



**STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT  
OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL HABITATS  
(CDPE)**

**Group of Specialists on Protected Areas  
(PE-S-ZP)**

**SCANDOLA NATURE RESERVE  
(FRANCE)**

**Category A**

**European Diploma Renewal**

*by*

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## SUMMARY

A a chersa di u secretariatu di u Cunsigliu di l'Europa, aghju esaminatu u 14 e 15 junio 1994 a Riserva naturale di Scandola/PNRC (F). Stu rughjone, difficile di passu, chi cumporta une parte terrena e une parte marina è maravigliosu in ogni puntu. Porghje une maghjine ripresentativa di i mezi naturali mediterranii. A Riserva naturale risponde à fondu a i criteri d'appreriazione per u rinnovu di una diploma Europeu.

At the request of the General Secretariat of the Council of Europe, I made an appraisal of the Scandola Nature Reserve/ Corsican Regional Nature Park [CRNP(F)] on June 14-15 1994.

Access to this reserve is difficult. It includes a land area and a marine area, and is outstanding in every respect. It offers a representative picture of Mediterranean natural environments and habitats. The Nature Reserve fully meets the evaluation criteria for renewal of the European Diploma.

### A) TERMS OF REFERENCE

The author of this report was asked to make an appraisal of the Scandola Nature Reserve / CRNP (F), based on the criteria laid down for the renewal of the European Diploma by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

### B) EXECUTION OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

13 June 1994:

Arrived in Ajaccio. Met at the airport by Mr. Frisoni, Head of the Heritage Department. Preliminary discussions with Mr. Frisoni and Mr. Leenhardt, Director of the Regional Nature Park [RNP]/Corsica.

Visited the architectural office, in Ajaccio, of Mrs. Stefanaggi, designer of the model of an orientation table to be installed in the near future at the Col de la Croix / Bocca a Croce.

Meeting in the offices of the CRNP Heritage Department with Mr. J.-M. Caillaud, scientific attaché.

Various items of information provided plus the list of scientific projects.

Stop on the Galeria road; after a 10-minute walk, view in the maquis of the future site of the orientation table, the plans for which we had just been shown.

On reaching Galeria, visited the "Maison de la Mer" [House of the Sea] and then the "Casa Marine", where we met and talked with the Head Warden Mr. Arrighi, and Mr. Frisoni.

14 June 1994:

Visit by powered "whaling-boat" to the marine area of the Nature Reserve and an important stretch of the frontage of the planned Corsican Marine Park. Messrs. Frisoni, Arrighi and Recorbet, responsible for "Nature Conservation" (DIREN) are with us in the boat helmed by the Head Warden.

15 June 1994:

At the "Casa Marine" in Galeria, lengthy discussion and visit of the completely renovated House with Mr. J.-B. D'Angeli, field guide.

Then, with Messrs. Arrighi and Paul Rossi, town councillor of Galeria, visit to the Le Fango Genoese tower.

Late morning visit to the APEM Ecological Laboratory in the Pirio state forest, where a team is at work headed by Professor Blondel of Montpellier University.

In the afternoon, another sea outing with a team of Catalan university researchers working on the *Cystoseira* group (algae vulnerable to pollution). Went ashore with Mr. Arrighi at Elbu Bay, to examine the site. A great deal of talk about the problems of preserving an agrarian heritage and ways of doing so.

In the evening further discussion with Mr. J.-C. Thibault, biological and ornithological consultant at the Corsican Regional Nature Park, and Mr. Dominici, park warden.

16 June 1994:

Mr. J.-C. Thibault takes us north of Portu, close to Punta Bianca to observe the ringing of osprey chicks by park wardens J.-M. Dominici and Franco Rossi.

Final discussions with Mr. J.-C. Thibault.

End of assignment and return to Switzerland.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my warm thanks to the people mentioned above for all the help they gave me during my assignment, and in particular Mr. Frisoni, Head of the Heritage Department, who went to great lengths to help me with transport to Galeria and provided me with all the information required for the successful completion of my task.

