

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 14 January 1971

Confidential
CE/Nat (71) 15

Or. Fr.



COE077765

EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR THE CONSERVATION
OF NATURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Working Party on Flora, Fauna and Landscapes
(Strasbourg, 15-17 March 1971)

EUROPEAN DIPLOMA

German-Luxembourg natural park

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

20.645
03.3/58.1

At its meeting in May 1970 the Working Party on Flora, Fauna and Landscapes considered the application presented jointly by the German and Luxembourg authorities (CE/Nat (70) 25) for the award of the European Diploma to the German-Luxembourg natural park.

The Working Party noted that the European scientific interest of the park was not clearly brought out in the papers submitted with the application and that little information had been given on how it was managed (CE/Nat (70) 39, item 3.3.2).

On the instructions of the Working Party the Secretariat had asked the competent authorities of the two countries concerned for additional information. This document contains:

- A. The text of the treaty concluded between the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Land of the Rhineland-Palatinate on the creation of a common natural park;
- B. A statement from the Vereinigung Deutsch-Luxemburgischer Naturpark at Echternacherbrück, dealing in particular with the development and management of the park;
- C. Additional information from the Luxembourg authorities on the management of the park;
- D. A statement of the grants allocated by the Federal Republic of Germany for developing the park.

- A. Treaty concluded between the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Land of the Rhineland-Palatinate on the creation of a common natural park

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

and

the Land of the Rhineland-Palatinate,

wishing to protect, maintain and develop as an area for relaxation, on the most uniform possible principles, the countryside situated on the borders of the Sûre and the Our, have concluded the following treaty:

Article 1

1. The Contracting States agree that the territory situated partly on the Our and partly on the Sûre and delimited in paragraph 2 shall be known as "The German-Luxembourg natural park" and shall be preserved and developed according to the principles set out below.

2. The territory of the German-Luxembourg natural park shall comprise:

- on the Luxembourg side, the region to the west of the German-Luxembourg frontier from Hinkel in the south to Lieler in the north; it shall include the valleys of the Sûre, the Our, the Black Ernz and the White Ernz, the Bleeps, with the adjoining uplands, the district of Mullerthal with Echternach, Berdorf and Beaufort together with the Ardennes countryside of Vianden, Clervaux, Troisvierges and Weiswampach;
- on the German side, the region to the east of the German-Luxembourg frontier from Wintersdorf in the south to the point of intersection of the German-Belgian-Luxembourg frontier in the north; it shall include the regions of West Eifel with Daleiden and Neuerburg and the region to the west of Mettendorf, the Ferschweiler plateau and the uplands bordering the Sûre with Echternacherbrück and Wintersdorf.

3. The natural park is precisely delimited on a map annexed to this treaty and forming an integral part of it.

Article 2

1. The Contracting States shall take care that those areas of their territory forming part of the natural park shall retain their privileged nature of protected landscape and that their suitability as a recreational area for large sections of the population shall be developed.

2. The measures to be taken to this end shall adequately take into account the desire of the people for an improvement in their general living conditions.

Article 3

1. Countryside of exceptional beauty and special interest shall be preserved. The total area of forests shall not be decreased.

2. The system of footpaths shall give pedestrians access to the main parts of the natural park. The governments of the Contracting States shall do their utmost to facilitate their passage across the frontiers in search of relaxation.

3. There shall be parking facilities provided within easy walking distance of the central areas of the park.

Article 4

1. A Committee shall be set up to which each Contracting State shall appoint four members.

2. The governments of the Contracting States shall communicate to the Committee development plans for the natural park.

3. The Committee shall submit to the governments of the Contracting States plans for the further development of the natural park and for harmonising measures to be taken by either party; to this end it shall duly take into account proposals from officially recognised private organisations for developing the German-Luxembourg natural park.

4. The Committee shall meet twice a year. It shall have the power to co-opt experts for its meetings.

Article 5

On the Committee's recommendation each country shall be empowered to make slight modifications to the delimitation (Article 1) of the part of its territory included in the park.

Article 6

This treaty shall be concluded for a period of ten years.

It shall be renewed for a further period of five years unless it be denounced one year before its expiry date.

Article 7

This treaty shall be ratified. Instruments of ratification shall be exchanged as soon as possible at Echternacherbrück.

The treaty shall come into force on the day the instruments of ratification are exchanged.

Made in duplicate, in French and German, the two languages being equally authoritative, at Clervaux,
17 April 1964.

B. Statement from the Vereinigung Deutsch-Luxemburgischer Naturpark, Echternacherbrück

The creation of a "Südeifel" natural park in 1958 protected one of the most beautiful countrysides in Western Europe. On the Luxembourg side the landscape is equally beautiful, and the idea of creating a joint natural park took shape in 1965. The first European natural park run by two countries has become a reality. The area forms a geological entity predominantly, in the southern part of the park, of Luxembourg sandstone (Triassic).

