The Group of Specialists entrusted the Secretariat to remind the Diploma-holding areas authorities that as stated in the European Diploma regulations ([Resolution CM/ResDip\(2008\)1](#)) “ The logo is used on signposts at the entrances to the areas, in information leaflets on them and in the visitor reception buildings”.

The Group of experts entrusted the Secretariat to remind the Diploma-holding areas authorities of the need to give visibility to the European Diploma logo.

9. CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING

The Chair thanked the members of the Group, the experts and especially the outgoing members – Ms Ana Rainho, Mr Igor Ivanenko - for their contribution and dedication to the work of the Group of Specialists.

The Secretariat also thanked the Chair for his commitment and hard work during his 2 year mandate as Chair of the Group, as this was his last participation.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Secretariat would notify members of the date of the next meeting, to be held in 2018, in due course.

Appendix 1 – List of participants

CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF SPECIALISTS / PRESIDENT DU GROUPE DE SPECIALISTES

NETHERLANDS/PAYS-BAS

Mr Jan Willem SNEEP
Laan van Meerdervoort 1030
2564 AW The Hague
Netherlands
E-mail : [jwsneep\[at\]live.nl](mailto:jwsneep[at]live.nl)

SPECIALISTS / SPECIALISTES

HUNGARY/HONGRIE

Dr. Rozália Érdiné SZEKERES (**Member**)
Head of Department for Nature Conservation
Ministry of Agriculture
Kossuth tér 11.
1055 Budapest
Hungary
E-mail : [rozalia.szekeres.erdine\[at\]fm.gov.hu](mailto:rozalia.szekeres.erdine[at]fm.gov.hu)

ITALY/ITALIE

Ms. Valentina MAURIELLO (**Member**)
Technical support SOGESID
Ministero dell' Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio e del Mare
Via C. Colombo, 44
00147 Roma
Italy
E-mail: [Mauriello.valentina\[at\]minambiente.it](mailto:Mauriello.valentina[at]minambiente.it)

Mr Antonio MATURANI (**Member**)
Ministero dell' Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio e del Mare
Via C. Colombo, 44
00147 Roma
Italy
E-mail: [Maturani.antonio\[at\]minambiente.it](mailto:Maturani.antonio[at]minambiente.it)

PORTUGAL

Ms. Ana RAINHO (**Member**)
Head of the Division of Biodiversity Conservation at ICNF
Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas, IP
Divisão de Conservação da Biodiversidade
Avenida da República, n.º 16 a 16B
1050-191 Lisboa
Portugal
E-mail : [amrainho\[at\]fc.ul.pt](mailto:amrainho[at]fc.ul.pt)

SWEDEN/SUEDE

Mr Hasse BERGLUND (**Member**)
Head of Section
Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

Section of Protection and Management of Nature Reserves and National Parks
Policy Implementation Division
Valhallavägen 195
106 48 Stockholm
Sweden
E-mail : [Hasse.Berglund\[at\]naturvardsverket.se](mailto:Hasse.Berglund@naturvardsverket.se)

UKRAINE

Mr Igor IVANENKO (**Member**)
Deputy Head of the State Agency for Protected Areas
Ministry of Environmental Protection of Ukraine
Building 35, Uritskogo street
03035 Kyiv
Ukraine
E-mail: [ecoland\[at\]menr.gov.ua](mailto:ecoland@menr.gov.ua)

CONSULTANTS/EXPERTS

Mr Olivier BIBER
Président de "Nos Oiseaux"
Brunngasse 2, Postfach 658
3000 Bern
Switzerland
E-Mail: [olivier.biber\[at\]nosoiseaux.ch](mailto:olivier.biber@nosoiseaux.ch)

Mr Robert BRUNNER
Kirchengasse 39/13
1070 Wien
Austria
E-mail : [rbw748\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:rbw748@gmail.com)

Mr Pierre GALLAND (**apologised**)
Consultant en Environnement et Développement,
Chesaulx 6
2035 Corcelles
Switzerland
E-mail: [pierre.galland\[at\]bluewin.ch](mailto:pierre.galland@bluewin.ch)