I would also like to extend my kind thanks to Mr. Arrighi, Head Warden, Messrs, Dominici, Finelli and Rossi, park wardens at the Nature reserve, and Mr. J.-C. Thibault, biological consultant, for their warm welcome, the information they provided, and their eager readiness to assist me.

C) EXAMINATION OF THE QUESTIONS RAISED IN THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

1) Introduction

The previous examination, carried out in the summer of 1988, and the report drawn up at that time help to gauge very precisely the positive nature-friendly developments that have taken place since then, the various new trends, and the concerns of those running the Reserve and the Corsican Regional Nature Park (CRNP).

The commitment to enhancing an already outstanding heritage has not faltered. On the contrary, it would appear that the on-going efforts of the CRNP to do with young people, environmental education and informing the "public at large" are bearing fruit and making it possible to approach the future of the coast with confidence. What is more, a "Corsican Marine Park" project has been drawn up and the Head of the Heritage Department together with the Director of the CRNP are both extremely optimistic about its realisation.

In other respects, the endeavours of the Coastal and Lakeside Conservancy (Conservatoire de l'espace littoral et des rivages lacustres) are continuing apace, for on 1 January 1994 the Conservancy's heritage in Corsica increased to 10,549 hectares (from 9220 ha in 1988), i.e. 122 km./ 76 miles of shoreline (105 km/ 66 miles in 1988), which represent 48 outstanding sites (33 in 1988).

After visiting the sites concerned, preparing the required assessment of the situation, and hearing the explanations offered by the persons in charge, I confirm that the documents forwarded by the French government in support of the application for the renewal of the European Diploma are accurate and correspond to the actual situation.

2) On-the-spot appraisal provided for in Resolution (73) 4/ (conducted in accordance with the Regulations for the European Diploma)

Situation:

The Scandola Nature Reserve is located on a precipitous headland jutting out from the west coast of the island, in the north-west of the *département* of Southern Corsica (Corse du sud), 50 km/30 miles north-north-west of Ajaccio, as the crow flies.

The coast is uninhabited on both sides of the Reserve, access is difficult, if not impossible, because the mountains plunge sheer into the sea.

1.5.4 a) Effectiveness of the system of protection. Site development.

No new features have altered the Reserve's remoteness from all human habitation - there are no new lines of communication, and no new facilities (thoroughfares, electricity, etc.). The unspoilt nature of the site is thus still intact.

Nor have any changes been made to the legal measures and land use described in 1988.

Added to this are:

- a) Factors for Agro-Silvo-Pastoral zoning of Corsica-Fe. 13. 1:25,000.

- b) For the Girolata Marina (outside the Nature Reserve) the "Major Sites Operation" directed by the DIREN. This approach consists of considerations concerning the major listed sites and problems that may affect them. In the above-mentioned case, the examination involves the architecture of the buildings, their incorporation, waste and refuse, boat moorings, etc.

The "Corsican Marine Park" project represents a tangible example of the philosophy of the "Corsican Spatial Management Plan", which combines development with the conservation of natural beauty. If this project were carried out as planned, the Scandola Nature Reserve would be situated roughly in the lower third of a protected area extending from Capo Rosso in the south, to Punta de la Revellata in the north, forming a sea frontage of 45 km/28 miles. The land and marine zone would classically include the undeveloped reserves (including Scandola, very slightly enlarged), the central zone, where the heritage would be strictly safeguarded, and the peripheral zone, where development would be possible, but bearing in mind the quality of the landscape and architecture in the site, and avoiding impairment of the environment.

### Ownership

In 1991, 354 hectares were acquired by the Coastal Conservancy, including 261 ha in the NR. This can be broken down on a rough percentual basis into 45% communal land, 26% belonging to the Coastal Conservancy, and 28% privately owned.

### Staff

Supervision, observation, information, logistical back-up for scientific and photographic assignments, as well as...."tidying up" as and when required are all handled on an on-going basis by the Head Warden, and 2 extremely professional assistant wardens.<sup>1</sup>

During the two months when tourism is at its height, two seasonal assistants are taken on. They are stationed alternately at the Elbu Marina, where accommodation consists of a very small maisonette equipped as a radio station. Their job consists mainly of patrolling the areas in question, preventing unlawful activities, collecting rubbish and informing the public about the interest of the site and how to treat it.

