



# PROTECTED AREAS IN-SIGHT

THE JOURNAL OF THE EUROPARC FEDERATION

New Voices  
New Visions  
New Values  
for people and nature



# Imprint

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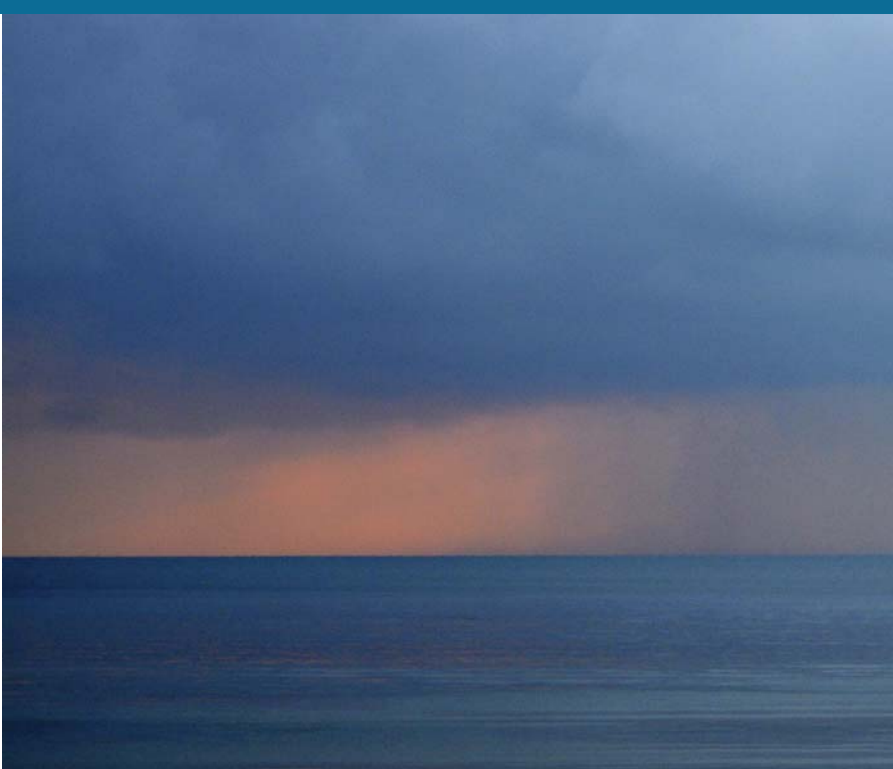
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Many thanks to all those who have contributed to this edition.



*Cover photo:*  
*Magic Mountains (Montanhas Mágicas), Portugal.*

More information at

[www.montanhasmagicas.pt](http://www.montanhasmagicas.pt)



# PROTECTED AREAS IN-SIGHT

THE JOURNAL OF THE EUROPARC FEDERATION



The **EUROPARC Federation** represents Protected Areas and governmental organisations in 37 countries, who themselves manage the green jewels of Europe's land, sea, mountains, forests, rivers and cultural heritage.

**Nature knows no boundaries** and EUROPARC therefore facilitates international co-operation in all aspects of Protected Area management. Through networking, advancing policy and practice, sharing best practices and developing new solutions to the challenges of Protected Area management, we want to deliver a *Sustainable Nature: Valued by People* and ensure the value of Protected Areas is recognized at the heart of Europe.

For more information: [www.europarc.org](http://www.europarc.org)



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# New Voices, New Visions, New Values for people and nature in Europe

EUROPARC brings people together from across Europe, with a shared passion for nature and landscapes to look beyond our parks and highlight their importance to environmental, social and economic development. Throughout 2017 we have done just that!

At this time, society seems to be questioning its core values. EUROPARC members, during some glorious and inspirational days in the Magic Mountains of Portugal, considered who are the NEW VOICES we need to hear, what are the NEW VISIONS we need to inspire us and what VALUES need to be RENEWED.

We concluded, **Protected Areas, with enlightened political leadership and good governance, can promote a more socially inclusive, environmentally healthier and economically viable model for society.** You can read more of the thoughts of our conference speakers, Marina Silva and Monsignor Francisco Frojan Madero in this edition and look out for the conference report coming soon!

Our Regional, Nature and Landscape Parks were a particular focus in 2017, with the publication of the book **"Living Landscapes"**. It is highly recommended reading. Thanks to the Association of German Nature Parks (VDN) and those who took part in the project for this great work. EUROPARC will convene future meetings of Regional Nature Landscape parks network, to address their issues.

Interregional cooperation is crucial to the work of EUROPARC and we are proud to be a partner in the IMPACT project. Such, **interregional cooperation is key to accelerate the learning process among different people, parks, regions, countries and enables us to find quicker solutions to complex issues.** The IMPACT Interreg Europe project, funded by ERDF, aims at improving the development potential of Protected Areas by introducing sustainable economic activities in their management plans. This aims to change management policies, to promote productive activities in Protected Areas, without compromising biodiversity conservation. EUROPARC through the IMPACT project supports experience exchange, collects case studies and promotes international projects. You can read more in this edition and visit the project website.

EUROPARC has a long established record in combining the work of Protected Areas and sustainable development, so we were especially pleased to be involved in various activities during the International Year of Sustainable Tourism in 2017. One highlight was the video intervention of United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, at the EUROPARC Conference 2017, where he stated the "European Charter for Sustainable Tourism is an important tool for Protected Areas to better implement the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and work for the benefit of the present and future generations." Look further into our journal to see some special reports from our sustainable tourism network and check out our new logo.

The new logo is part of a refresh of the EUROPARC communications with a new strategy and new tools on the website. So look out for the toolkits and webinar programme. **Help us bring more people together by joining in from the comfort of your screen!**



**By joining together we can continue to build a stronger, European network, with a renewed vision, revived voices and restored values and be better placed to support our members and to engage in the challenges Europe's nature is facing.**

**Carol Ritchie**  
Executive Director  
EUROPARC Federation

# Special edition: IMPACT Project



European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund



## HOW CAN WE EXPLOIT PROTECTED AREAS... without putting nature at risk?



**IMPACT is an interregional cooperation project aimed at introducing new management models that promote biodiversity-proof economic activities in protected areas.**



Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of Andalusia - Regional Government of Andalucía.



EUCC Baltic Office, Lithuania.



EUOPARC Federation, Germany.



National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism, Romania.



Molise Region, Italy.



Espaces naturels régionaux, France.

Regional administrations

Research Institutes

NGOs







## Is it time to move from conservation-focused management plans to new management models?

Traditionally, Protected Areas have been seen as **isolated, static spatial entities**, exclusively devoted to **preserving habitats and biodiversity**. However, current trends seek to enlarge this vision with the introduction of new concepts such as **green infrastructure** and **ecosystem services** that Protected Areas are expected to deliver. Innovative management plans will need to take into account these new aspects.

Moreover, Protected Areas have proven to be a **stimulus for economic development**, thus preventing current rural abandonment. If well managed, Protected Areas can mean a real opportunity for **green jobs creation** in sectors such as sustainable and active tourism, forestry, organic farming, processed food, fisheries, and handmade crafts, among others. Today, there is a **clear need to create employment in many rural areas, especially for young people**.

**With the aim of introducing** new management policies for Protected Areas, EUROPARC joined the **IMPACT Interreg Europe**, an interregional cooperation project. The aim is to try new models to move from conservation-focused management plans towards models that promote sustainable development in protected spaces and their area of influence.

What can be done to promote socio and economic development in rural areas? How important is stakeholder engagement and how to achieve it? In the next pages, we bring you some good examples from IMPACT partners.

### **How can we exploit Protected Areas without putting nature at risk?**

IMPACT is an interregional cooperation project aimed at introducing new management models that promote biodiversity-proof economic activities in Protected Areas.