Mr Hervé LETHIER
EMC²I, Le Belvédère, Chemin de l'Observatoire,
1264 Saint Cergue
Switzerland
E-mail: [herve.lethier\[at\]wanadoo.fr](mailto:herve.lethier@wanadoo.fr)

Mr Michael B USHER
4 Chalmers Court,
BRIDGE OF ALLAN
Stirling FK9 4BA
United Kingdom
E-mail: [m.b.usher\[at\]stir.ac.uk](mailto:m.b.usher@stir.ac.uk)

OTHER PARTICIPANTS / AUTRES PARTICIPANTS

Ms Kaja LOTMAN

Advisor
Environmental Board
Estonia
Phone +3725247899
E-mail: [kaja.lotman\[at\]keskkonnaamet.ee](mailto:kaja.lotman[at]keskkonnaamet.ee)

Ms Kadri MOLLER
Adviser
Nature Conservation Department
Ministry of the Environment
Estonia
Tel.: +372 6262876
E-mail : [kadri.moller\[at\]envir.ee](mailto:kadri.moller[at]envir.ee)

Mr Ivan KOUBEK
State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
Tajovského 28B
974 01 Baska Bystrica
Slovak Republic
E-mail : [ivan.koubek\[at\]sopsr.sk](mailto:ivan.koubek[at]sopsr.sk)

Mr Mario PERINAJ
Director of the Poloniny National Park Administration
State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
Tajovského 28B
974 01 Baska Bystrica
Slovak Republic
E-mail : [mario.perinaj\[at\]sopsr.sk](mailto:mario.perinaj[at]sopsr.sk)

SECRETARIAT

DIRECTORATE OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE/
DIRECTION DE LA GOUVERNANCE DEMOCRATIQUE
Biodiversity Unit / Unité de la biodiversité
Fax: +33 (0)3 88 41 37 51

Mr Eladio FERNANDEZ-GALIANO
Tel: +33 (0)3 88 41 22 59
E-mail: [eladio.fernandez-galiano\[at\]coe.int](mailto:eladio.fernandez-galiano[at]coe.int)

Mr Gianluca SILVESTRINI
Tel: +33 (0)3 88 41 35 59
E-mail: [gianluca.silvestrini\[at\]coe.int](mailto:gianluca.silvestrini[at]coe.int)

Mrs Iva OBRETENOVA
Tel: +33 (0)3 90 21 58 81
E-mail: [iva.obretenova\[at\]coe.int](mailto:iva.obretenova[at]coe.int)

Mr Marc HORY
Tel: +33 (0)3 88 41 28 27
E-mail: [marc.hory\[at\]coe.int](mailto:marc.hory[at]coe.int)

Ms Tania BRAULIO
Tel: +33 (0)3 88 41 23 02

E-mail: [tania.braulio\[at\]coe.int](mailto:tania.braulio@coe.int)

Appendix 2 – Agenda

WEDNESDAY 8 MARCH 2017

9h00 – 9h40 Welcome and opening of the meeting

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE CHAIR

Dr. Jan Willem Sneep (the Netherlands), Chair of the Group of Specialists

2. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

[Document T-PVS/DE (2017)3]

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SHORT PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE GROUP IN 2016 AND OF THE ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING THE LAST YEAR

Dr. Jan Willem Sneep, Chair of the Group of Specialists

FOLLOW UP BY THE SECRETARIAT ON THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE 2016 MEETING OF THE GROUP OF SPECIALISTS

Ms Iva Obretenova, Secretary of the Bern Convention

Report of meeting of the GS EDPA [T-PVS/DE (2016) 4]

Extract from the list of decisions and adopted texts on the European Diploma for Protected Areas, at the 36th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention [T-PVS/DE (2017)1]

9h40 – 10h30 Assessment reports with a view to the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas

4. RESULTS OF THE ADVISORY VISITS, DISCUSSION AND PROPOSALS TO THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

- Matsalu National Park (Estonia) by Mr Michael Usher (10 minutes presentation, 15 minutes discussion)

Report on the assessment visit to Matsalu National Park [T-PVS/DE (2017) 5]

Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Matsalu National Park [T-PVS/DE (2017) 9]

- Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve (Germany) by Mr Robert Brunner (10 minutes presentation, 15 minutes discussion)

Report on the assessment visit to Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve [T-PVS/DE (2016) 12]

Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve [T-PVS/DE (2017) 9]

10h30 – 10h50 COFFEE BREAK

- Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park (Spain) by Mr Olivier Biber (10 minutes presentation, 15 minutes discussion)

Report on the assessment visit to Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park [T-PVS/DE (2017) 4]

Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park [T-PVS/DE (2017) 9]

- Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve (Russian Federation) by Mr Hervé Lethier (10 minutes presentation, 15 minutes discussion)

Report on the assessment visit to Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve [T-PVS/DE (2016) 14]

Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Kostomuksha Strict Nature Reserve [T-PVS/DE (2017) 9]

- Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation) by Mr Hervé Lethier (10 minutes presentation, 15 minutes discussion)

Report on the assessment visit to Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve [T-PVS/DE (2016) 16]

Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Tsentralno-Chernozemny Biosphere Reserve [T-PVS/DE (2017) 9]

- Store Mosse National Park (Sweden) by Mr Pierre Galland (10 minutes presentation, 15 minutes discussion)

Report on the assessment visit to Store Mosse National Park [T-PVS/DE (2017) 6]

Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Store Mosse National Park [T-PVS/DE (2017) 9]

12h30 – 13h45 LUNCH BREAK

13h45– 14h10 Assessment reports with a view to the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas (continued)

- Bullerö and Långviksskär Nature Reserves (Sweden), by Mr Pierre Galland (10 minutes presentation, 15 minutes discussion)

Report on the assessment visit to Bullerö and Långviksskär Nature Reserves [T-PVS/DE (2016) 15]

Draft resolution regarding the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas awarded to the Bullerö and Långviksskär Nature Reserves [T-PVS/DE (2017) 9]

14h10 – 16h00 Annual reports 2016

5. FOLLOW UP ON THE 2016 CONCLUSIONS OF THE GROUP OF SPECIALISTS REGARDING POLONINY NATIONAL PARK AND BIALOWIEZA NATIONAL PARK

Report of meeting of the GS EDPA [T-PVS/DE (2016) 4]

Opinion on Poloniny National Park's management plan drafted by Mr Robert Brunner and Mr Hervé Lethier [T-PVS/DE (2017) 10]

Report of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic [T-PVS/DE (2017) 11]

Update of the situation of the Bialowieza National Park [T-PVS/DE (2017)13]

6. PRESENTATION OF THE REPORTING RESULTS BY THE SECRETARIAT AND THE GROUP

Compilation of annual reports by EDPA zones [T-PVS/DE (2017) 2]

Compilation of the analysis of the annual reports [T-PVS/DE (2017)12]

16h00 – 16h20 COFFEE BREAK

16h20 – 17h15 Annual reports 2016 (continued)

7. DISCUSSION OF THE AREAS IN NEED OF PARTICULAR ATTENTION BY THE GROUP AND FUTURE RENEWALS

- Follow up on the areas identified in 2016 as requiring particular attention (Central Balkan National Park (Bulgaria), Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve (Germany), Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park (Italy), Oka National Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation))
- Suggested actions
- Possible exceptional on-the-spot appraisals to be carried out in 2017
- Draft list of areas to be visited in 2017 and 2018 with a view to a renewal of their Diploma in 2019*

* In 2017, 9 assessment visits are expected to be carried out with a view to the renewal of the Diploma of the areas concerned in 2018. These 9 visits complement the 7 visits already carried out in 2016. In 2018, there are 13 such areas for possible renewal of their Diploma in 2019. The Group of Specialists should identify priority areas for appraisals in 2017 and 2018

**Compilation of the analysis of the annual reports [T-PVS/DE (2017)12]
List of areas whose Diploma should be renewed in 2019 [T-PVS/DE (2017) 8]**

17h15 – 18h00 Other business

8. VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION

- Videos on the Bern Convention and the Emerald Network
- Use of the Diploma logo
- Bienial thematic meetings of the EDPA managers

9. CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING