
Reminder – election to fill a vacancy on the EUROPARC Council

As stated in the previous edition of the EUROPARC E-News an election for the one remaining vacant position on the EUROPARC Federation Council will take place at the General Assembly in September 2009 in Sweden. Candidates must be from a member organisation of the Federation and meet the criteria in the candidacy document (please login to www.europarc.org to access). They may not be nominated by their own organisation.



The deadline for nominations to reach EUROPARC Headquarters is 30th April. It must be in written form from a Federation member. This is a great opportunity to help direct the future of the Federation. We welcome anyone with experience, commitment and passion to fight for the benefits and values of Europe's protected areas.

The Marine Bill

The Marine and Coastal Access Bill continues its passage through Parliament. At the time of writing it is still in the House of Lords Committee after 10 days of debate.



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EAI has joined with CPRE, CPRW, English National Park Authorities Association, the National Trust, NAAONB and the Welsh Association of National Park Authorities in briefing Peers on an amendment relating to the inclusion of "seascapes" as a reason for designating Marine Conservation Zones [MCZs]. The briefing can be seen on EAI's website.

The debate on this amendment was held on Monday 9 March and can be read in Hansard on line – cols 1033 to 1045. There was considerable support for the conservation of "seascapes" including the marine dimension of AONBs and National Parks amongst those who spoke in the debate from all sides of the house. However, the Government's response was very lukewarm to the use of the MCZ mechanism for conserving "seascapes", citing a number of reasons:

- the absence of any definition of what a "seascape" is
- the clause introducing MCZs had been designed for a specific purpose and it would be inappropriate to add to the purposes for designation

Furthermore the Government did not consider that there are any threats to AONBs and National Parks that need to be addressed by designating "seascapes".

Some comfort can be taken from statements made by Lord Davies

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for the Government to the effect that “*The concepts will be included in the high-level marine objectives that underpin the development of the marine policy statement.*” [Hansard 9 March 2009 Col 1043]. This is very similar to the statements in an earlier debate in the maritime heritage and archaeology:

- *“I put it on record that the marine policy statement will indeed set out the Government’s policy on safeguarding the marine environment, which will include cultural and historic marine heritage. Those documents will then drive decisions made in the marine area, so I hope the Committee will appreciate that heritage protection will in a very real sense feature in decisions that are made”*[Hansard 23 Feb 2009, Col 48]
- *“the list of things that Clause 52 requires the planning authority to keep under review is indeed broad. It is certainly broad enough to include matters of historical and archaeological interest, without specific mention in the legislation. If it will help, I am happy to put on record that we firmly intend that issues of historical and archaeological interest should be considered and addressed in marine plans.”* [Hansard 23 Feb 2009, Col 49]

There will be further opportunities raise the issues surrounding “seascapes” and the marine dimension of coastal AONBs and National Parks at the Report Stage in the House of Lords, due to start on 5 May, and when the Bill reaches the House of Commons.

Feedback from our last seminar: Naturally Better – how protected landscapes can help deliver health and wellbeing outcomes



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On the 26th March EUROPARC Atlantic Isles held a seminar in Wallingford, Oxfordshire to look in some depth at the relationship between health and protected areas.

Speakers from both health and protected area backgrounds presented a wealth of compelling evidence that simply getting out into the landscape, and being in nature, reduces the incidence of a range of serious health problems including heart conditions, obesity and depression. Quite literally, protected areas can help save lives.

The seminar was a continuation of work carried out by the Nordic-Baltic section of the Federation, and focused on practical actions, for both individual protected areas as well as partnerships, that will continue to take this vital area of work forwards. A report will soon be available, in electronic form that will look at next steps, and a follow-on session is planned for EUROPARC 2009 aimed at expanding the group of members interested in working in this area. Anyone interested should contact Dan Bloomfield, EAI Development Officer, at dan.bloomfield@europarc-ai.org

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EAI Sustainable Tourism Charter Network

Twelve representatives from UK protected areas gathered in Manchester on the 23rd March to discuss progress of the Charter.