During the first phase of the project (2016-18), **partners share their good practice** on the topic and learn from each other through **meetings and study visits**. Based on this learning process, each partner will produce an action plan to improve policies that will help to introduce new management plans in their Protected Areas.

More information at  
[www.interregeurope.eu/impact](http://www.interregeurope.eu/impact)

# Andalusia, promoting sustainable development plans (SDPs) since 1989

by Francisco Solano Cobos Ruiz – Andalusian Environmental and Water Agency

**Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency are the main objectives of the Sustainable Development Plans,** a project implemented in Andalusia since **1989**. The Regional Government of Andalusia tries to foster economy and create job opportunities involving 24 protected natural spaces.

**Sustainable Development Plans (SDPs)** are built up through a **participative and bottom-up process**, where stakeholders' opinions are considered through surveys, workshops and interviews. Tourism, agriculture and service enterprises, local governments, regional delegations of the Andalusian Government and citizen associations are invited to give their perception of the protected spaces and the activities that could take place within.

**SDPs include a description of the area focusing on both its ecological (land and biodiversity) and socio-economic aspects.**

Then, a **diagnosis of the area** following the SWOT methodology is presented, along with a **Financial Plan**. This includes self-funded actions, but the main aim is to use SDPs to look for financial opportunities from any public policy and programme (Economy, Agriculture, Culture, Tourism, Infrastructure).



## Implementing and monitoring SDPs

Some of the actions included in SDPs are oriented towards **human capital**, with training, education, dissemination and participation programmes. Other actions relate to investment, infrastructures improvement - like water facilities, roads or technological networks - and actions to protect or restore natural and cultural heritage.

**Organic farming** is growing fast in Andalusia as well, thus SDPs support branding approaches in order to ease the access to more exigent markets.

Watch EUROPARC Live video "Natural Park Label and its value"



*Cork extraction is a traditional job that respects natural heritage*

The SDPs are subject to Impact Environmental Assessment. Besides, once in place, a monitoring and evaluation system is performed on a regular basis. As a result of SDPs, **economic and sustainable activities linked to the territory have emerged**, some of which traditional, such as organic and integrated agriculture, tourism and forest use.

**One of the main achievements of the SDPs is that Andalusia has slowed the migration from rural to urban areas: job and education gap between people in the protected and urban areas is was halted.**



**New management models need to follow a more participative approach as compared with conventional models. Local stakeholders should be involved to guarantee the long-term success of the protected area management plan.**

As a result of traditional activities abandonment, many habitats are suffering changes and biodiversity loss. One way of reducing this impact is to stimulate these traditional activities under a new format – or to promote specific socio-economic activities that will help to maintain landscape and park management.

In all this period, Andalusia has not lost any municipality because of rural abandonment and the Natura 2000 Network is still growing in the region.

**IMPACT**  
Interreg Europe



*Photo: Grazalema National Park, Spain*







## An NGO as a neutral intermediary between Environmental authorities and local stakeholders

*Aisté Jurkienė, EUCC Baltic office*

In Lithuania, funds and human resources are directly allocated for the implementation of specific measures that improve natural resources and habitats. However, such **habitat management is inefficient, costly and unsustainable.**

**An alternative to such costly approach is to create a management system that involves as many people as possible. This can be done by encouraging local people to perform continuous socio-economic activities in the park.**

**IMPACT**  
Interreg Europe



European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund

In the two Natura 2000 sites existing within the **Seaside Regional Park**, **negative natural processes are occurring**, such as uncontrolled growth of wild shrubs, bushes and trees in the seaside meadows. On the other hand, abandoned and damaged areas are increasing due to the inactivity of local residents and landowners - neither used for grazing, nor for mowing anymore.



# Special edition: IMPACT Project

## Changing perceptions and improving cooperation

Nature management and local interests are tightly interconnected in and around the **Seaside Regional Park**. However, a deep **lack of cooperation and communication** between the community and the environmental protection authorities existed due to mistrust, suspicion and an atmosphere of hostility. The best way to deal with such communication problems was the emergence of a **neutral and unbiased intermediary**, and the EUCC Baltic Office was a very suitable partner for that.

Although this "mission" began quite a long time ago, and some progress was already made, the **IMPACT project** has given a **new impetus to the creation of stable and affiliated ties** between the local community of the Seaside Regional Park and nature conservation authorities.

Firstly, the EUCC Baltic Office was able to organise **regular meetings and consultations focused on environment and sustainable development**, involving both local residents and officials. Over the last two years, a **problem-solving culture** has emerged, based on **sittings and meetings**.

Secondly, they have strengthening cooperation and **performed joint activities** through a **project application called „Communities initiatives in conserved and Protected Areas“**. The overall idea of the project is to **support communities situated on Natura 2000 sites** in building international cooperation focused on exploitation of Protected Areas. **Fishery, forestry and agriculture, tourism services, handicraft and art** are some of the main areas of work.

These are just the first but necessary steps in order to achieve a coherent lifestyle in Protected Areas,

**diminishing not only conflicts between people and nature, but also conflicts between people with different interests.**

The EUCC Baltic Office hopes that the IMPACT project will build trust and a culture of mutual respect, that will continue to grow in the long-run.



*Photo: amber catching at Pajuris (Seaside) Regional Park, Lithuania, by EUCC Baltic*

Marine ecosystems are seriously threatened. The European Commission is calling Member States to better protect their seas. **The creation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) is a key conservation measure, to safeguard marine ecosystems and species.** Who should be involved in the protection of our Seas? Local communities have a role to play? In this issue, we bring you an interesting story: the creation of the first **community led Marine Reserve** in Scotland.

### **A small Scottish island community leads the way to protect and recover our seas.**

Diving for 10 years with my friend Don around the Isle of Arran in the Firth of Clyde (3700 sq. km of sea) we saw with our own eyes a very rapid decline in marine life.

For decades overfishing and poor fisheries management have been the norm. Even the 3m/5k offshore protection from bottom towed trawls was removed in 1984, due to industry pressure.

Rays, assorted flat fish, anglerfish, cod and pollack decreased and then disappeared. In 20 years, the commercial fishing industry lost 70% of its jobs in the Clyde area. With so few fish to catch, recreational sea anglers (RSA) gave up. The commercial fishers, encouraged by Government, turned to scraping prawns out of the mud and dredging up scallops from sand and gravel seabeds.

Reports were written and pressure was put on Government by RSA, marine tourism and environmentalists, but all were ignored by Government who viewed the seas as a resource just for the benefit of commercial fishermen.

**There was no recognised official route to implement a Marine Reserve but it was clear to us that was what needed to happen if there was to be any recovery. So what were the 3 major steps we took?**



Photo: Angus Robson in photo survey, by Howard Wood

## **1**

### **Engage your community**

With my dive buddy Don MacNeish, we researched and understood **the heart of the problem was regulatory capture of Government by just one section of the fishing industry** (the ones using the most destructive fishing gear).

To save our seas, we needed to “dive” into politics, to meet fishermen leaders and encourage a longer term vision. It was obvious that no one was going to take much notice of us unless we had the widespread support of our island community. **So we founded COAST, The Community of Arran Seabed Trust.** We held public meetings, gave presentations to dozens of local organisations and collected photos of fishermen with huge fish -from just a decade before. We needed to show what was missing.

**With growing public support, politicians slowly started to help COAST and write letters on our behalf,** but still Government officials continued as if our seas were solely for the benefit of the remaining commercial fishermen.

