

Strategy and Action Plan 2008 to 2012

FINAL 12/07



EUROPARC
Atlantic Isles

Conservation Without Frontiers

I EUROPARC Atlantic Isles

- .1 EUROPARC Atlantic Isles (EAI) has over 60 member organisations that bring with them a wealth of experience. They represent national parks, regional parks, areas of outstanding natural beauty, heritage coast areas, local authorities, government agencies and non-governmental organisations. It is the only organisation to have such a comprehensive resource network spread across the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and Iceland.
- .2 It is also the only organisation that is able to link and work with protected area organisations throughout Europe – a unique and valuable level of access. EAI is a Section of the EUROPARC Federation. The Federation brings together over 390 member organisations from 38 nations, who together represent the management of over 500 protected areas. Within the overall purpose of promoting 'conservation without frontiers', the Federation aims to bring together those with a responsibility for the management of parks and other protected areas in Europe, in order to increase their effectiveness in conserving and enhancing natural and cultural heritage, by:
 - promoting good practice and contributing to the effectiveness of protected area management
 - becoming the voice of protected areas and landscapes in Europe, influencing public policy and programmes to ensure the objectives of protected areas and landscapes are incorporated
 - raising the profile of protected areas and increasing support for their protection and management
 - contributing to the formation of viable protected area networks through facilitating establishment of new areas and encouraging transboundary co-operation
- .3 EAI shares these general purposes, with a specific focus upon the Section's member nations. It exists to enable its members to share knowledge and expertise, to raise their profile as part of Europe's unique landscape heritage, and to make links with the wider Federation network.
- .4 EAI is a registered charity and a non-profit making company limited by guarantee. It is managed by an Executive Board of ten members, which is responsible for directing and managing the work of the Section. EAI currently employs a part-time Development Officer.

Development Officer

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2 Strategy

- 2.1 The comprehensive review of the EAI Strategy was initiated by a working group of the Executive Board in December 2006. In April 2007 the Development Officer was appointed, with the task of taking the strategy forwards. In July 2007 a survey of members' views was carried out. In September 2007 the new EUROPARC Federation strategy 2008 to 2012 was finalised. This document incorporates all of these developments.
- 2.2 This Strategy and Action Plan covers the period 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2012.
- 2.3 The Executive Board will annually review and sign off progress against this Strategy and Action Plan at their December meeting.

Vision

- 2.3 Our vision is to be, within Europe, the voice of all protected areas in the Atlantic Isles.

Aims

- 2.4 We aim to achieve this vision through:
 - **Communicating** a range of messages to different audiences and via a range of media;
 - **Spreading knowledge** in order to share experience and expertise and in order to address issues of joint concern, by bringing people together at a variety of events - as well as through other mechanisms - that will be innovative, member-focussed and offer a European flavour;
 - **Influencing policy and programmes** at national and international levels, in order to support protected area objectives;
 - **Enhancing our links within Europe** – through the Federation and with other Sections;
 - **Developing our organisation** so that it grows and remains capable of delivering all the other objectives.
- 2.5 We will realise these five aims through a detailed operational action plan, as detailed below.
- 2.6 We will deliver the action plan through a range of mechanisms that will include:
 - Our own limited resources, which require active Board membership and involvement; a number of key Action points require Board volunteers to be identified early in the period of this document
 - encouraging participation by our members wherever possible. Member involvement is key to the development of our organisation. Our output will reflect the degree to which members input contributions of different kinds;
 - using EUROPARC Consulting where appropriate.

Overarching objectives

- 2.7 As well as the above five operational aims, all of EAI's work over the next four years will have regard to:
 - **Increasing and retaining membership** – through regular, targeted drives;
 - **Attracting more external funding** – including that dedicated to specific projects, sponsorship and partnerships.