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The Network compared notes on the experience of re-evaluation, working in partnership with nearby towns and cities, how best to help protected areas who are just beginning the process of gaining Charter status, what we would like to see in terms of Part III of the Charter, and what we could contribute to the upcoming meeting in Spain, in June.

Anyone wishing to get involved in the Network should contact Dan Bloomfield on dan.bloomfield@europarc-ai.org

Nordic-Baltic seminar: restoration of sensitive biotopes in protected areas, Dzūkija National Park, Lithuania 5-7 May 2009

To find out more about this seminar, please contact:

Emilis Tamosiunas info@dzukijosparkas.lt

Mindaugas Lapel gamta@dzukijosparkas.lt

Evelina Selander evelina.selander@naturvardsverket.se

Detailed program and registration at www.europarc-nb.org



Nordic-Baltic seminar: Monitoring and management of visitors and visitor flows, Rovaniemi, Finland, 3-5 November 2009

Connecting flights from Helsinki to Rovaniemi. To find out more about this seminar please contact Joel Erkkonen at

joel.erkkonen@metsa.fi, and for more information please go to

www.europarc-nb.org



Conference on Wilderness and Large Natural Habitat Areas in Europe, Bieszczady National Park, Prague, 27-28 May 2009

Jointly hosted by the Czech Presidency of the EU Council and the European Commission, this conference will bring together policy makers, academics, civil society and other interested groups as well as individual experts from some 40 countries.

The conference will assess and propose a range of policy options designed to promote a coordinated strategy for the protection and restoration of these areas across Europe.

www.wildeurope.org



2nd International Symposium on Dark-sky Parks, Lastovo Islands, Croatia, 14-19 September 2009

The initiative for an international association of dark-sky parks has announced details of its second symposium and dark-sky camp.

The event will be hosted by Lastovo Nature Park, (www.pp-lastovo.hr). The organisers are currently making a call for papers, and if you are involved in any night sky projects or light pollution initiatives, EUROPARC, who will present at the symposium, would very much like to know about them. Full details of the event, which will be run in English, can be found at www.darksleeparks.org



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Local Implementation of the European Landscape Convention; conference in Czech Republic, 27-30 May 2009



The first international Conference dedicated to the local implementation of the European Landscape Convention will be held in Nove Hradky, South Bohemia, Czech Republic, next month.

The aim of the Conference is to bring together key players from non-profits, Local Authorities, and ecomuseums in support of the European Landscape Convention and those who wish to learn more about the local, practical implementation of the ELC and how, for example ecomuseums or non-profits can help with this.

www.landscapeconventionconference.com

SeaZone – a new initiative for characterising our historic environment



A nationally applicable method for characterising England's historic seascapes using GIS has recently been published. The product, designed to raise public awareness of the considerable pressures and changes already affecting our landscape perceptions, has been developed by SeaZone and Maritime Archaeology Ltd, commissioned by English Heritage.

The results of the demonstration work to date will be disseminated via a stakeholder seminar in August 2009. In the meantime, you can find out more by visiting <http://tinyurl.com/dhepdo>

European Commission (LIFE) seminar on the restoration of meadow bird habitats, Copenhagen, 27-28 April 2009



An international LIFE seminar will be held later this month on the restoration and management of meadow bird habitats in order to share experiences on restoration and management of salt meadows and to disseminate experience gained in recent project work project. To find out more go to www.ec.europa.eu/environment/life/news/

Lakes for Living Conference, Lake District, 18-21 May 2009

The Lakes for Living Conference will be held at Low Wood Hotel, and will provide an opportunity to bring together international senior decision makers to discuss how those in business, the community and the environment can and should work together for the benefit of lake environments, land use management, spatial planning and regional development. The conference will also be of interest to those involved in the Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plans. There will be presentations from: Cumbria Tourism; Environment Agency; the Mayor of Invermere, Canada; Futerra; Global Nature Fund; and the Northwest RDA.



A range of study tours will be available.

To register on line, go to www.lakesforliving.com

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Update on the European Landscape Convention

The fifth Council of Europe Conference on the European Landscape Convention was held at the Palais de L'Europe, Strasbourg on the 30th-31st March 2009. EUROPARC attended the conference, which was hosted by the Steering Committee for Cultural Heritage and Landscape.