## **2**

### **Challenge the status quo and find joint solutions**

After 3 years, numerous meetings, enquiries by cross party parliamentary committees, **government officials, fishing industry leaders and COAST were given 6 months to find an agreed solution.** Progress was slow, 6 months became 2 years and even then, fisheries leaders threatened to walk away at the last minute unless the agreed small 2.67 sq. km *NoTakeZone* was halved in size. We held our ground and on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2008, the first UK community led Marine Reserve was designated by the Scottish Parliament.

However, the overriding issue was still unresolved - **on whose behalf should our Government be managing the sea?**

For a small island community organisation, we were fortunate to be meeting senior Government officials and regularly challenged them on just who “owns” Scotland's seas. After months of officials saying “It's solely a matter between ourselves and commercial fishermen” finally the Scottish Government accepted that **Scotland's seas were a public asset and a common resource.** This was a breakthrough!



# Protecting the Sea



Photo: Ballan Wrasse, by Howard Wood

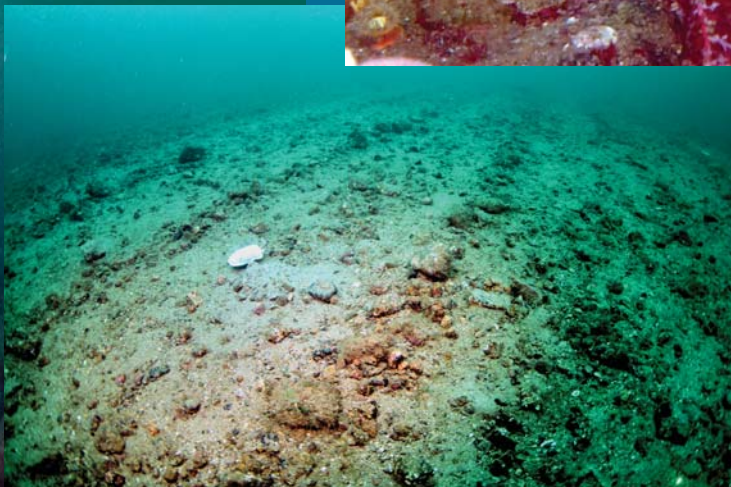


Photo: Dredged seabed, by Howard Wood

## Howard Wood

is co-founder and chair of **COAST** (Community of Arran Seabed Trust) and also founder and director of **SIFT**. His passion for diving around the Isle of Arran in Scotland since 1974 led him to become a marine environmental campaigner. In 2015 he was awarded the **Goldman Environmental Prize for Europe** and for his services to the marine environment an OBE by Queen Elizabeth II.



## 3

### Monitor and analyse effects

The Scottish Government did the initial baseline surveys of the *NoTakeZone* but since 2010 COAST has raised funds to monitor, working mainly with University of York PhD & MSc researchers. Nearly **30 research papers have been produced**. For such a small area the original *NoTakeZone*, has, over 9 years, **rejuvenated scallop and lobster stocks and doubled the biodiversity of the seabed providing nursery areas for fish**.

**The people of Arran are extremely proud of their Community Marine Reserve** and while Marine Scotland have the legal duty to protect the area, they are supported by dozens of local people.

Two years later the Scottish Parliament passed the Marine Act, which included the set up of a network of Marine Protected Areas. For its first 20 years COAST was run by volunteers, often with no funding. In, 2011, COAST gained funding for its first paid member of staff. Three years later South Arran Marine Protected Area was **100 times larger than the original NoTakeZone and covering 280 sq.km.**

## The next step.

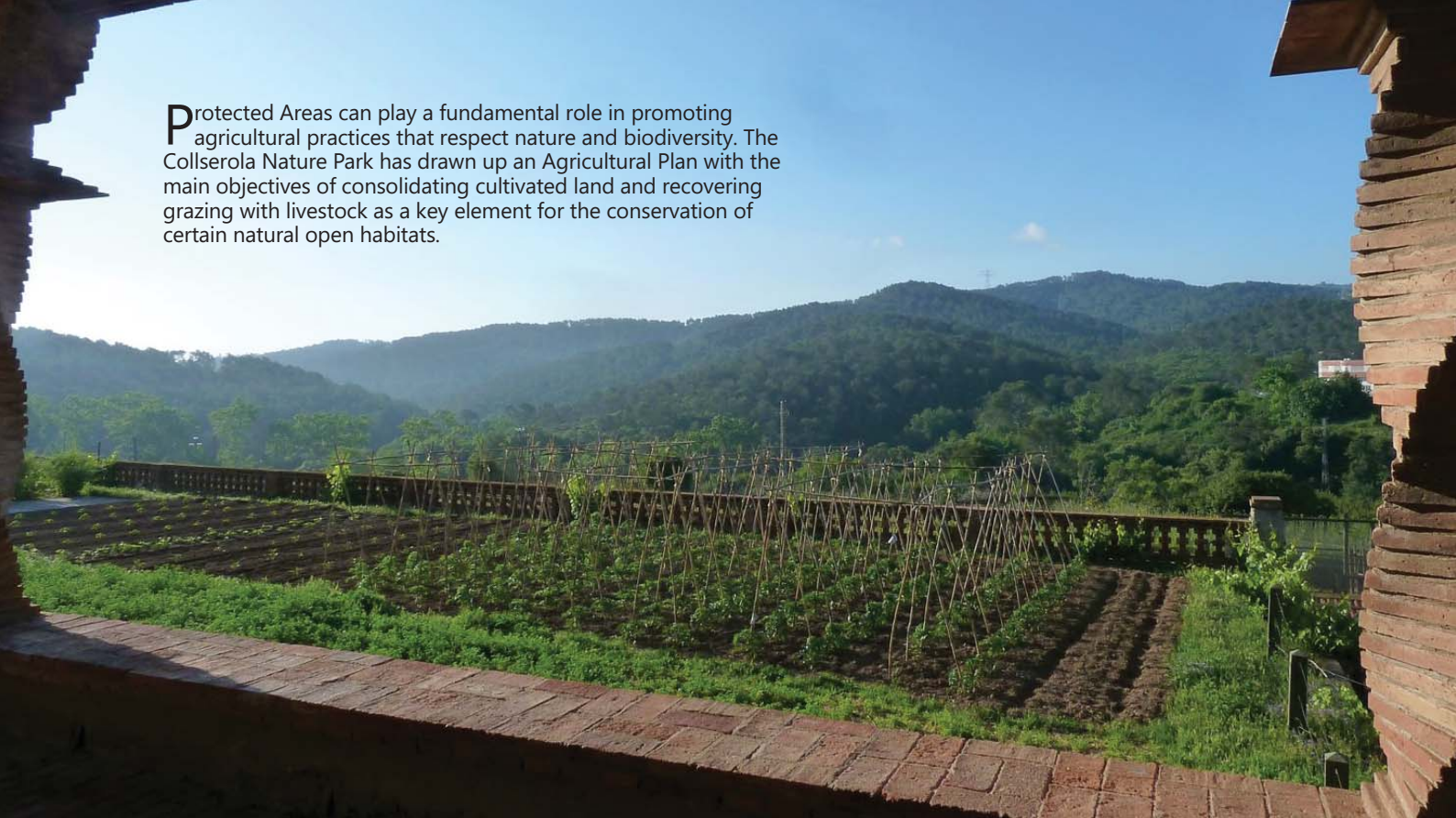
### Share the success

While COAST have been at the forefront over the past 25 years they have now been joined by 9 other marine communities all campaigning and wanting to be involved in the management of THEIR seas.

<https://www.communitiesforseas.scot/>



Protected Areas can play a fundamental role in promoting agricultural practices that respect nature and biodiversity. The Collserola Nature Park has drawn up an Agricultural Plan with the main objectives of consolidating cultivated land and recovering grazing with livestock as a key element for the conservation of certain natural open habitats.