3 Action Plan

Aim One - communications

3.1 Communications is a cross-cutting issue - enhancing our communications is a key requirement for the delivery of all aims. The communications action plan below lists the ways in which we will communicate with the following **key audiences**:

- Our members
- Potential members
- Partners organisations within the Atlantic Isles Section
- EUROPARC Federation
- EUROPARC Sections
- Key European organisations, including DG Environment, NWE Europe and North Sea INTERREG organisations
- Governments and their agencies within the Atlantic Isles Section

3.2 Key messages

- EAI is a valuable organisation for our members – our activities are relevant, timely and focused on their needs
- There is no other organisation that is available to our members which has our breadth of membership and links into Europe
- EAI is enhancing its service to our members, by expanding and by hiring a new, dedicated Development Officer
- EAI's workplan for the next five years is about focusing on our members' needs. It puts EAI on a firmer footing, expands our reach within European networks, and develop new outputs and projects in line with our membership's priorities.

3.3 The primary source for communication is our website; an enhanced website, as well as e-bulletins, form the cornerstones of our strategy.

3.4 Communication – action plan

	Action	Completion date	Lead	Support	Urgency 1-5	Impact 1-5	Rank 1-25
	Run a series of national/regional workshops with members and non-members. Using a common presentation, develop some detail around what individual members can do for EAI and what EAI can do for them.	From June 2008	Board	DO	4	5	20
1	Develop regular e-Bulletin for members	March 2008 and ongoing	DO		4	5	20
2	Create and maintain list of Members' communications officers	Ongoing	DO		4	4	16
3	Build reference section (list of expertise available and issue guides) on website	April 2008	DO		3	5	15
4	Create and promote use of an interactive members' area for the website	In progress	DO		3	5	15
5	Create and promote use of an interactive Directors' area of the website	In progress	DO	Board	3	4	12
6	Develop working relationship with Communications staff at EHS, NPWS, NE, CCW, SNH and Europarc Federation	March 2008	DO	Board	3	4	12
7	Articles in funding bodies' in-house magazines, newsletters etc	July 2008	DO	Board	3	4	12
8	Articles in NAAONB, ANPA, CNP, SCNP, SNPS, ENPAA and WANPA newsletters, circulars etc	Sept 2008	DO	Board/ Partners	3	4	12
9	Review EAI element of NAAONB's induction programme	March 2008	DO		4	3	12
10	Ask all members to add links to EAI website from their own	Repeat in March 2008	DO		2	5	10
11	Circulate EAI leaflet in electronic form to all staff in members' organisations	March 2008	DO		3	3	9
12	EAI presentation in-built for ANPA's new members\staff induction seminars and refresher courses	Annually	DO		3	3	9
13	EAI exhibition made available for key non-EAI conferences and seminars	July 2008	DO		2	3	6
14	Contribute articles to quarterly EUROPARC Bulletin	Ongoing	DO		2	3	6
15	Develop a calendar for public sale, alongside NAAONB and ANPA	Dec 2009	DO		1	3	3
16	Explore possibility of partnership work with Federation and other sections on joint development of website through input of monies	March 2009	DO	Board	1	3	3

Aim Two – spreading knowledge

- 1.5 A key objective of EAI is to identify, develop and promulgate best practice in protected areas work, particularly from across Europe. EAI must aim to spread this information readily, speedily, clearly, and in a timely manner.
- 1.6 This objective cuts across a number of work areas including: communications; liaison with the Federation and other Sections; liaison with NAAONB, ANPA and others; and enhancing our capacity to deliver.
- 3.7 Much of the potential for learning lies in developing simple **online resources** – especially links to existing guides, management tools, research reports, innovative ideas and expert individuals.
- 1.8 Where the topic is more complex or broad, or requires deliberation, **seminars and conferences** are suitable and popular ways of facilitating these outcomes. In addition, the model of existing **standing Working Groups** should be rolled out to cover the most important issues. The members' survey identified a number of current issues, to stand alongside sustainable tourism and coastal and marine work. Listed in order of degree of interest:
- Economic development
 - Community engagement
 - Youth involvement
 - Health and wellbeing
- 1.9 There are a wide range of specific issues and potential tasks that would be suitable for shorter-lived arrangements, such as temporary Working Groups or **Task Groups**. These include:
- European policy / European Landscape Convention
 - Exploring the potential for transboundary work in the EAI Section
 - Designation and re-designation issues
 - Exploring ways of delivering the Natura Network Initiative of the Federation more effectively