Camping, bivouacking, hunting, scuba diving and underwater fishing, in particular, are all prohibited.

Fishing is still prohibited for everybody in the north-west part of the Reserve, in the Gargalu-Punta Palazzu area (high-level protection); and elsewhere for everybody except professional local fishermen.

The Police, and the Customs and Excise (this is a new development), back up the supervision of the nature Reserve as part of their assignment.

For the time being, mass tourism is still not a factor of concern for those running the reserve. In fact, Scandola is still pretty inaccessible from land and sea alike, and access may even be hazardous in rough seas. Furthermore, apart from a brief period of activity around Easter,

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<sup>1</sup> These wardens are also expected to specialise in a particular area, e.g. observation of ospreys, marine mammals, etc.

yachting and boating only occurs in the site from June to September.

Sports: rock-climbing is still a very marginal activity for the time being. There are no facilities.

The specialist press has nevertheless been reporting ascents of cliffs made directly from boats. The park wardens expect that this activity will probably increase.

Light civil aircraft do not, in principle, pose any problem. Staff will, however, take action to report any violation of the protected area.

No land-based military manoeuvres are held on the coast and its approaches. The Army is aware of the existence of the reserve, and has recently made enquiries to ensure that the area is not disturbed during its operations.

There is no more agricultural activity and in the maquis the odd vine run wild attests to what used to be cultivated here.

The development of mass tourism is restricted by the legal protective measures introduced by the authorities to safeguard the wildlife and landscape of the area.

The busy period for yachting and boating is from June to September - depending on weather conditions - with a brief busy spell during the Easter vacation.

However, sea excursions are popular with the public. Compared with the previous appraisal, we have observed two new vessels, with a larger passenger capacity, and fitted with a see-through panel for observing the underwater world, and fish in particular.

As a result, the number of tourists carried annually on boat excursions is reckoned to be in excess of 50,000 (up from 30,000 in 1988), to which must be added 1,200 sailing boats and "visitors in small craft" (Zodiac inflatables, powered dinghies, etc).<sup>2</sup>

No industrial or residential developments are planned.

#### 1.5.4 b) Scientific studies

These have been undertaken at sea and on land alike.

- \* Specific publications for Scandola in "Travaux scientifiques du Parc Naturel régional et des Réserves naturelles de Corse" [Scientific Studies of Corsica's Regional Nature Park and Nature Reserves]: Nos. 21(2)--22--23(2)--25--26(2)--29(3)--31(2)--34--36(5)--41(3).
- \* Ornithological monitoring of 5 species, including ospreys, cormorants, and Cory's shearwaters.
- \* Inventory of the temporary human habitat.

#### Planned research projects:

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<sup>2</sup> The increased availability of rental boats will probably pose a new problem in the future.

These are decided upon by the Scientific Committee.

- \* Climate study (budgeted).

#### 1.5.4 c) Improvements made or foreseen

The strict status of the Reserve does not call for any improvements to be made which would not promote the objectives sought. On the contrary, the ruins of a hut built with breeze blocks on the Baie d'Elbu have been demolished.

The little refuse occurring in the above-mentioned spot is regularly cleared up by wardens.

The study for the reinforcement of Gargalu Tower is in the hands of an architect who is preparing a dossier for the implementation of future work.

#### 1.5.4 d)

##### Means of public access

Very restricted overland, because usable tracks (not marked on the 1:25,000 map) are quickly closed off by the invading maquis. What is more, an illegally cleared passage starting from Girolata was swiftly rendered impassable with the help of thorns.

By sea, even if the transport capacity has increased, access to the shore and the off-loading of "charter-boats" offering "guided tours" do not yet pose a problem.

However, the presence of pleasure boats moored at various spots close to the shore means that a watchful eye must be kept to make sure that "full capacity" is not reached. This also applies to access to creeks and grottos, because the distinctive "coastal platform" (akin to a sidewalk) leading to them is starting to suffer from too many visitors.