The conference heard about the considerable recent progress in rolling the Convention out across the continent. Thirty countries have now ratified the Convention, and a further six have signed it.

The European Landscape Convention is described as a tool to create a new territorial, landscape-level dimension of human rights. Access to quality landscapes, and involvement in their planned future, is posited as a basic right in Europe.

Various developments in the Charter were reported. In May 2009, The first Landscape Award of the Council of Europe will be awarded to a region considered to have made a special contribution to landscape-level conservation. A new Observatory, providing database and monitoring services for the implementation of the Convention, will soon be instigated.

The next meeting is a Workshop, entitled 'Landscape and Driving Forces', which will be held in Malmö, Sweden on the 8-9 October 2009.

It is hoped that a more in depth update, and an exploration of how the Convention can help protected areas in their work, will be provided at EUROPARC 2009 in September.

The South Downs National Park

The Government's decision to confirm the designation of the South Downs as a National Park is of interest to those pursuing the connection between land and sea. The Inquiry Inspector had been unable to recommend the extension of the proposed Park into the adjacent marine environment because no powers exist to enable that to happen, notwithstanding the fact that he agreed with the the case that had been made by the South Downs Campaign.

The Secretary of State's decision letter deals briefly with the marine boundary in paragraph 59, which is reproduced below.

"59. **Marine boundary.** At paragraphs 4.0-4.10 of IR1 the Inspector considers the issue of the marine boundary. This issue was the subject of legal submissions on the part of NE and a number of objectors as to whether a national park can lawfully include marine areas beyond the mean low water mark (MLWM). At paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 the Inspector explains the reasons why he accepted NE's submissions (as recorded in paragraph 4.0 of IR1) that legally a national park cannot extend beyond MLWM. The Secretary of State agrees with the Inspector's reasoning and conclusions on that issue. However at paragraphs 4.5-4.10 of IR1 the Inspector went on to suggest that consideration should be given to leaving open the

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boundary of the national park to the sea for those lengths of coast and foreshore that satisfy the statutory criteria. The Secretary of State has given careful consideration to that suggestion, however he has decided to reject it. As the Inspector concluded, the statutory powers and functions of the NPA would extend only to the MLWM. Whilst the marine areas might, in principle, satisfy the statutory natural beauty and recreational opportunities criteria, the conservation and management of the marine environment below the MLWM is being addressed as part of the Marine Bill. Such an approach is also consistent with the recent approach adopted for the New Forest National Park. In those circumstances the Inspector's recommendation to leave the boundary to the sea "open" where the adjoining cliffs and foreshore satisfy the statutory criteria is rejected and the Secretary of State proposes to adopt the MLWM as the boundary in these areas."

It can be seen that the Secretary of State agrees with the Inspector's conclusion that the National Park cannot extend beyond the MLWM. However, he does not agree with the Inspector's recommendation for an open boundary and has set it at the MLWM. In doing so he says that:

"Whilst the marine areas might, in principle, satisfy the statutory natural beauty and recreational opportunities criteria, the conservation and management of the marine environment below the MLWM is being addressed as part of the Marine Bill. Such an approach is also consistent with the recent approach adopted for the New Forest National Park."

There seems to be no specific reference to the Secretary of State's view on the Inspector's recommendation about reviewing legislation to enable the designation of a National Park to include the marine environment. It is pretty clear that he does not want to go down that road, relying instead on the provisions of the Marine Bill to secure the conservation of the marine environment. It is interesting, however, that he does not rule out the possibility of marine areas satisfying National Park designation criteria.

Eucaland Project – European Culture expressed in Agricultural Landscapes; conference in Cambridge, 22-23 September 2009

The Eucaland Project promotes the consideration of agricultural landscapes amongst the general public and the preservation of their cultural heritage. Project partners include some 15 universities, local governments, research groups and government agencies across Europe. The results of two years work, that include a proposal for the classification of European agricultural landscapes within the framework of the European Landscape Convention, will be presented at a public conference at Clare College, University of Cambridge, this September. To find out more, visit www.eucalandproject.eu



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