## Promoting open spaces with farmers in a forest park as a means to increase biodiversity

Serra de Collserola Nature Park, Catalonia

By Sean Cahill, Joan Vilamú & Lluís Cabañeros\*



**The Serra de Collserola Nature Park is a protected Natura 2000 site covering some 8,000 ha situated in the centre of the Barcelona metropolitan area.**

Although now mostly covered by Mediterranean pine and oak forests (~70%), historically much of Collserola was devoted to agriculture, with many hills covered with terraced vineyards, carob, almond and olive trees.

However, the decline in farming and forest activities, as well as the assignment of land for property and infrastructure development has led to forest expansion within the park, and intense urbanization on its periphery. As a consequence, the diversity and extension of open type habitats and their associated biodiversity has been greatly reduced.

**The presence of an active agro-silvo-pastoral mosaic landscape is key to conserving open habitats in an otherwise forested park. This is also an essential part of a fire prevention strategy.**

Thus, there is a clear need to recover sustainable agriculture, **not only from an environmental perspective, but also to ensure a viable livelihood for the community.**

### Seán Cahill

is a Biologist at Collserola Park's Biological Station. Working on wildlife and biodiversity monitoring in general, with expertise in wildlife conservation and related conflicts in this highly anthropogenic metropolitan Protected Area.



\*Contact for further information: [lluisc@parccollserola.net](mailto:lluisc@parccollserola.net)



# Protecting the Land

## The Agricultural Plan

The Plan aims to consolidate existing cultivated areas, avoid further land abandonment and recover abandoned fields. It also strives to **encourage environmentally friendly agriculture and move towards organic farming**.

Likewise, the Plan aims to **promote controlled grazing**, provide support for correct animal husbandry and organic meat production, favouring the **recovery of traditional varieties and local breeds**.

Furthermore, the Plan goes beyond mere productivity, and includes an inventory of traditional dry stone wine huts, shepherding trails, and other elements relating to the **farming history and patrimony of the park**.



'Saint Theresa's broccoli', to look at the possibility of certifying these under this brand. **The new quality brand should also help encourage local restaurants to get involved**, both as producers and consumers of quality local goods.

Apart from the actual recovery of cultivated lands and local varieties themselves, a major outcome of the Plan has been the **use of grazing with sheep and goats in order to maintain endangered *Hyparrhenia hirta* dry grassland habitats**.

Such grazing also represents a more environmentally friendly method of maintaining fire **prevention strips within woodlands**. Likewise, this pastoral activity has also given rise to the production and commercialisation of '**Collserola Lamb**' as a new local product from the park.



# 1

## Promote local engagement

One of the main drivers of the park's Agricultural Plan **has been the participatory "Stimulation of Local Organic Farming" (DLOF) initiative to connect interests in agriculture and spur cooperation**. This local initiative represents a strategy for local development aimed at promoting fairer and more sustainable communities and food production systems. Through this initiative, the **park promotes a network for the marketing and commercialisation of farm products, especially of newly recovered local varieties, such as the 'Mandó' tomato**.

# 2

## Create a quality brand

An important milestone of the Plan was also the approval of the **Produkte de Collserola 'guarantee of quality' brand**, which now has the potential to identify many agricultural products from the Serra de Collserola Natural Park.

We are now starting trials with several local varieties of vegetables, such as the 'sugar lettuce' and the

# 3

## Celebrate success

One of the main outcomes of the park's Agricultural Plan to date has undoubtedly been its success at community building, promoting historical identity and awareness of place and nature with local products.

This also heightens the notion of care for habitat and landscape as an added value for local produce.





# Peace-keeping in the Mountains of Snowdonia

By Helen Pye, National Park Partnerships Manager at Snowdonia National Park.

In 2015 the issues affecting the area as a result of its immense popularity with visitors were reaching a crunch point. Parking problems were significantly affecting the local communities of the area, paths were being heavily eroded, litter was a major problem on the mountain and there was a general feeling amongst the public that things just weren't working. Snowdon regularly made the news in local and national press, and not in a good way!

There was of course a huge amount of effort and great work going on to look after the mountain from all sorts of different organisations – both public, private and third sector, **but there was no joined up, co-ordinated approach.**

The Snowdonia National Park Authority decided to take a leading role in a more joined up approach to the management of the area, by **developing a partnership management plan**, which would set out the opportunities and threats we all wanted to tackle over the coming years.

## Helen Pye

is responsible for creating the new National Park Management Plan as well as co-ordinating Fforwm Eryri – a forum that brings together the organisations that operate and deliver on the National Park objectives within the National Park.



From this very beginning point, to the point we are at now – with an agreed Plan in place – there were some fundamental ingredients that were key to the success of the process:

**Snowdon, Yr Wyddfa in Welsh** (pronounced uhr-wydd-fa), is a globally renowned, iconic mountain. It is home to vibrant, energetic communities and a mosaic of upland hill farms. It is a national asset, the most visited mountain in the UK, attracting over half a million people from across Wales, the UK and around the world every year. **Caring for Yr Wyddfa is a complex business, requiring close collaboration in the work that we do.**



# Working together



## 1 Identify the key players. Who are the key influencers in the area?

It was really important to design a plan that all our stakeholders supported and agreed on. Over the years, different types of groups in the area had become quite disparate in their views. In order to successfully influence and get people on board, we **identified and established communications with key players** in the area.

As well as a core group of officers (see point 3 below) **we also identified everyone, who had some stake, role or interest in the way we as partners cared for the mountain**, and then from these identified the key influencers and a clear communication strategy.

## 2 Find the one outcome that everyone agrees on (and cares about):

There will be an outcome that nearly everyone has in common. Sometimes it can be difficult to identify when moods are heightened! For Snowdon, it was that **everyone wanted to care for the mountain and look after it for future generations**. Once we'd identified this common outcome it was much easier to move things forward.

## 3 Create a core partnership to drive the process forward

The group comprised of officers that represented all the organisations and landowners that are responsible for on-the-ground management of the mountain - ranging from conservation work and path management to tourism, farming and mountain rescue teams. We wanted to make sure that this core group was/were delivering on the ground and avoid it becoming a "talking shop". **By creating and implementing a plan together, we could all be working towards the same goals.**

## 4 Develop the core partnership into a cohesive strong group

Point 2 above was the first and most important step in starting to bring the group together, along with other vital elements such as size of the group, meeting arrangements, dynamics and tone. Even the way you set out the room for a meeting is important!

## 5 Agree on - and then deliver - a genuinely open, transparent consultation process

This was about getting from where we were (no plan) to a point of delivery (an agreed partnership plan in place) in the most effective and efficient way. The diagram on the left sets out the process we took.

## 6 Demonstrate positive progress

During the process we identified some 'quick wins' that could demonstrate positive progress. One of these was a **pilot visitor giving scheme**. It helped show stakeholders that physical progress was being made, whilst we were still discussing and creating the Plan.

## 7 Build clear responsibilities and ownership

Perhaps one of the most important steps we took was a **'responsibility assigning' workshop** run for us by a fantastic consultancy company. This meant that responsibilities for action within the plan were very clear. Fundamental for being able to successfully deliver the plan.

### And so here we are now with an agreed plan in place. The end of the beginning!

It took two years to get to this point but has been hugely worth the effort. The turn-around in attitude and opinions of stakeholders has been quite incredible, and the momentum is really with us now. This makes everything so much easier and more efficient when it comes to delivering, when everyone is happy with the way forward.