#### 1.5.4 e) Ownership title

Of the 919 hectares which form the land reserve, 261 hectares acres have been acquired by the Coastal Conservancy, which represents stepped-up protective measures. In addition, the provisions set forth in Interministerial Decree n° 751.128 of 9 December 1975, setting up the Nature reserve, are still valid for 919 hectares of the Scandola peninsula and 1,000 hectares offshore.

#### 1.5.4 f) Management

The objective which has thus far acted as the main guideline for those running the Reserve still applies, and namely:

"To preserve representative natural environments and thus act as a repository. To provide a field laboratory for the study of these environments, the way they function and the way they develop".

Based on this guideline, there are programmes covering on-going supervision, public



education and information, and scientific studies.

The management plan<sup>3</sup> has been drawn up. It has been approved by the Advisory Committee, and subsequently submitted to the Scientific Committee, in its initial version. Once the document has been finalized, via the DIREN, it will be forwarded to the Ministry of the Environment.

Approval by the National Committee for Nature Protection [NCNP] is expected to be granted in October/November 1994.

New information boards for the public will be installed in Portu, Calvi, Girolata, and Galeria, in the form of "harbour-master's notices", sign posts for yachtsmen, and markers indicating the main features and perimeter of the Reserve.

The "Maison de la Mer" (adjacent to the harbour) plays the role of "technical base", with the Head Warden's office, a small laboratory, facilities and accommodation for visiting scientists, storage facilities for equipment, and so on. In 1982, the visit by the Minister Michel Crepeau, accompanied by Mr. J.-F. Giacobbi, Chairman of the CRNP, offered a chance to obtain the old Gendarmerie. After restoration work costing 5,300,000 francs, the "Casa Marina"<sup>4</sup> was opened in March 1994. The premises have been designed with two purposes in mind: a laboratory for scientists, and a reception centre for school students (exploration of the environment, information and awareness programmes). In off-season periods the centre can be used for seminars.<sup>5</sup>

Relations between countries have been developed in a variety of areas: ornithological exchanges with Algeria, scientific exchanges with Catalan botanists (Spain), contacts with the Balearic islands (Spain) to do with plantlife protection, and with Morocco to do with the Al Hoceima National Park. With Italy, a "marine sanctuary" project which would include Corsica, and consequently Scandola, forming the Genoa-Monaco-Corsica triangle.

The operating budget has been increased: for example, the Reserve has three wardens instead of two, and the "petrol" station capacity for craft used for patrols and back-up for scientists has been raised to 30,000 litres per annum.

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<sup>3</sup> The management plan and the scientific studies programme involve medium- to long-term planning. The standard outline includes the following headings: Descriptive and analytical approach / Appraisal of the heritage and objectives / Work programme and definition of major topics.

<sup>4</sup> The building has been restored with a great deal of taste and awareness. It houses the Head Warden's lodgings, as well as those of the CRNP field guide. It includes accommodation for 38 persons, complete with kitchen and dining-room. Further amenities include a multi-purpose hall, a biology laboratory, a photographic laboratory and a leisure room.

<sup>5</sup> Since the spring, the Casa Marina has been used for various meetings: a seminar on the swift (*Apus*) - MAB Committee - holiday camp organisers' course - first aid course - WWF seminar and meeting - field guide training course, etc.

### General points

With regard to all the details and information given above, clear priority is being given by those running the Reserve to the creation of a "Corsican Marine Park". If this very large site does come into existence, the means to operate and supervise it would match the scale of the project. This new departure should help to achieve a broader control of activities and pressures which have hitherto eluded any favourable natural environment management, over a large area.

For his part, this author is of the view that it would be advisable to separate, *a priori*, the "Marine Park" project, which might be described as a "desirable entitlement", from the day-to-day administration of a reserve whose "management plan", formulated for a 5-10 year period, very clearly indicates shows up the tasks to be dealt with and programmes to be introduced. In effect, by benefiting from the many legal provisions and regulations, the Scandola Reserve should continue to operate as it has in the past, without any "waiting period"; and it should take the practical decisions required, whatever the new policies and the subsequent choices of the political and administrative managers might be.