3.10 Spreading knowledge – action plan

	Action	Completion date	Lead	Support	Urgency 1-5	Impact 1-5	Rank 1-25
8	Develop an online directory of expertise in different work areas	March 08	DO		3	5	15
9	New Working Group – community engagement. To be established following the November seminar. Produce a best practice guide to community engagement in PAs.	June 2008	DO	Vol from Board	3	5	15
10	2008 seminars – finalise themes, dates, locations and delivery ideas	Jan 2008	Board		3	4	12
11	Task Group – ELC implementation. Establish small group to scope implementation issues in EAI area and steer partnership proposals (see 'enhancing our links with Europe')	April 2008	DO	Board	3	4	12
12	Continue to support the workplan of the Coastal and Marine Working Group	Ongoing	EH		3	4	12
13	Continue to support the workplan of the Sustainable Tourism Charter Net	Ongoing	DO		3	4	12
14	Develop EAI Awards Programme – build into budget and promote	March 08	DO		3	4	12
15	Annual Duncan Mills Scholarship Award – promote and disseminate	Ongoing	DO		3	4	12
16	Liaison with ANPA and NAAONB: hold regular meetings to co-ordinate work	Ongoing	DO		2	5	10
17	Liaison with ANPA and NAAONB: develop a joint project on local government involvement in protected areas	March 2009	DO	Board	2	5	10
18	Develop Working or Task Groups in accordance with member feedback (Action 1) and Policy Forum output (Action 32).	Dec 2008	DO	Board vols	2	4	8
19	EAI to engage with other key organisations including agencies, NAAONB, ANPA etc via a training / study programme that delivers a European dimension	March 2010	Do	Board	1	5	5
20	Task Group – transboundary work within EAI. Establish small group to investigate how EAI could contribute to the Federation initiative	March 2011	DO	Vol from Board	1	3	3
21	Task Group – delivering the Natura Network Initiative within EAI. Establish small group to investigate EAI contribution to the Federation initiative	end 2012	DO	Vol from Board	1	3	3

Aim Three – influencing policy and programmes

- i.11 EAI could expand its work in this area considerably. Historically the organisation has done little formal advocacy work, although it has recently responded to policy consultations etc.
- i.12 The action plan therefore includes some early scoping work that needs to be carried out so that EAI can base the expansion of its work in this area on a sound footing over the next five years.
- i.13 **Influencing policy and programmes – action plan**

	Action	Completion date	Lead	Support	Urgency 1-5	Impact 1-5	Rank 1-25
i2	Policy Forum. Set up a small working group from the Board and other members to look at the key issues affecting protected areas and review how the Section, on behalf of its members, could influence policy and programming as a whole, and relate priorities to output from the workshop series (Action 1). To consider in particular the Catalonia and Snowdonia Declarations.	Final report by March 2008	Vols		5	5	25
i3	Develop a new advocational set of action points resulting from the report of the Policy Forum that develop EAI's role in raising awareness on PAs. These to include specific outputs for Scotland, Northern Ireland, Iceland, Republic of Ireland, England and Wales.	July 2009	DO	Board	3	5	15
i4	Identify opportunities wherever possible to develop the implementation of the European Landscape Convention; to report and spread best practice and promote the ELC as a vital landscape management tool.	Ongoing	DO		2	4	8
i5	Champion protected landscapes to developed administrations and UKG, as a tool for delivering cross-sectoral and sustainability policies and goals.	End 2012			2	4	8