Helen is happy to share information, knowledge and advice in more detail. If you'd like to discuss anything further you can get in touch via e-mail: [helen.pye@eryri.llyw.cymru](mailto:helen.pye@eryri.llyw.cymru)

*The Snowdon Partnership is funded by Snowdonia National Park with the support of Welsh Government, the National Trust and Snowdonia Society.*

To view the Snowdon Plan go to [www.snowdonpartnership.co.uk](http://www.snowdonpartnership.co.uk)

# European Policy

## The EU Action Plan for Nature, People and the Economy

In December 2016, the Fitness Check of the Nature Directives one space less that they are fit for purpose and remain fundamentally sound. However, there remain challenges with the application of this legal framework and the desired results are not fully achieved.

**Fulfilling the Directives' objectives and realising their full potential depends upon greatly improving implementation. This requires addressing funding shortages, knowledge gaps and increasing stakeholder engagement.**

These are key issues and the Commission has developed a strategic plan to address them, built on an extensive dialogue with Member States and stakeholders, including the 552,000 responses to the online public consultation during the evaluation of the Directives.

The **Action Plan for nature, people and the economy** aims to improve the Nature Directives implementation and boost their contribution towards reaching the EU's biodiversity targets for 2020. The Action Plan also aims at increasing coherence between nature protection and socio-economic activities, and foster engagement with national authorities, stakeholders and citizens.



### What is it about?

The fifteen actions to be carried out between now and 2019 focus on four priority areas:

#### A. Improving guidance and knowledge and ensuring better coherence with broader socio-economic objectives

Tensions between nature protection and socio-economic activities can arise for a number of reasons. The Action Plan sets out measures such as **guidance and a peer-to-peer mechanism to promote smarter participatory approaches** and encourage full engagement of landowners and users.

#### B. Building political ownership and strengthening compliance

While Member States are ultimately responsible for implementation of the Nature Directives, the Action Plan sets out measures such as dedicated bilateral and biogeographical dialogues as well as stakeholders' platforms for the Commission and stakeholders to work more **closely to facilitate and promote the conservation and sustainable use of nature.**

#### C. Strengthening investment in Natura 2000 and improving synergies with EU funding instruments

Funding shortages are a major factor undermining the effectiveness of the Nature Directives and preventing the Natura 2000 network and wider biodiversity from fully delivering their many benefits to society. A 10% increase of the support for nature under the LIFE Fund, result-based schemes under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and support for private land stewardship are some of the measures set to promote and support better use of available EU funding.

#### D. Better communication and outreach, engaging citizens, stakeholders and communities

Nature is our common heritage and provides multiple benefits to society. The Action Plan sets out measures to engage citizens, stakeholders, local and regional authorities and communities, using available platforms and to better promote local exchange of experience, as well as recognition and promotion of good management practices.

1) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992) and Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20 of 26.01.2010, p. 7).





Photo: Kullaberg Nature Reserve, Sweden, by Jimena Castillo

### Who will implement?

While several measures in the Plan will be taken at EU level, Member States and stakeholders concerned will also need to act. It is only through active engagement of people that we can ensure the right measures are implemented and established in the right places.

### Protected Area managers are in the front line in these challenging tasks. They are the key day-to-day engine to make Natura 2000 work.

The Fitness Check has revealed that the implementation of the Nature Directives needs more action on the ground. There is a great deal of interest and support for nature across the EU, and the Action Plan offers a unique opportunity to re-engage EU citizens and local communities. Achieving this will only be possible through a real partnership approach, engaging communities across the EU.



### Humberto Delgado Rosa,

Director for Natural Capital at DG Environment, European Commission. His Directorate's mission is to protect, conserve and enhance the EU's natural capital in the areas of biodiversity, nature, land and soil, forests and nutrient cycles, as well as overseeing the LIFE Programme for nature and the environment.

**I would like to call the whole EUROPARC network to take active part in this endeavour.**

Learn more about the EU Action Plan for Nature, People and the Economy

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness\\_check/action\\_plan/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness_check/action_plan/index_en.htm)









# Special edition "Overtourism"

## Are Protected Areas becoming victims of their own popularity?

By Luís Monteiro

With the United Nations declaring 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, and the increase of international influxes predicted for the coming decade, there has been a growing attention about "overtourism" and its negative consequences.

**As an important asset for tourism in many countries, Protected Areas do not escape this phenomenon.** After all, the reasons for protecting a natural place are often the same reasons for their popularity!

**Recently, it was estimated that the world's National Parks, Nature Reserves and nature reserves receive around eight billion visits per year.<sup>1</sup>**



Photo: Verdon Nature Regional Park, France, by S. Blanc

1) "Walk on the Wild Side: Estimating the Global Magnitude of Visits to Protected Areas", download at

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.1002074>



# Imposing a limit?

Unpredicted visitation growth might create two-folded negative impacts, firstly on the biophysical attributes, to local communities' life quality and to the existing infrastructures; and secondly a decline in the quality of visitor experience that sites are expected to provide.

To tackle the problem, some parks in Europe established **strategic limits on visitation** in order to preserve resources and ensure quality of visitor experience. Often as a last resort, when park managers (and locals) feel they don't have enough tools to deal with the masses. Although the majority of people dislikes this management option, it is in some cases inevitable.

The **Krka National Park** in Croatia is now limiting entrance to 10 thousand visitors at a time into the Skradinski buk section of the Park. In Italy, the picturesque **Cinque Terre National Park**, located along the Ligurian Sea, limited the total number of visitors to 1.5 million per year.

However, before we reach such decisions on limitation, **we might need to understand if there is a clear vision and objectives of what public use should be in our Protected Areas**. How to support parks in this endeavour?



## Luís Monteiro

is a researcher at Czech University of Life Sciences on assessing, managing and monitoring tourism related impacts in Protected Areas. Luís is also a member of the Tourism and Protected Areas Specialist Group from the *IUCN WCPA*.



## Special edition "Overtourism"

More examples are represented in the manual *Practical, profitable, protected. A starter guide to developing sustainable tourism in Protected Areas*, published by the ECEAT International, the European Centre for Eco and Agro Tourism in partnership with the EUROPARC Federation.

<http://bit.ly/2FFIKdR>



# Addressing “overtourism” in Protected Areas

1

## Set management principles

The **European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas** (ECST) is a useful tool, based on 5 principles, for the development, planning and implementation of quality tourism in and around Protected Areas.

2

## Look for a management framework

Various frameworks have been developed around the concept of **carrying capacity**. Yet carrying capacity has been recognised to provide managers with limited practical direction since the methodology focuses on **“How many is too many?”, when managers really need to understand the relationships between visitor numbers, impacts, site goals, and local community expectations.**

As a response to these limitations, both in theory and practice, several frameworks have been developed and used worldwide. See: *Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)*, *Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC)*, *Visitor Experience and Resource Protection (VERP)* or the *Visitor Use Management Framework (VUM)*.

3

## Define a strategy and action plan

A good plan will identify agreed objectives, actors and management actions necessary to realise the vision.

Strategies to manage high tourist numbers can either be

Direct

through  
regulations  
law enforcement

examples  
limiting the use:  
restrictions on length of stay  
differential fees  
use permits

Indirect

through  
education

examples  
site design  
visitor education  
communication  
promoting off-season  
tourism

4

## Implement a monitoring programme

Assessing the current conditions and effectiveness of management practices is essential. Numerous guidelines and handbooks are available with examples of monitoring methodologies and programmes devoted to visitor use, behaviour, experience and visitor impacts.

Some of the most common **visitor use indicators** include:

- the total number of entries
- stays overnight
- length of stay
- visitor consumption expenditure.

As for **monitoring visitor impacts**, indicators can be divided in:

- recreation infrastructure (e.g. trails, campsites, scenic overlooks);
- ecological resources (soil, vegetation, wildlife, water);
- visitor use and behaviour (type and distribution of use, and the sign of non-compliance behaviour).