### Information collected and facts that have emerged

- Open-berth moorings uproot *Posidonia* algae. They also encourage illegal fishing (skin-diving, spear-fishing).
- Access to certain creeks is being reconsidered, particularly at Gargali, the monk-seal Grotto, Cala a Laetitia, and so on, because of the degradation caused to the coastal limestone platform by impact and the stagnation of traces of hydrocarbons.
- Individual pressure from Zodiac-type inflatables and powered dinghies is becoming more conspicuous. This deserted coast is a tourist attraction; it is also seen at its best from rented power boats and excursions made by 8 motor vessels, the largest of which can carry 175 passengers.
- Rules governing speeds, combined with a ban on certain routes, should be introduced, for example for the Palazzu and Gargali channels.
- A stop should be put to feeding fish in the Reserve (by boatmen). Furthermore, it would be a good idea to draw up, with these boatmen, an agreement entailing the granting of a quality label. A list of specifications would help to define rules of conduct relating to use of the site.
- From the viewpoint of professional fishing, it would be a positive move (if it were legally feasible) to restrict access to people really residing in Portu and Galeria.

### D) CONCLUSIONS

- 1) The Corsican Regional Nature Park [CRNP] has diligently and expertly undertaken the task entrusted to it in December 1975 by the Ministry of the Environment of managing the Scandola Nature Reserve.

- 2) The CRNP has stepped up its public information and education programmes to do with flora and fauna protection. A good illustration of this is the opening, early in 1994, of the "Casa Marine" in Galeria, and the "Casa di a Natura" in Vizzavona.

It has also embarked on and backed up scientific research and study projects which demonstrate the outstanding character of the Reserve. Furthermore, its staff is highly committed to the enhancement of the protected environment, and its conservation.

- 3) The Scandola Nature Reserve is at a "pivotal" moment, when its legal, territorial and budgetary structures must be fleshed out and reinforced in order to help it to deal more effectively with the pressures to which it is subject, precisely as a result of its ever-increasing attraction. The "Management Plan" currently awaiting approval represents a crucial tool for achieving the objectives set.

- 4) Consequently, the Scandola Nature Reserve satisfies the evaluation criteria for the European Diploma, according to Section 4 of Resolution (73) 4. Renewal for 5 years therefore seems justified.

- 5) To wind up this report, we list below, in no particular order of priority, the following suggestions:

- Official restriction of nets to 50 for professional fisherman, with, in addition, the keeping of a "catch logbook".
- Introduction of rules governing traditional fishing.
- Subjection of commercial practices in the marine area to a more restrictive interpretation of the Decree, which should be updated.
- Prohibition of landing and rock-climbing on all the small islands, including the "Porri Isles" lying  $\pm$  1 km NE of the eastern boundary of the Reserve.
- Scrutinising the compatibility between current water sports (water-skiing, jet-ski etc) and the goals of the Nature Reserve.
- Providing Reserve wardens with sufficient legal status enabling them to take action, without intermediaries, in all matters concerning navigation and compliance with the law.
- Equipping the Reserve with a diesel-powered boat, which would be less costly to run than a petrol-fuelled motor boat.
- Examine the advisability of enlarging the Marine Reserve (buffer-zone) and introducing stricter controls for open-berth mooring, access to certain creeks, feeding fish, and access to certain channels (or putting a complete stop to all of the above). Lastly, modulated speed limits for boats should be introduced from area to area.

(signed)

J.-P. Reitz

Nature Conservator

Lausanne, 20 September 1994

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- CRNP - DOMINICI J.-M. - Marine mammals observed on the sea frontage of the Corsican Regional Nature Park (1992-1993)
- CRNP - Scandola Nature Reserve Management Plan (provisional document awaiting adoption - 1993)
- CRNP - List of publications in the "Scientific Projects" series. 1982-1992.

