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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

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REPORT

**ON THE SPOT EXPERT APPRAISAL OF THE
BOSCHPLAAT NATURE RESERVE**

(NETHERLANDS)

2-3 July 2018

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The European Diploma for Protected Areas (EDPA) was first awarded to De Boschplaat Nature Reserve in the Netherlands in 1970 for the period until 1975. The Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas decided at its meeting in 2018 meeting that an on-the-spot appraisal be undertaken during 2018 to assess whether the EDPA should be renewed for a period of 10 years from 2020.

This report is written in relation to a consideration of the renewal of the EDPA for the 10-year period from 2020 until 2029. No member of the Secretariat in Strasbourg was present during the on-the-spot visit from 1 to 5 July 2018.

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1. THE REMIT

At its meeting on 22 February 2018, the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma for Protected Areas (EDPA) decided to carry out on-the-spot appraisals of certain EDPAs which are subject to renewals in 2019 and 2020. De Boschplaat Nature Reserve in The Netherlands was one of those EDPAs selected for appraisal. The previous appraisal had been undertaken by Edward Idle on 26 and 27 August 1999.

A letter dated 14 May 2018, signed by Iva Obretenova, stated that “the objective of the on-the-spot appraisal is to assess whether the conditions of the site remain the same as when the Diploma was awarded and extended, or whether they have improved or deteriorated”. I was asked to be “the independent expert in charge of the on-the-spot appraisal, visiting the site, meeting relevant stakeholders as per the draft agenda, and preparing a report, including the necessary recommended actions”. This report is written to fulfil the requests in Iva Obretenova’s letter. The detailed programme for the on-the-spot visit, together with names and affiliations of people who contributed to the visit, is given in Annex 1.

2. INTRODUCTION TO DE BOSCHPLAAT NATURE RESERVE

An application from the government of The Netherlands for the award of the European Diploma for Protected Areas (EDPA) was considered at a meeting in Strasbourg in November 1969 [paper CE/Nat (69) 105, dated 10 November 1969]. Following favourable consideration of this application an on-the-spot survey of the nature reserve was conducted on 6 and 7 April 1970 by Professor A. Noirfalise [paper CE/Nat (70) 33, dated 15 April 1970].

Subsequently, a series of six further surveys/appraisals have been carried out:

- from 30 September to 2 October 1974 by Dr W. Erz [paper CE/Nat/DE (75) 15, dated 20 January 1975],
- on 21 and 22 August 1979 by M. J. Everett [paper SN-R-DP (80) 4, dated 10 January 1980],
- on 14 and 15 September 1983 by Mario F. Broggi [paper SN-ZP (84) 25, dated 23 March 1984],
- from 1 to 4 August 1988 by Francis Roux [paper PE/ZP (88) 36, dated 22 November 1988],
- on 19 and 20 April 1994 again by Francis Roux [paper PE-S-ZP (95) 39, dated 17 January 1995], and
- from 25 to 28 August 1999 by Edward Idle [paper PE-S-DE (2000) 64, dated 10 January 2000].

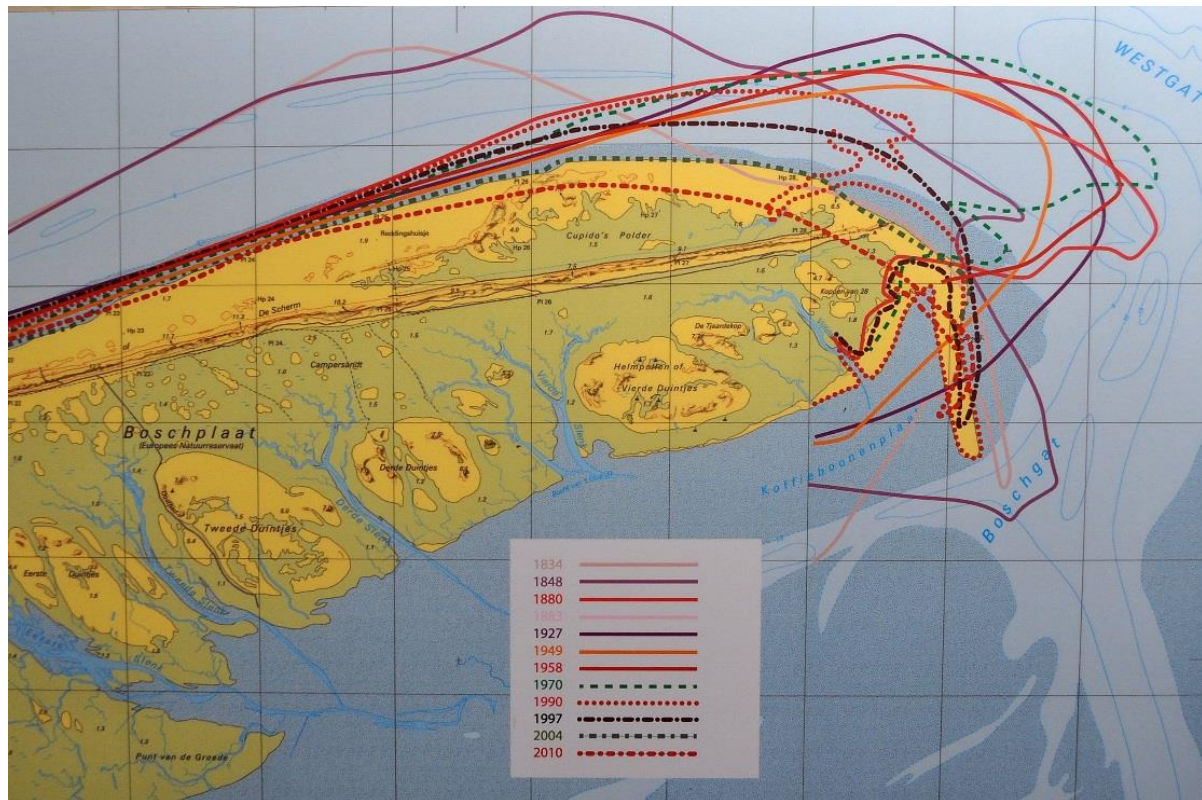
The main message coming from the previous seven reports of visits to the Boschplaat Nature Reserve is that there have been no doubts expressed about either the initial award of the EDPA or its renewal. The six people who have undertaken the visits between 1970 and 1999 have all been impressed by the importance, conservation and management of the nature reserve. Over the years it appears that no conditions have been attached to the award or the renewals, but series of recommendations have been made.

3. EUROPEAN INTEREST

The European interest in De Boschplaat Nature Reserve has been recognised in the previous seven reports, and hence only brief details will be given in this report.

De Boschplaat contains about 4,000 ha of sand dunes, dune grassland, saltmarsh and a variety of inter-tidal habitats. It is this large expanse of plant and inter-tidal communities, influenced in varying degrees by both saltwater and freshwater, that contributes to the mosaic of habitats and hence to the outstanding biodiversity of the nature reserve. An account of the history of De Boschplaat and its fauna and flora was published by Zwart (2010). The nature reserve is also important both for its migratory bird populations and for the breeding species (perhaps the spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*), marsh harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*) and lesser black-back gull (*Larus fuscus*) are the most notable).

In addition, there is very considerable dynamism in the coastline of De Boschplaat, as shown in the illustration below. Although to some extent the processes of accretion and erosion have been modified by the construction of dykes, the processes are nevertheless natural. It is arguable that a major influence on the development of the coastline was the construction of the 16 km long ‘Stuifdijk’ (sand dyke), along the northern margin of De Boschplaat, between 1931 and 1937.



It is these continuous processes of accretion and erosion which lead to the variety of habitats, and the continuous re-starting of ecological successions. These processes also lead to a variety of soil types and buried soil profiles as demonstrated in the popular factsheet (Staatsbosbeheer, 2017), which also addresses issues of sea level rise. The *Platform Duurzaam Landschap Terschelling* estimates that about 400 ha of the land area at the eastern extremity of De Boschplaat has been lost during the last 40 years. Staatsbosbeheer suggest that there has been an increase in the area of saltmarsh on the Wadden Sea side of the nature reserve, but the extent of this increase and its present annual increment (if any) has yet to be determined.