There are many successful examples from Protected Areas managing their tourism flows. Parks tend to implement a combination of both direct and indirect strategies.



Photo:  
Pembrokeshire Coast  
National Park, UK,  
by Marloes



# Tackling overtourism: 7 ideas from the Tuscan Archipelago National Park, Italy

by Aurora Ciardelli

The Tuscan Archipelago National Park protects the land and sea of seven islands, looking after 15 Natura 2000 sites (SCIs and SPAs) and 22 types of habitats. Twenty years of experience and the will to do always better, taught us that

**protection must be shared and not imposed and that the hard work of building good relations with the community will eventually be fruitful.**

We have been working in partnership with local administrations, associations, volunteers, but also with cultural organisations, schools, and law enforcement agencies. The achievement of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas Certification was the tangible example of this.

**Promoting off-season visits** is our main objective to tackle overtourism. How to make nature tourism attractive outside the summer season? In summer, how to combine the classic sun and beach holiday with new cultural, naturalistic and educational stimuli?

To tackle seasonality flows, and inspire tourists protecting while enjoying the Park, we have implemented a series of activities throughout the year.

## The Walking Festival

A year-round calendar of events that include **beautiful – and free – guided tours** on all seven islands. Visitors are inspired to discover the scents of spring or the autumn foliage; to enjoy a *digital detox*; to taste some of the islands' typical products; to find out the archaeological, geological, naturalistic values; or to simply walk under moonlight.

## Accessibility for tech-lovers

For the passionate hikers who love the digital world, **the Park has recently incorporated maps of the 7 islands in the "Avenza Maps" App.** The app, designed for smartphones and tablets, is free for download and works without internet connection.

## The Pianosa Model: prisoners as nature-guardians?

We are particularly proud of the *Pianosa model*. Thanks to a collaboration with the prison administration and other institutions, **detainees helped recover degraded areas of the island and created a vegetable garden** - giving prisoners an opportunity for job reintegration and sense of pride. Visitors appreciated the improvement of the landscape and innovative services such as dinners with *pianosini* fruit and vegetables signed by renowned Chefs, and classical music concerts in the Island's deep silence.

### Aurora Ciardelli

Working in the Tuscan Archipelago National Park since 1999, Aurora is responsible for liaising with press and external stakeholders, having a major role in promoting sustainable tourism activities in the Park, through social media, digital tools and press.





## Valuing and restoring

Thanks to a close collaboration with the local Municipality of Giglio Isola, **the Park opened guided tours to** an archaeological site of great attraction, which had been abandoned for years.

The dune area of Lacona, the last example of natural dunes in the Tuscan Archipelago, was valued through a **monitoring and visitation programme** (under the RESTO LIFE project), supported with a new information point.

## Scuba diving in a protected sea?

Around the Pianosa island, sea has remained untouched over the last 50 years, as diving and fishing were banned activities. Opening controlled access and ensuring habitat protection, was a great achievement.

Locals were amazed by the exuberance of the underwater world, while diving centres increased their activities and visibility – and **became strong Park promoters and allies for sea protection.**

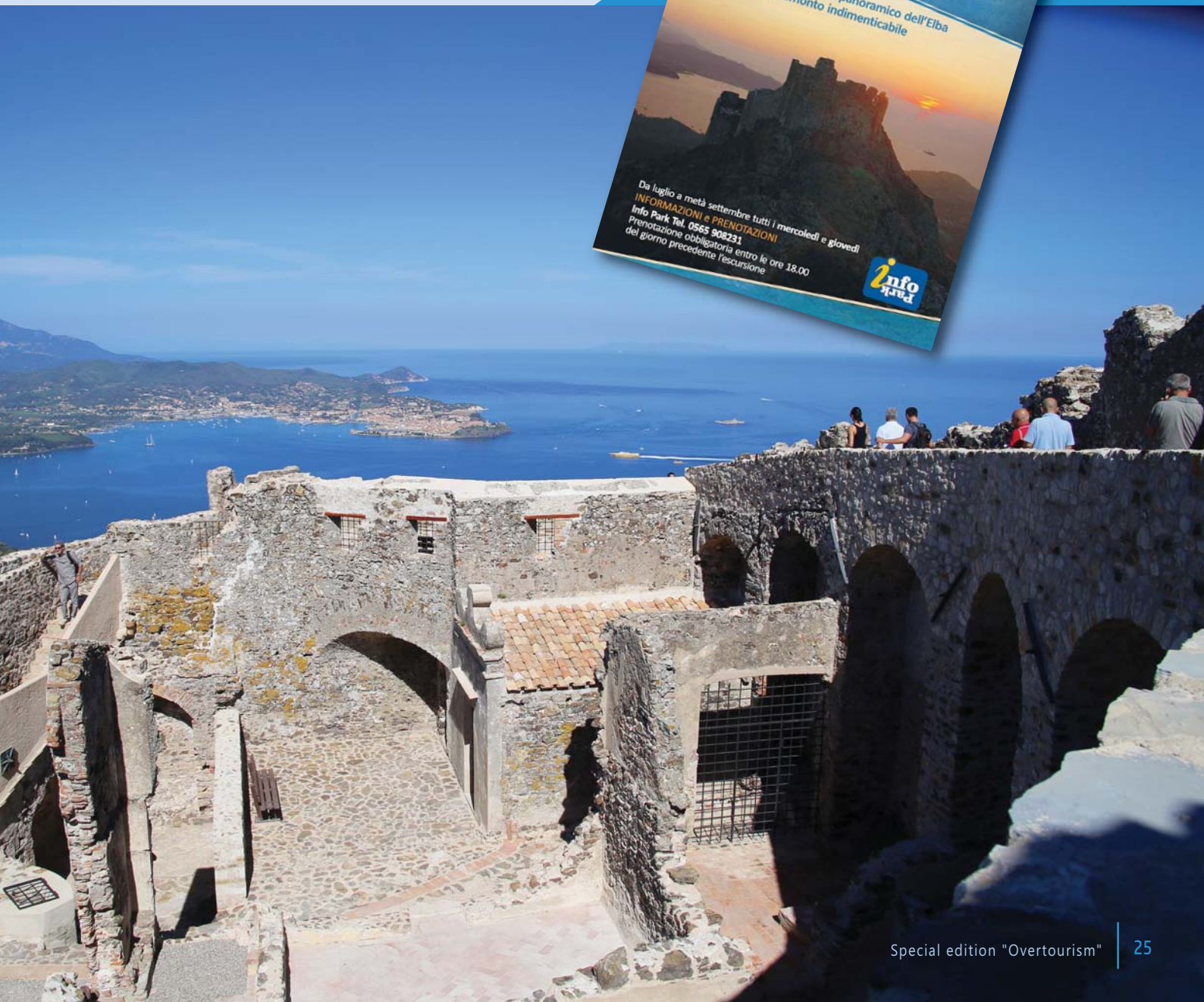
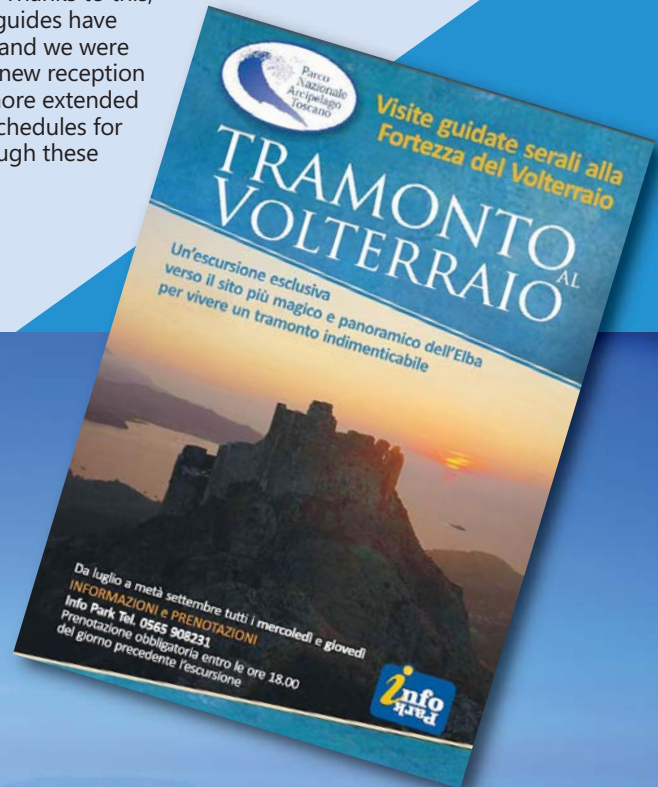
## Imposing a visitors' limit