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Appendix I: Resolution (90) 10

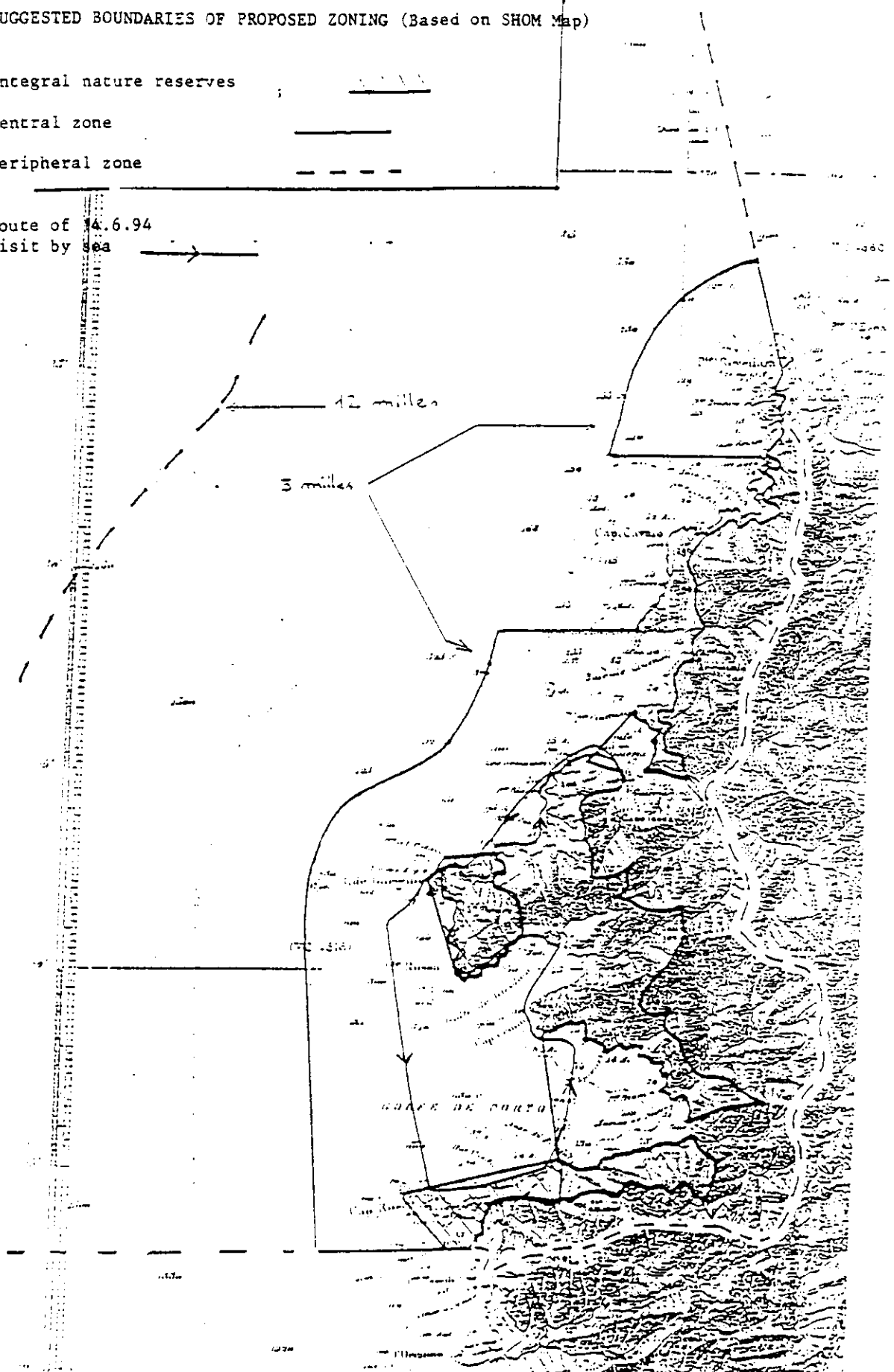
Appendix II: Draft Resolution (95) ...