My assessment is that the European interest in the area is at least as strong as it was when De Boschplaat was originally proposed in 1969. The natural processes of accretion and erosion, together with the ecological successions initiated, are maintaining the area's biodiversity. Although the sizes of bird populations have varied, the increase in the number of breeding spoonbills is particularly dramatic. Thus, De Boschplaat remains satisfactory on the criterion of European interest.

4. APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the previous renewal of the EDPA, 5 recommendations were attached. In this section of the report I provide my assessment of the extent to which these issues have been addressed. This assessment is based on observation and discussions whilst I was on the Island of Terschelling, and on the annual reports submitted to the Council of Europe by the Dutch authorities.

Recommendation 1: sufficient financial resources need to be available on an ongoing basis in order to safeguard the interests of the Boschplaat's natural environment, especially monitoring, staff, public relations and communication. My impression is that De Boschplaat is adequately funded for normal management activities. Additional funds have become available for seasonal activities, such as the employment of seasonal wardens and the educational programme. There is a certain amount of monitoring activity, and at one of the warden's posts I discussed monitoring of the bird populations in

an area at the eastern end of the nature reserve. However, there is a case for continuing the funding for the seasonal wardens and educational staff, and for both expanding the monitoring programme and funding some research (this will form the basis of recommendation 3 in this report).

Recommendation 2: measures should be taken to restore the original dynamics in the eastern part of the reserve. The present function of the “Stuifdijk” (artificial sand dyke) should be taken into consideration. New insights based on recent scientific research on restoring natural dynamics should be included in the management plan, including the consequences of the current rise in sea levels. This is a very complicated issue which engenders strong emotions in some of the people of Terschelling. The presence of the Stuifdijk over the entire length of De Boschplaat is clearly a problem for naturally dynamic processes and biodiversity on De Boschplaat itself (this is discussed in the report ‘*Nature Restoration by Natural Dynamics on De Boschplaat*, OBN (2018), one the main sources of information for the new vision for De Boschplaat). The annual reports state that a path to the eastern end of the nature reserve has been re-located and changes have been made to cycle parking facilities (both were seen during the on-the-spot visit). In the longer term, discussions are continuing, with the aim of finalising a ‘Vision for De Boschplaat’ later in 2018. The issues surrounding this recommendation, the development of the vision, and a new management plan from 2023 onwards, are discussed in section 5 of this report, when a new recommendation (recommendation 1 in this report) will be proposed.

Recommendation 3: communication with all those involved in the measures to be taken (which are still being contested locally) requires maximum attention and deployment of the necessary resources. This is linked to recommendation 2 above. It was clear from the people whom I met that there was very considerable communication and agreement on many of the issues relating to the management of De Boschplaat. A number of informative brochures has been published by Rijkswaterstaat (2015) and Staatsbosbeheer (2017). There is also a special Boschplaat exhibition in the Natuurschuur Lies (running from 2017 until later in-2018).

Recommendation 4: Annual shipping incidents in the North Sea to the north of the Boschplaat are a real concern for both people and the natural environment. Better guarantees of safety with regard to the transport of hazardous substances and oil should be instituted. Better guarantees of safety are beyond the control of either Staatsbosbeheer or Rijkswaterstaat. However, both organisations work with the Wadden Sea Disaster Response Network (CRW). I was briefed about a potential response to any disaster which might occur within the Wadden Sea. In September 2017, a three-day exercise was held which simulated a shipping incident, including an oil spill. By chance, this exercise was held under very real conditions as a force 8 gale was blowing! The managers of De Boschplaat were involved in the exercise and are able to advise on the clean-up after any real incident. All of this seemed satisfactory for an incident which affects the southern side of De Boschplaat, but there remain concerns about the effectiveness of CRW if an incident occurs in the North Sea (this will be addressed in recommendation 5 in this report).

Recommendation 5: the number of motorised vehicles on the beach should be reduced. There has essentially been no change since this recommendation was originally made. Permits to individuals to drive on the beach are issued, for a fee of €25 per year, by the Municipality of Terschelling, and the number is restricted to 900 in any year. Driving on the beach is only permitted from between 1 October and 31 March the following year. The Land Rover Club has two meetings per year with Staatsbosbeheer to discuss sensitive areas which can be avoided by placing yellow markers. By and large, responsible drivers undertake a major beach clean-up (especially collecting litter during the last weekend in March), restrict their activity until after 17.00 hours in October and during the Christmas holiday when there are other beach users, and restrict their speed to 20 – 25 km per hour. Problems might arise, however, with drivers who ignore these guidelines and drive up to the speed limit of 60 km per hour. It also needs to be remembered that the issue of permits is a useful source of revenue for the Municipality.