The natural park is marked by an exceptional flora. Leafy plantations, scarcely touched by man, cover a large part of the area. They afford many subjects for scientific research.

The protected reserves include forests of maple, lime and elm, chalk grassland (mesobrometum) with orchidaceae, groups of chasmophytis and a peat bog. The presence of an oak plantation with service trees and elements of a sub-mediterranean flora is worthy of attention. The appended list of rare plants is witness to the richness and diversity of the flora and illustrates the great scientific value of the region. Rich in game, the natural park still provides a habitat for various rare predators such as the peregrine falcon and the kite. Water-ouzel, teal and garganey, kingfisher and heron are also found there.

Neolithic remains, Celtic sanctuaries, Roman tombs and villas bear witness to the great importance of the region in all those periods. Echternach had an important influence as a cultural and Christian centre.

The development of this sparsely populated region as a recreational area for the benefit of the neighbouring industrialised regions emphasises the European interest of this park.

The growing number of visitors constituted a threat to the beauty of the landscape. It was therefore a matter of fundamental importance that the administration of the international natural park should create the necessary infrastructures to control the flow of visitors so as to keep the countryside intact.

The "Verein Naturpark Südeifel" Association on the German side and the Luxembourg section of the Ardennes-Eifel European Group are the founding members of the natural park. Under the Treaty of 17 April 1964 (see A), between the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Rhineland-Palatinate the governments agreed to the joint creation of a natural park.

The treaty provides for a joint international committee on which each country is represented by four members. It is planned to hold two meetings a year. The committee is concerned with the planning of the park as a whole; it makes proposals to both governments for the future development of the park and endeavours to harmonise the decisions taken on both sides. The two founding members set up a common development organisation, "Vereinigung Deutsch-Luxemburgischer Naturpark", at Echternacherbrück. This committee is the first for a natural park, which in addition to harmonising the work undertaken in two countries, deals with trans-frontier matters. The Chairmanship alternates from year to year between a German and a Luxemburger.

Continuity of administration is assured by a permanent secretary. The work of the committee is aided by a working party covering the forestry services. Another international working party looks after publicity. It is for the working parties to ensure co-ordination of work such as the creation of trans-frontier car and pedestrian routes; the publication of topographical maps and publicity folders; the construction of fire lookout towers to oversee the whole park; the building of international bridges for excursionists crossing the boundary rivers, the Our and the Sûre; the improvement of footpaths along the streams connecting these bridges; the production of a film on the German-Luxembourg natural park; the organisation of poster and photograph competitions in schools; the drawing up of a common European plan for the development of the whole area of the park.

The management plan drawn up in 1970 includes a development plan, a plan of present facilities and a plan showing future aims. There is also a legend giving the historical evolution, the geographical structure, a description of the flora and fauna, suggestions for improving facilities for recreation, the development and conservation of the countryside.

A plan of recreational facilities has been prepared to meet the needs of the population of large conurbations.

Management and supervision are ensured, on the Luxembourg side, by the Administration of Water Resources and Forests in co-operation with the Ministry of Tourism. On the German side this task falls directly to the "Verein Naturpark Südeifel", assisted by the forestry services. Since its creation the "Verein Naturpark Südeifel" has invested 1.8 million DM, of which 166,840 DM have gone into the plantations and other measures important to the beauty of the countryside. On the Luxembourg side, investments for similar purposes are of comparable amounts.

Work already done includes: new footpaths, improvement of old footpaths, car parks, shelters, fire lookout towers, benches, finger-posts, direction boards, measures to beautify the landscape. Two international bridges for excursionists, at Weilerbach over the Sûre and at Tentismühle over the Our, have been financed and completed. At present, two bridges are under construction, one at Dornauelsmühle, the other at Gentingen. In 1971 a bridge is to be built at Minden, and in 1972 one at Wintersdorf. These bridges linking the two countries have no permanent customs posts; in the spirit of the Agreement of 1 March 1967, aimed at the free passage of frontier traffic into the natural park, these represent spearheads in the building of Europe.

Among the tasks lying ahead may be mentioned structural improvement of the landscapes and ornamental lakes. Thanks to the extension of recreational facilities the working population will have a chance to renew its contact with nature. The game park at Hosingen (Luxembourg) and the falconry at Bollendorf have been created for the same reasons. In these surroundings the townsman can see the native wild animals of the region.

Care is being taken to prevent the spoliation of the countryside by secondary residences. On the German side, the order called "Landschaftsschutzverordnung", the federal law on town planning, and the availability of two localities for week-end houses, preserve the countryside from piecemeal building. The Luxembourg part of the park is protected by the Act of 29 July 1965 on the conservation of nature and natural resources.