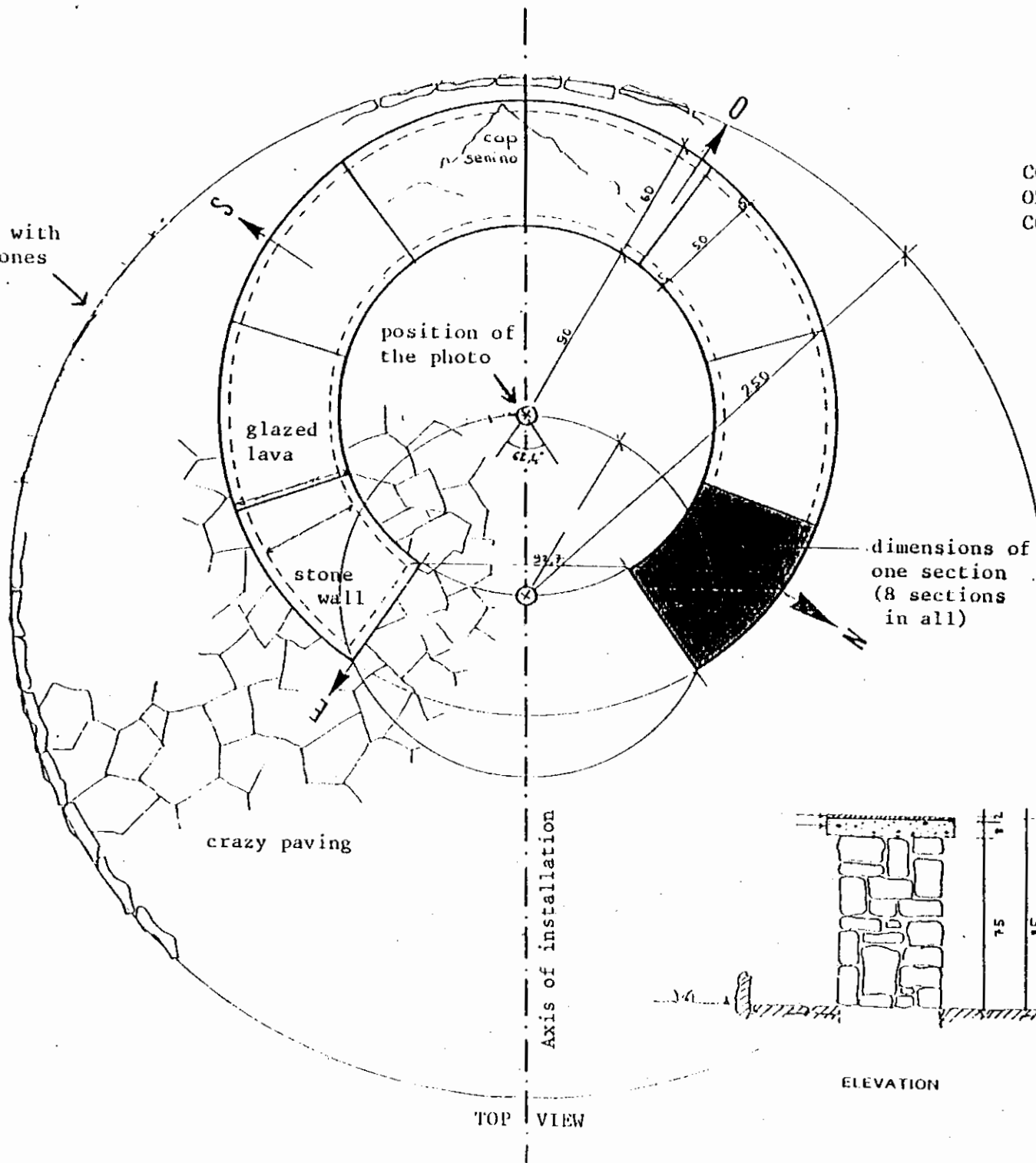
SUGGESTED BOUNDARIES OF PROPOSED ZONING (Based on SHOM Map)