Conclusion. It would appear that first three of the five recommendations have been complied with, especially as there is considerable progress with determining the new ‘Vision for De Boschplaat’. The fourth recommendation has been addressed as far as is possible, given that the management of De Boschplaat does not have the authority to give such guarantees as are requested. Whilst there has been

no progress with recommendation 5, any harm done by driving might be mitigated by the collection of litter, policing of undesirable actions by others, and by the revenue to the Municipality.

5. CONSERVATION MEASURES AND MANAGEMENT

It is possible to say that conservation of a protected area such as De Boschplaat could best be achieved by ‘controlled neglect’! Naturally occurring processes are creating the mosaic of habitats which favour a wide diversity of species of both plants and animals. The question arises as to whether or not management practices should interfere with the naturally occurring processes. The dilemma is therefore “to intervene or not to intervene”.

With the Staatsbosbeheer owning a large proportion of the land area of Terschelling it is desirable that management balances the requirement for the safety of the local population with the requirement for fostering conservation. An evaluation of the management plan has been published (Staatsbosbeheer & Rijkswaterstaat, 2015), but the dilemma has yet to be resolved. However, although relying on natural processes might be true for much of De Boschplaat, there are several management issues which relate directly to conservation.

De Boschplaat is a Natura 2000 area, lying towards the south western end of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Area. The short description of the World Heritage Area states: “*The Wadden Sea is the largest unbroken system of intertidal sand and mud flats in the world. The site covers the Dutch Wadden Sea Conservation Area, the German Wadden Sea National Parks of Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein, and most of the Danish Wadden Sea maritime conservation area. It is a large, temperate, relatively flat coastal wetland environment, formed by the intricate interactions between physical and biological factors that have given rise to a multitude of transitional habitats with tidal channels, sandy shoals, sea-grass meadows, mussel beds, sandbars, mudflats, salt marshes, estuaries, beaches and dunes. The area is home to numerous plant and animal species, including marine mammals such as the harbour seal, grey seal and harbour porpoise. Wadden Sea is one of the last remaining large-scale, intertidal ecosystems where natural processes continue to function largely undisturbed*”. Thus, the conservation and management of De Boschplaat contributes directly to the values of this World Heritage Area.

The main issues facing both the conservation and management of De Boschplaat are the extent to which completely natural processes of erosion and accretion should be allowed to occur, or whether intervention in these processes (by maintaining sand dykes, by sand nourishment, etc.) is desirable. As seen in previous reports about the EDPA, these differences of opinion have continued for decades!

As part of the process of agreeing a way forward, Staatsbosbeheer has been undertaking a considerable consultation exercise which will lead to a vision for De Boschplaat Nature Reserve. To begin the process 30 people, including the mayor, political parties and the Management Consultation Group, visited the neighbouring island of Ameland. Following this there have been 11 excursions into De Boschplaat, involving 314 people. There has also been an internet forum, in which 590 people have participated, about half being islanders and the other half coming from the mainland. There have been 2 workshops, one symposium in which scientific experts were involved and a report prepared by an independent network of specialists (OBN, 2018). Whilst it is not easy to resolve the differences of opinion between those who favour completely natural processes and those who advocate human interventions, at the time of writing this report (July 2018) presentations of the draft vision are being made to various island groups. This vision, currently termed “*Boschplaat Vision 2050: safe for people, plants and animals*”, will form the basis of the revised management plan for the Boschplaat Natura 2000 area, which coincides with the EDPA, from 2023 onwards.