Steps taken to safeguard and develop the countryside by those responsible for the natural park have been followed by other authorities and ministries; for example, the building of roads, improvement of water-courses, the purchase of valleys, to be conserved by the natural park authority, the purchase of sites where orchidaceae flourish and the purchase of sites with historical remains.

This natural park in the very heart of Europe is already well known, as is proved by the attached bibliography.

F l o r a

of the Germano-Luxembourg natural park

There are many rare plants in the natural park. According to Goebel (bibliography 53) and Reichling (67 and 68) the following plants may be specially noted:

Orchidaceae:

Arachnites:

- Ophrys muscifera
- O. fuciflora
- O. apifera
- O. Fassbenderi

Orchids:

- Orchis purpurea
- O. militaris
- O. ustulata
- O. mascula
- O. masculata
- O. latifolia

Other orchidaceae:

- Coeloglossum viride
- Himantoglossum hircinum
- Platanthera bifolia
- Platanthera chlorantha
- Cephalanthera rubra
- C. grandiflora
- C. xiphophyllum
- Goodyera repens
- Neottia nidusavis
- Listera ovata
- Epipogon aphyllum
- Epipactis palustris
- E. latifolia
- E. atropurpurea
- Limodorum abortivum
- Gymnadenia conopsea

Ferns

- Ceterach officinarum
- Hymenophyllum tunbrigense
- Dryopteris filix-mas
- Athyrium filix-femina
- Pteridium aquilinum
- Blechnum spicant
- Phyllitis scolopendrium
- Lycopodium clavatum

Other rare plants:

Aquilegia vulgaris
Pulsatilla vulgaris
Brunella alba
Anthericum liliago
Digitalis lutea
Potentilla rupestris
Helleborus niger
Carex depauperata
Gentians germanica
G. ciliata
Aconitum napellus
Galanthus nivalis
Scilla bifolia
Pyrola rotundifolia
Orobanche hederæ
Erytraea contaureum
Euphorbia amygdaloides
Astragalus glycyphyllos
Lithospermum purpuro-caeruleum

Shrubs:

Mespilus germanica
Amelanchier ovalis
Cornus mas
Juniperus communis
Daphne mezereum
Ilex aquifolium
Ulex europæus
Buxus sempervirens
Pyrus communis
Pyrus malus
Juniperus communis
Cotoneaster integerrimas

Trees:

Sorbus torminalis
Sorbus domestica
Ulmus glabra
Juglans regia

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C. Management of the park - Luxembourg reply

The "Verein Naturpark Südeifel" Association on the German side and the Luxembourg section of the Ardennes-Eifel European Group may be regarded as the founders of the natural park.

The park is managed by a joint international committee. Each country is represented on it by five members.

The Luxembourg membership consists of:

- the Director of the Administration of Water Resources and Forests,
- the legal Counsellor of the Ministry of the Interior,
- the Counsellor of the Ministry of Tourism,
- the State town-planning architect and the Chairman of the Luxembourg section of the Ardennes-Eifel Group.

The Committee meets twice a year.

The common managing body is the "Vereinigung deutsch-luxemburgischer Naturpark".

From the Luxembourg side the park is managed by the Administration of Water Resources and Forests with assistance from the Ministry of Tourism; on-site supervision is maintained by 11 forest wardens.

D. Grants allocated by the Federal German Government

A development plan has been established for the German-Luxembourg natural park. To projects already completed, the following new facilities are to be added at a cost of 65 million DM:

60 km of signposted walks	1,275,000	DM
330 km of footpaths	2,675,000	DM
94 car parks	850,000	DM
23 camping sites	1,560,000	DM
6 retaining dams	36,000,000	DM
37 artificial pools	2,775,000	DM
11 supervised bathing-places	550,000	DM
7 open heated swimming-pools	6,400,000	DM
7 areas for holiday villages (x)	100,000	DM
10 areas for secondary residences (x) (x) including infrastructure	100,000	DM
15 shelters	45,000	DM
5 frontier river-crossings	650,000	DM
6 outlook and fire-spotting towers	240,000	DM
530 km of plantations of main cover	5,300,000	DM
750 km of plantations of secondary cover	5,300,000	DM
80 sports and relaxation areas	600,000	DM
secondary installations (water catchments, benches, direction boards)	770,000	DM

It is hoped that the necessary financial resources will be made available during the next fifteen to twenty years.

The major installations, such as the retaining dams, the swimming pools and protective plantations, are clearly matters concerned with the general structural improvement and their completion will depend on the "Land", the Federal Government and the local authorities. On these, the German-Luxembourg Natural Park Association can only make suggestions and prepare plans as the national society in each country.

On the other hand, the minor developments and maintenance will be the direct responsibility of the association and will be carried out by the forestry staff or with the aid of the annual subsidies of 120,000 DM.

These subsidies will not only need to be maintained over a long period, but it will also be necessary to increase them considerably because of the general importance attached to this method of conserving and developing the natural park.