The smaller and the most vulnerable islands, are safeguarded by a quota of accesses and can only be visited with certified park guides and with an **online system for tour operators.** This guarantees compliance with the limits of visitors in the island and overnight stays.

## Outsourcing tourism services

For three years now, **outsourcing to a specialised company has solved many of our problems.** Services include information to the public, reservations, environmental education, sale of tours and merchandise, and management of the Park's events. Thanks to this, 50 new park guides have been trained and we were able to open new reception points with more extended and flexible schedules for tourists. Through these actions,

**We have been able to protect endangered habitats, combining use and respect.**







# Limiting the impact, rewarding the visitors

At Monsanto Forest Park, Portugal

Monsanto Forest Park is a forest installed in Lisbon's Council in 1934, with ca 1000 ha and covered by a very diverse flora, dominated by common oaks (portuguese, green, cork and English oaks) and umbrella pine and cypress, wild olive and carob trees. It is equipped with several sports facilities, playgrounds, an interpretation centre, some restaurants and many trails.

Despite being a Periurban Park, it is increasingly perceived as an Urban Park by many. This is not due to any changes to the original park concept, but simply because it was swallowed by the city expansion and its satellites.

## This status frames some strengths & weaknesses:

1. Easy access (lies at very short distances from the heart of the city)
2. Easy crossing (an alternative to the main traffic routes especially during rush hours)
3. Easy visiting (many access possibilities for visitors from the city, the outskirts, or even from very distant places (even from abroad international))
4. With many attractions (recreational and outdoor sports facilities, enjoyment of wild nature, nature interpretation, environmental education, etc ...)
5. Impossibility of controlling accesses (too many entrances with different jigs [ranging from the freeway to the trekking trail], some even without any specific declaration)
6. High number of users who "open" new spontaneous trails in the forest (without any control)
7. Rising conflicts between users, especially in spaces where multiple opportunities for use meet.

## Fernando Louro Alves

*is Forester Engineer Senior Advisor in the Lisbon City Council, serving in the Management Division of the Monsanto Forest Park, from the Department of Green Spaces. Apart from his degree in Forest Engineering specialized in management of natural resources, Fernando has training in Landscape*

*Architecture and holds a Masters in regional and urban planning.*





# Special edition "Overtourism"

The last point raises an important question: **should the Park accommodate all types of visitors equally, even if some rather harmful and high-impact uses inhibited the undisturbed, low-negative-impact visits?**

For the Park, establishing a positive connection between different user groups users, and diminish the reasons of conflict, are management priorities. This is achieved by

**facilitating and supporting the access for users that generate less negative impact, whilst creating obstacles for visits of high negative impact.**

## Improving Slow Mobility

A group of citizens, through the Participatory Budgeting Process, proposed an improvement on the mobility within the park. Supported by this initiative, we decided to implement a set of measures on slow mobility with the macro-objective of **increasing the number of good / low-impact visits of the Park.**

This intervention was drawn under different scopes:



## Improving Soft Mobility

1. Establishment of a parkway (circular distribution route) inside the Park, to be carried out preferably in public transport (green energy).
2. Establishment of a trail for runners.
3. Establishment of 6 new thematic trekking trails: one especially prepared for users with reduced mobility. The trails also allow educational of different geological, botanical, biological values of the Parks.
4. Improvement of the quality / comfort / safety of all trails and walking paths
5. Solving of conflicts caused by road intersections, between motor traffic and "soft mobility", through creating the nodes of conflict between motor traffic and smooth mobility, namely by creating uneven passages and avoiding crossings.
6. Homogenization of the Park's signage, making clear to all the users that they are inside the Park.

### Decrease the number of users with greater impact

1. **Redraw the road profile**, especially in places where drivers tend to exceed legal speed limits, by creating scores or or narrowing the channel - to reduce the flow of traffic crossing the Park. This provides greater safety to soft mobility users and to the living beings that usually end up being ran over: mainly European Hedgehogs, Squirrels and Owls.
2. **Improve and confine some parking areas**: giving better conditions to those arriving first and provoke reduction of visitors coming by car "due to lack of parking lots". This would avoid exceeding the carrying capacity of each equipment.
3. **Renaturalize manmade trails**, in order to provide greater tranquility in some spaces, counterbalancing the concentration of users in the Park area.





# EUROPARC

Sustainable Tourism  
in Protected Areas

## Good for Parks Good for People

Sustainable Tourism in European Protected Areas provides a meaningful quality experience, safeguards natural and cultural values, supports local livelihoods and quality of life and is economically viable

[europarc.org/sustainable-tourism](http://europarc.org/sustainable-tourism)





For over two decades, EUROPARC has supported Protected Areas as key-promoters of sustainable tourism in their regions. Through the methodology of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECSTPA), parks establish strong partnerships with business and community. It is through this participatory process that a common vision, strategy and action plan for the region comes to life, assuring nature, people and local economy benefit.

**“Work with the Charter has allowed all involved parties to think of the area as a big book we are writing together, each chapter is essential to make the story complete”**

*Kemeri National Park, Latvia*

Hundreds of Parks in Europe following the Charter methodology are contributing to economic development, based on a shared commitment towards sustainability. In 2017, the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres, in a welcome video to EUROPARC Conference, stated

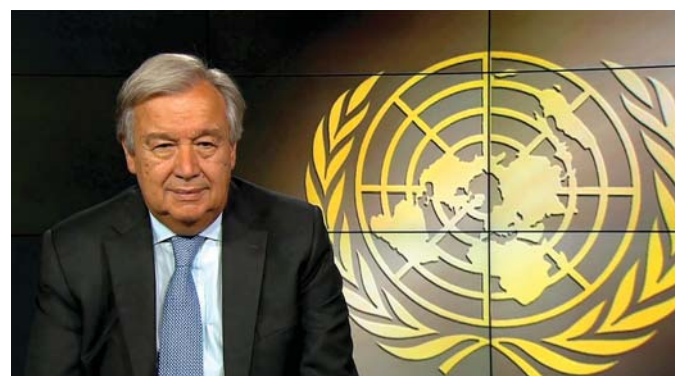
**“the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism is a valuable tool for Protected Areas to better implement the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and work for the benefit of the present and future generations”.**

**Watch the message of the UN Secretary-General**

<https://youtu.be/xnwwOakU7Kk>



The logo is available in 7 languages and 3 different versions – to be used by the Sustainable Destinations, by their Sustainable Partners and Sustainable Tour Operators.



To celebrate the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, EUROPARC organised a series of *webinars about sustainable tourism*, and launched the new image of the Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas!