This leads to the first recommendation. **1. Communicate the final version of the ‘Vision for De Boschplaat’ to the Council of Europe, together with information about the revised management plan for the EDPA and Natura 2000 area, by December 2022.**

Much of the southern part of De Boschplaat consists of saltmarshes. It is thought that these areas are accreting, but more research/monitoring is required to determine the dynamic nature of the extent of saltmarsh. These saltmarshes are valuable as examples of an ungrazed (by domestic livestock) habitat, with various stages in the physical and ecological development of saltmarsh from bare mud to a more-or-less fully vegetated plant community. However, the south western part of the EDPA is

known as ‘De Groede’ and has traditionally been used for grazing livestock. This has led to grasslands of varying types which, though grazed by cattle and horses, are important feeding grounds for migratory birds, especially geese (*Branta* species). The managed grasslands also increase floral diversity – unfortunately, my on-the-spot visit was too late in the year to see the orchid species which occur in this area and elsewhere. This system of conservation management in De Groede clearly adds to the value of De Boschplaat for birds, plants and invertebrates – both overgrazing and undergrazing of this area could potentially lead to a reduction in the biodiversity of this area.

Thus, a second recommendation is: **2. Review annually the grazing in De Groede, and adjust the intensity and boundaries as necessary so as to retain the biodiversity value of this section of De Boschplaat Nature Reserve.**

Resources for managing De Boschplaat are currently sufficient, with 12 staff being permanently employed, and this number being increased to 25 during the summer months. Also, as mentioned in the annual reports, volunteers have been trained to assist with the management of visitors, the protection of particularly sensitive bird breeding areas, and to collect some information of value to managers (such as the home origin of visitors). Whilst this is commendable, there is further information which could be collected and would be of value for the management of the nature reserve.

One aspect of the information requirement relates to research. The most immediate issue which came to my attention is understanding the dynamics of the saltmarsh along the southern boundary of the nature reserve. The symposium which was related to the development of the ‘Vision for De Boschplaat’ involved scientists from elsewhere in the Netherlands and USA. It might be useful for the management of the nature reserve to draw up a list of research projects which it would find both helpful and useful. This list could be circulated to research establishments and universities, but some funding might be required for collaborative projects.

Another aspect of the information requirement relates to monitoring. At present there are some data on the bird populations, although there was a general feeling that more monitoring was required. I heard about the four fritillary butterflies (genera *Argynnis*, *Boloria* and *Issoria*) on the nature reserve, but there are no data on their abundance, distribution and variability of their population sizes, nor on the distribution of their food plants, *Viola* species. Such information could be important in determining management options, especially grazing (or lack of grazing) in various parts of the nature reserve.

It appears that there are sufficient financial resources for the ongoing management of the nature reserve in order to safeguard the interests of the natural environment, to support an appropriate number of staff, and to deal with public relations and communication. However, additional resources might be required from time to time to support targeted monitoring, educational and research activities. This leads to a third recommendation: **3: Assess the requirements for additional financial resources to undertake targeted and time-limited research, monitoring and educational activities.**

Relatively few alien species were observed during the visits to De Boschplaat. Concern has been expressed about both the rugose rose (*Rosa rugosa*) and a cordgrass (*Spartina x townsendii*), but neither is at all widespread. However, one potentially serious invasive alien species is the cherry (*Prunus serotina* – sometimes known as black cherry, wild black cherry, rum cherry, or mountain black cherry). In one particular area I saw that the larger trees/scrub had been cut and a herd of goats maintained in a temporarily fenced area so as to control any re-growth. The difference between the controlled area and the area outside of the fence line was very noticeable. Again there is a difference of opinion between managers who would wish to eradicate the species from the nature reserve and some local people who wish to collect the fruit. Having visited West Terschelling, I found that *P. serotina* was also abundant at that end of the island, and hence there seemed little point in satisfying the demands of fruit collectors on the nature reserve. This leads to a fourth recommendation: **4: Devise a strategy for the management and control (or eradication) of invasive alien species on De Boschplaat to be included in the future management plan.**

The previous recommendation 4 was written because of the concerns about shipping accidents and the resulting problems associated with pollution. Whereas most aspects of accident prevention

and clean-up operations are beyond the authority of De Boschplaat managers, nevertheless it is important to be aware of the risk of an accident occurring and be prepared to take action if necessary. The involvement of nature reserve staff in the exercise of a simulated accident in 2017 was important in preparing staff for a real event if one ever arises (Rijkswaterstaat 2017, 2018). Communication between all agencies involved is important as actions need to be instituted speedily in the event of an incident. Thus a recommendation is: **5: Maintain liaison with all agencies involved in marine accident prevention and, if an incident does occur, with agencies involved in the amelioration of the effects of the accident on De Boschplaat.**