Aim Four – enhancing our links with Europe

1.14 Europe is our unique selling point to our members, and initiating, enhancing and maintaining links within the continent is a vital area of work. This includes:

- other individual protected areas
- Council of Europe
- European Commission
- funding and project delivery mechanisms such as LIFE+ and INTERREG (North West Europe and North Sea Area)
- European contacts within EAI member states' government departments and agencies
- other sections of EUROPARC
- EUROPARC Federation HQ
- EUROPARC office in Brussels

1.15 Within the EUROPARC Federation, EAI has a very strong role to play. We contribute considerably to the Federation's budget and membership total.

1.16 Enhancing our links with Europe – action plan

	Action	Completion date	Lead	Support	Urgency 1-5	Impact 1-5	Rank 1-25
16	Act as partners within relevant LIFE+ and INTERREG (IVa – cross-border, and IVb – transnational) project proposals, and ensure ELC is considered within them	Oct 2008	DO	Board	3	5	15
17	Ensure EAI representation on the Council, wherever possible	Ongoing	Board		2	5	10
18	Develop links with key European policy personnel within Government departments and agencies in the UK and Ireland	Nov 2008	Agency observer		3	3	9
19	Continue involvement with Federation Sustainable Tourism Charter Network	Ongoing	DB		2	4	8
20	Continue involvement with Federation Coastal and Marine Working Group	Ongoing	EH		2	4	8
21	Maintain contacts with Brussels policy office	Ongoing	DB	Council rep	3	2	6
22	Contribute to Federation Strategy and Workplan reviews and ensure compatibility with EAI strategy and Action Plan is maintained	Ongoing	DO		1	5	5
23	Host Section Meeting or Council Meeting bi-annually	Ongoing	Council rep		1	4	4
24	Scope potential for EAI to lead within the Federation on an otherwise new area; look for partners sections to work with	End 2012	Council rep	Vol from Board	1	4	4
25	Attend Section Meetings (Chair and DO)	Ongoing			1	4	4
26	Attend General Assembly (Chair, DO and maximum EAI members)	Ongoing			1	4	4

Aim Five – developing our organisation

i.17 This five-year period, immediately following the establishment of EAI as a charity in its own right and the appointment of a Development Officer to lead the work, is a critical one in the history of the organisation. The Strategy and Action Plan is a visionary and ambitious one. There is a clear need to ensure that the organisation itself has the capacity, management systems and budget to deliver.

i.18 Developing our organisation – action plan

	Action	Completion date	Lead	Support	Urgency 1-5	Impact 1-5	Rank 1-25
i7	Special Board meeting on the Strategy and Action plan for the next 5 years and the associated budget implications	Spring 2008	DO		5	5	25
i8	Annual review of the capacity of the Section as a whole. In particular the Board and the Development Officer's ability to achieve the Strategy and Action Plan – are both fit for purpose?	Ongoing	Board		4	5	20
i9	Annual review of the organisation's financial management and accounting systems – are they fit for purpose?	Ongoing	Board		4	5	20
i10	Establish a co-ordinated core funding timetable on a long-term basis e.g. 3-yearly	March 2009	DO	Board	3	5	15
i11	Develop an external funding strategy, reviewing funding needs from agencies, trusts, corporate sponsors and project funding	Sept 2008	DO	Board	3	5	15
i12	CO2 reduction strategy in place	Sept 2008	DO		3	4	12
i13	Hold annual funding agency meetings	Ongoing	DO	Funders	2	5	10
i14	Review delivery of AGMs and Members' Days and develop proposals to maximise output and attendance	Spring 2008	DO	Board	2	4	8
i15	Produce a full set of relevant employers' HR policy statements	April 2008	Board		3	2	6
i16	Sign off, year on year, the strategy and business plan	Ongoing	Board		1	4	4
i17	Hold a minimum of four Board meetings per year	Ongoing	Board		2	2	4