Integral nature reserves ;   
Central zone   
Peripheral zone 

Route of 14.6.94  
visit by sea 



Border made with  
embedded stones



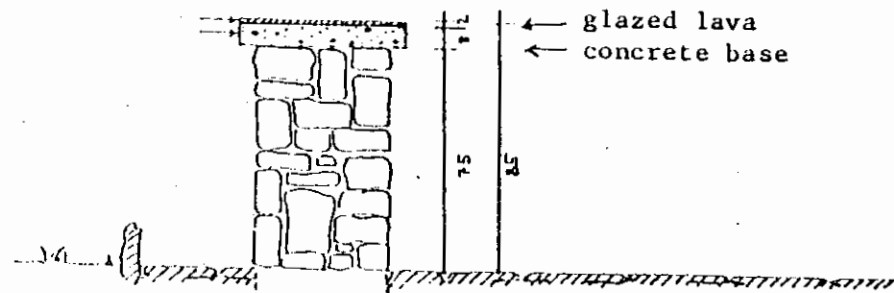
COL DE LA CROIX  
ORIENTATION TABLE  
COMMUNE OF OSANI

dimensions of  
one section  
(8 sections  
in all)

crazy paving

Axis of installation

TOP VIEW



ELEVATION

EGH. 1 cm.p.20 cm

Appendix I  
**COUNCIL OF EUROPE**  
**COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS**

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RESOLUTION (90) 10

**ON THE RENEWAL OF THE EUROPEAN DIPLOMA  
AWARDED TO THE SCANDOLA NATURE RESERVE (FRANCE)**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 18 June 1990  
at the 442nd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

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

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

Having regard to Resolution (85) 11 on the award of the European Diploma to the Scandola Nature Reserve:

Having regard to the proposals of the Steering Committee for the Conservation and Management of the Environment and Natural Habitats (CDPE),

Renews the European Diploma awarded to the Scandola Nature Reserve in category A until 21 September 1995;

Addresses the following recommendations to the authorities which are responsible for the management of the site:

1. the survey of visitors to the reserve, begun in 1987, should be continued;
2. the Department of Maritime Affairs should be asked to establish a buffer zone around the perimeter of the marine area of the reserve;
3. investigations, on-the-spot appraisals and discussions with fishermen should be continued with a view to the imposition by the state of a total fishing ban in the Bay of Elbo;
4. a study of the reserve's climate should be undertaken;
5. scientists should in certain cases be urged to draw attention in their work to any information likely to assist the management of the reserve in its decision-making;
6. the planning improvements to Galeria should be implemented as quickly as possible in order to provide a suitable public information service.



## Appendix II

### Draft Resolution (95) ...

#### For the Renewal of the European Diploma for the Scandola Nature Reserve (France)

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

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

Having regard to Resolution 85 (11) awarding the European Diploma to the Scandola Nature Reserve,

Having regard to the proposals of the Steering Committee for the Conservation and Management of the Environment and Natural Habitats (CDPE);

Renews the European Diploma awarded to the Scandola Nature Reserve in Category A until 21 September 2000;

Attaches to the renewal the following recommendations:

1. to review of the 1975 Decree creating the Nature reserve, so as to provide it with adequate means for dealing with the "new factors" due to the socio-economic situation and tourist requirements of the region;
2. to take all possible steps to enlarge the area of the marine Reserve (buffer zone) and introduce stricter rules for tourist moorings and access to creeks, feeding fish, and access to certain channels. Speed-limits for boats should be imposed in accordance with the particular environments concerned;
3. to prohibit landing on and rock-climbing in all the small islands, including the "Porri Isles" lying about 1 km. NE of the eastern boundary of the Reserve;
4. to introduce rules for traditional fishing, limit the number of nets for each professional fisherman to 50, and make it obligatory for fishermen to keep a "catch logbook";
5. to take adequate steps to make water sports (water skiing, jet-ski etc.) compatible with the goals of the Nature Reserve;
6. to give Reserve personnel a legal status authorising them to take direct action in all matters to do with navigation and compliance with the regulations in the protected area.