6. USES AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Tourism is a major activity on the Island of Terschelling and is a major source of revenue for the Municipality. There are two ferries, the fast ferry which only carries foot passengers and the slow ferry which also carries cars; both arrive in West Terschelling. There are good beaches and many facilities at the west end of the island, and the great majority of these tourists do not travel as far as De Boschplaat at the east end of the island. Hence, the number of visitors to the nature reserve is relatively small as they have to park (or travel by bus) near the west end of the nature reserve, and then have either to walk or cycle into the nature reserve (a few recommended walking routes within the nature reserve are described by Zwart (2015)). It seems unlikely that the number of visitors to the nature reserve will change substantially even if the number of tourists visiting Terschelling increases.

For tourists who prefer not to walk or cycle into the nature reserve, there are options of other forms of transport. During the visit I met the owners of the Beach Bus Company, Puur Terschelling Covered Wagon Company and Terpstra Covered Wagon Company. The nature reserve managers have agreed routes that these horse-drawn vehicles can take, largely within the western part of De Boschplaat. There are also opportunities for horse riding on the beach.

The educational activities were impressive. Two members of staff undertake a variety of activities with the school children of the island, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to spend two days and a night out on the nature reserve. Innovative demonstrations, such as that observed showing the processes of erosion and accretion in a tank operated by a child, are impressive.

During the visit I saw the duck decoy at De Grië. This is one of four duck decoys on Terschelling, and had recently been acquired by Staatsbosbeheer. Restoration of the structures associated with the trapping of ducks has been taking place. Whilst relatively few visitors are likely to venture to the duck decoy, it is nevertheless an important part of the cultural heritage of the nature reserve.

There is a small exhibition in Lies, to the west of the nature reserve's western boundary. However, provision for adult visitors is largely in the Dutch language (I am told that less than 5% of visitors to Terschelling come from outside The Netherlands). A useful popular introduction to the dunes and their wildlife is Rijkswaterstaat & Staatsbosbeheer (2015) and a more technical account is contained in Oost *et al.* (2018). As mentioned in previous reports to the Council of Europe (the reports dated 22 November 1988 and 17 January 1995) it would be useful to have more literature available in other major languages (e.g. German, French, English and possibly Danish). The importance of the area, both as part of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Area and having the European Diploma for Protected Areas, could be more prominently displayed and communicated to visitors. Thus a further recommendation is: **6: Review the information available to both Dutch and international visitors, stressing and demonstrating the conservation and heritage importance of De Boschplaat.**

7. CONNECTIVITY OF THE AREA

De Boschplaat is a substantial portion of the eastern end of the Island of Terschelling, and as well as holding the EDPA it is a Natura 2000 site. Together with the Noordsvaarder (areas influenced by the Wadden Sea), De Boschplaat is a small part of the extensive Wadden Sea World Heritage Area, which extends from the Netherlands in the south, through Germany to Denmark in the north.

There are two particular concerns in relation to the whole of the Wadden Sea. One relates to shipping accidents and other activities, such as the building of dykes and barrages, or drilling for oil

and/or gas extraction. The other is the effects of climate change and the potential for sea level rise. Whilst both concerns are largely beyond the control of managers of De Boschplaat, international co-operation is essential if the Wadden Sea World Heritage Area is to be protected

Of particular interest is the dynamic nature of the Ameland Inlet, the stretch of sea between De Boschplaat and the Island of Ameland. In an unpublished report by Edwin P. L. Elias (July 2017) there is the evidence that recently there is a net outflow of 10 to 38 million m³ per tidal cycle (about 5 – 9% of the volume of water entering as the tide rises). This has led both to the erosion at the eastern end of De Boschplaat and to the formation of a shoal which appears to be merging with the Ameland coast. Modelling indicates that a new shoal might arise in the North Sea to the north of the eastern end of De Boschplaat. All of this is indicative of the extremely dynamic nature of this coastline, and indeed of De Boschplaat itself.

8. CONCLUSIONS

De Boschplaat Nature Reserve is a protected area which both has considerable European interest and is well managed. It thus fulfils the two criteria for the award/renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas.