# Cover theme: New Voices, New Visions, New Values

## Ecological Spirituality

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By Monsignor Francisco Froján Madero

On May 24, 2015, Pope Francis surprised the world with the publication of the Encyclical Letter *Laudato si', On Care For Our Common Home*. As a good father, he addresses not only believers, but "the whole human family" (n.13) to all men and women who, even without recognizing themselves in any religious tradition, want to talk about their commitment to defend the dignity of man and to safeguard creation (n.3).

### **Laudato Si' On Care For Our Common Home**

The strength of *Laudato si'* lies in the innovation of Pope Francis, with his strong, contemporary and pertinent message, and the concreteness of his proposals. He has compiled a masterpiece that represents the Church's **sense of caring for our common home, to open the eyes of humanity to a problem that deeply affects everyone in general - and each one in particular.**

There is an order in the universe that must be respected. Human beings have a serious ethical responsibility to cultivate, preserve, improve and pass on this great space - the world's garden. **It is a task that involves a global "ecological conversion"** (John Paul II, Catechesis, 2001/01/17). Ecological damages, deformation and destruction of creation is a crime against ourselves and a sin against God (n.8).





Before nature we are subject to laws not only biological but also moral, whose transgression never goes unpunished. We have many examples of this.

**"God always forgives, man sometimes, nature never."**

We need today **changes in the way of life, production and consumption** (No. 23), **a new way of thinking and acting, individually and socially, a new ecological spirituality**. It implies, finally, "to examine our lives and to recognise how we offended creation" (n.288).

### **Environment, social exclusion and existential peripheries**

Natural heritage is "a loan that each generation receives and must pass on to the next generation" (n.159. Portuguese Episcopal Conference, Pastoral Letter Solidarity Responsibility for the Common Good, 15.09.2003, 20). An inescapable duty of justice between the generations (n. 159, 162).

**"The current ecological degradation and destruction of much of biodiversity is imposed by the ambition for profit and power and by an irresponsible misgovernment of the world's economy",**

notes Pope Francis. This economy is not compatible with a human - face ecology in which the socially excluded (cf. n.46), and ultimately the poorest, constitute the greater part of the planet (n. 49).

Above all the aspects of this "culture", lies the scandal (and sad spectacle) of food waste in our oppressive and unsatisfied society. It is known that in order to satisfy all needs of the postmodern, materialistic and super-industrialised society, large areas of forest must be cut for agricultural land.

Aggressive deforestation (not to mention the devastation caused by forest wildfires and its consequences, as dramatically affected Portugal this year) means the loss of forests and woodland, and of species that could constitute extremely important resources in the future, not only for food but also for the cure of diseases and a variety of other services (n. 32).

In a certain extent, the fiction narrated in the adventures of the popular Asterix, that I recall from the book "**Asterix: The Mansions of the Gods**" (1971) came true: "*Let's knock down the forest to make a great natural park*", pretends, as Pope Francis claims, "to replace an inconceivable and irreversible beauty by another created by us" (n. 34).

**Today, the green discourse, or ecological approach, cannot ignore the social question, since the cry of the land has become the cry of the poor (cf. n.49).**



### **Monsignor Francisco Froján Madero**

*graduated in biology and religious education and PhD in Theology. Since 2000, Francisco lives in the Vatican State and works in the State Secretary for external relations. His passion for nature made him establish a strong relation with the environmental subjects, having an active role in bridging-spiritual values with nature conservation.*

The earth's groan joined the groaning of the marginalised (cf. n.53). Ultimately: **"The common home of all men must continue to rise from a correct understanding of universal fraternity"** (Pope Francis, Address at the United Nations Headquarters, September 25, 20).





### Marina Silva

*former Minister of Environment in Brazil between 2003-2008. During her mandate, Marina created 25 million hectares of new National Parks and involved over 12 million young people in environmental actions all over the country.*

## An ideal for change

By Marina Silva

A political crisis is visible around the world. The “owners of the world”, including authoritarian and/or populist leaders, **seem more dedicated to profit from the crisis, instead of solving it.** Big countries’ societies look for ways out but they seem to be stuck on how to change, remaining vulnerable to conscience numbness. Disorientation dominates.

This is just the most visible and noticed aspect of the situation, the tip of the iceberg. In reality, the crisis is much bigger and not restricted to conflicts of political and social nature, nor to the financial breakage that sweeps national economies in all continents, throwing billions of people into unemployment. The fast evolution of global warming and its terrible effects on the planet is extremely serious.

**On the background of the political and social conflicts, there is a value crisis - a loss of meaning and a weakening of human solidarity.**

Those crisis (political, social, economic, environmental and of values) are simultaneous because they are systemic. **They form what I call civilization crisis.** It is the human civilization who is at stake. For the first time in history, we need to face the possibility of an imminent interruption of conditions that allow life on this planet.

Yet more, the ultimate consequences is the change on human mentality and on the identity ideals that used to reference human endeavours.

**In four centuries, the ideal of being was replaced by the ideal of having. Consumption started to be a symbol of success and achievement.**

### When success means failure

**H**ow did we come to this extreme condition? Paradoxically, it was not by failure, scarcity or weakness, but rather by our successes, by the excess and by the strength we impose on this planet. We obtained success with our technologies - on food production, disease treatment, recycling and waste management and, above all, in generating and using energy efficiently.

With these technologies, we grew abruptly: currently 7 billion with perspective of reaching 9 billion in 2050. **We repeated the success formula and obtained more excess.** We broadened the system that we started about 450 years with the arising of mercantilism, with **its production and consumption model that does not account for the support capacity of ecosystems.** Meanwhile, we are contaminating the atmosphere with gases causing temperature rise, destroying forests, landscapes, biodiversity, fertile soil and hydric resources at an unimaginable scale.



# Cover theme: New Voices, New Visions, New Values

## To have, or not to have?

**W**e do not want to be immortal, as the Egyptian desired, nor wise and free, as the Greek wanted, or neither great and strong, as the Romans praised. We do not want to be saints or knights, as the medieval Europeans wanted. **Now, we want to have, and to own things.**

The meaning has inverted: before, **being virtuous opened the possibility of earning valuable things; now, having valuable things may give us the means to be respectable, admirable and virtuous people.**

We can “be” infinite things without exhausting the planet. However, in order to “have” more, we collide with natural boundaries. In four centuries, we crossed those boundaries and won our struggle against nature restrictions... And by doing that, we destroyed the source of life. We walk towards collapse.

## How to overcome the civilization crisis?

**I** believe this is only possible if, within the crisis system, a significant amount of people unleash an identity-breaking pressure from the current system. World change will not come by a prolonged and reasonable planned transition, nor by a quick, abrupt and violent rupture. The old dilemma “reform vs. revolution” has expired.

**Change can come from a type of alternative enabling mutation. It shall change mentalities, values, meanings, and ideals. And then, it will also change the way we produce, consume, and relate to each other and to other forms of life.**

**There will be no place in the world for excessive consumption.** The planet cannot supply our infinite desire of having things, but our planet is the best environment there is for us to exercise our infinite wish for being. Of being the best artists, poets, writers, cooks, educators, physicians, people.

**It is necessary to add to the great ideals of the French Revolution of equality, freedom and fraternity, the ethical imperative of sustainability.**







**EUROPARC**

**Conference 2018**

Cairngorms National Park **Scotland**



“I am delighted to invite you to **EUROPARC Conference 2018** in the heart of the Cairngorms National Park, the largest Park in the United Kingdom.

We have planned a fantastic programme of speakers, workshops and visits and our aim is for you to leave **‘inspired by the next generation’** with new ideas to take back and use in your own National Parks and Protected Areas.

A warm Scottish welcome awaits you in September – I look forward to seeing you there.”

*Grant Moir, Chief Executive,  
Cairngorms National Park Authority*

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