My conclusion is therefore that the EDPA be renewed for 10 years, from 2020 until 2029. In reaching this conclusion I suggest that six recommendations are attached to the renewal. These are listed within the report, and for convenience are re-listed in Annex 2.

9. REFERENCES

[Note: many of the titles in this list are in Dutch. The English language translations are my own and hence are not definitive].

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Annex 1. On-the-spot expert appraisal of De Boschplaat Nature Reserve: Programme, 1 to 5 July 2018

Sunday 1 July

- Flight from Edinburgh to Amsterdam; 3 trains and bus journeys to Harlingen; overnight accommodation at a hotel in Harlingen.

Monday 2 July

- Early fast ferry from Harlingen Haven to West Terschelling.
- Meeting in the offices of Staatsbosbeheer (State Forest and Conservation Service) to discuss the programme, with Freek Zwart (District Officer, Staatsbosbeheer; local organiser of the on-the-spot visit), Jaap Roelofs (Team Leader, Staatsbosbeheer) and Jan Roclof Witting (Civil Engineer, Rijkswaterstaat (Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management)).
- Visit to De Boschplaat Nature Reserve, along the northern shore to the extreme east end of the island of Terschelling, accompanied by Freek Zwart and Jan Roclof Witting and meeting 4 other people during the day.
- Dinner with Jesler Kiestra (Head of Staatsbosbeheer for Friesland), Bert Wassink (Mayor of the Municipality of Terschelling), Jeltje Hoekstra-Sikkema (Alderman of the Municipality of Terschelling), Wout Jan Adema (Head of District West (+ Friesland), Rijkswaterstaat), Willem Riesenkamp (Advisor on crisis management, Rijkswaterstaat) and people previously met earlier in the day.

Tuesday 3 July

- Visit to De Groede, the grazed area in the south west of De Boschplaat Nature Reserve, accompanied by a number of people with interests in De Boschplaat. The group included Jaap Smit (Foundation for Island Conservation), Mike Rinders and Ronald van Zandwijk (Platform Duurzaam Landschap Terschelling (sustainable landscape)), Pim Werner (Land Rover Club), Piet Zumkehr (Ecological Consultant), Harry Horn (Spoonbill Working Group), Bert Scheepstra (Beach Bus Company), Ane Bierema and Jo Bierema (Puur Terschelling Covered Wagon Company) and Rients Terpstra (Terpstra Covered Wagon Company).
- Visit to the recently acquired duck decoy and saltmarsh on De Grië.
- Visit to the educational programme, where Wanda Bakker and Feline Zwaan discussed their work with schools and visitors; brief visit to De Boschplaat Exhibition.
- Interview with Jan Heuff, journalist from a regional newspaper.
- Final discussion with Jesler Kiestra and Freek Zwart.

Wednesday 4 July

Private day, visiting the coast and dunes of West Terschelling.

Thursday 5 July

- Fast ferry from West Terschelling to Harlingen Haven.
- Three train and bus journeys to Schiphol Airport
- Flight from Amsterdam Edinburgh.

Annex 2. The suggested six recommendations which might be attached to the renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas in 2020

In considering the on-the-spot visit in July 2018, it is my recommendation that the European Diploma for Protected Areas be renewed for the period 2020 to 2029. I also recommend that the renewal should have 6 recommendations attached to it, as listed below.

1. Communicate the final version of the 'Vision for De Boschplaat' to the Council of Europe, together with information about the revised management plan for the EDPA and Natura 2000 area, by December 2022.
2. Review annually the grazing in De Groede, and adjust the intensity and boundaries as necessary so as to retain the biodiversity value of this section of De Boschplaat Nature Reserve.
- 3: Assess the requirements for additional financial resources to undertake targeted and time-limited research, monitoring and educational activities.
- 4: Devise a strategy for the management and control (or eradication) of invasive alien species on De Boschplaat to be included in the future management plan.
- 5: Maintain liaison with all agencies involved in marine accident prevention and, if an incident does occur, with agencies involved in the amelioration of the effects of the accident on De Boschplaat.
- 6: Review the information available to both Dutch and international visitors, stressing and demonstrating the conservation and heritage importance of De Boschplaat.