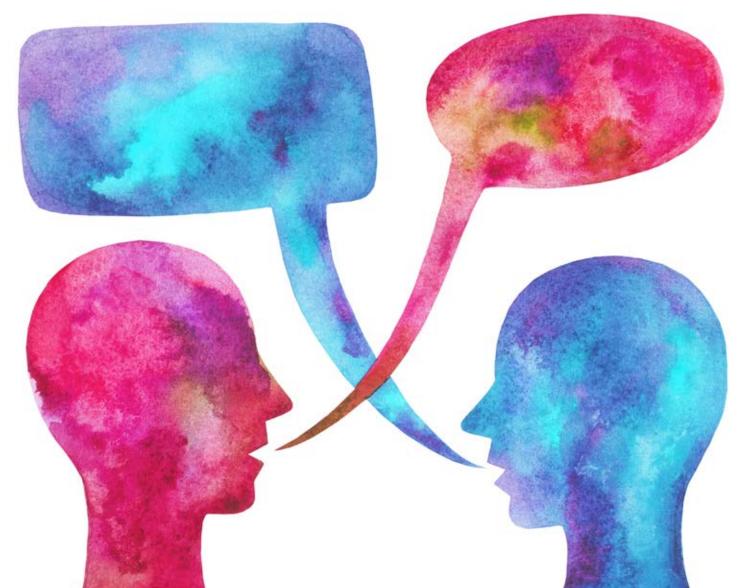


EUROPARC Strategy To 2030

DRAFT Version 11.06.2021





The EUROPARC Federation is the voice of its members and our members are the voice of Protected Areas across Europe.

This strategy reflects their needs and aspirations. As the principal organisation representing those who work in and for Protected Areas, EUROPARC is uniquely placed to deliver the changes required to improve our natural and cultural heritage and people's connection to it - politically, at a policy level and by improving the practice of our management.

This strategy will give focus and direction that will strengthen and grow our network in size and influence and build further on the unique partnerships, participation and professional development that membership of the Federation provides.





The production of this publication has received funding from the LIFE Programme of the European Union. The content of this publication doe s not reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Responsibility for the information and views expressed in the publication lies entirely with the authors. Through this strategy we will

Invest in our staff, our members' skills and capacities, our resources into projects and programmes that bring added value to our members and help take forward our goals

Inspire our members

through networking and communications, others to join us in partnership or membership, wider society to value their protected areas

Innovate

adopt an attitude of continual development, seeking new ways to advance our goals, engage, communicate with, provide training for our members and take forward the practise of Protected Areas management

Influence

political and policy decision makers to ensure the values and benefits of Protected Areas are recognised and integrated in their work.

Inform our members of progress, how to participate and get involved in our work, our partners and colleagues across sectors.

Overall we seek to have

IMPACT,

in that all the actions of our strategy, will precipitate a positive change across all areas of our work. These impacts will be the OUTCOMES of our strategy by 2030. Where are we now?

A short summary of the current strategy to 2021.

The <u>EUROPARC Federation Strategy to 2021</u>, saw a renewal of the commitment to build on the legacy inherited from our almost 50 year history. Our membership has grown and with Fedenatur coming into our organisation, we joined forces with the periurban parks.

We renewed our internal governance, strengthened the role of sections and instigated new ways of working with the Directorate now operating over 6 countries, with our headquarters remaining in Regensburg, Germany. Even more so, we invested in new, innovative and effective communications and embraced the changes in technology that have arisen over the past 6 years, to create new online services to members. Our lobbying work has grown across multiple agendae from human-large carnivore interaction, to sustainable agriculture and the Youth Manifesto. The investment in relationship building, providing concrete evidence and passionate advocacy has increased our status and ensured that EUROPARC is now regarded as the "go-to" professional body whom European organisations turn to for input and advice on matters relating to the work of Protected Areas.

The work of the Federation was delivered by a wider range of actors over the strategy period with new task forces and commissions bringing in member expertise. Sections within EUROPARC have fulfilled a greater role taking part in projects, leading in conferences and being the interface of European issues for regional and national members.

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Throughout the 2015-2021 strategy we have created greater opportunities to complement core member services by securing projects in areas that reflect members' priorities such as capacity building, green energy, sustainable tourism, sustainable regional development and the work of Regional Nature Landscape parks.

A multitude of webinars, seminars, often through the generous support of the Alfred Toeper Stiftung at Siggen, conferences and workshops, have ensured members share, learn and work together. We have successfully managed the move online in response to COVID19 attracting larger audiences than ever.

The established programmes of The Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas and Transboundary have been refreshed and Junior Ranger has been complemented with a Youth + programme. A new Healthy Parks Healthy People Europe programme and toolkit has been created, and we have advanced our advocacy work on sustainable agriculture, in particular gaining stronger recognition of having environmental organisations as a necessary part in the creation of national strategic plans.

EUROPARC has survived challenging financial times notwithstanding the tumultuous impact of the corona virus pandemic whose long term effects will take us well into the period of the next Strategy.

Nature knows no boundaries and during the period of the current strategy EUROPARC has remained committed to facilitating 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 will continue to deliver our vision of Sustainable Nature: Valued by People and ensure the value of Protected Areas is recognised at the heart of Europe.

Where do we want to be?

A forward looking view of the Protected Areas in Europe, as we achieve the ambitions and outcomes of our strategy.

Europe's Protected Areas are much increased in range and effectiveness by appropriate designations and management agreements on land and sea. The need for integrated management to ensure a healthy and sufficient life support systems is realised and resourced, with biodiversity thriving and restored. Protected Areas are valued as a critical element in addressing the interlinked climate and nature emergencies and are seen as natural health centres for improving health and well-being for all, regardless of background or income.

Protected Areas are appropriately managed and resourced to protect and conserve biodiversity and provide opportunities for enjoyment and learning, with well-trained staff, co-operating to commonly agreed goals, with differing sectors and across national boundaries.

Across all Protected Areas local communities and stakeholders are proactively involved in the decision - making processes governing the Protected Area. As the next generation, young people will be supported to engage actively at all levels. The Protected Areas world in 2030 and beyond. Protected Areas are valued further by society for the many ecosystem services they deliver. Staying true to their core values, they are recognised for the added value they provide in terms of benefits to society for our health and wealth, contributing to a sustainable society and ensuring citizens are informed and engaged. Protected Areas are a valued contributor to green recovery, locally, regionally and nationally, not only as sustainable tourism destinations, but as catalysts to regional sustainable development and sustainable agriculture, forestry and fishing.

The EUROPARC Federation has members from every European country representing the majority of Parks and Protected Areas. It is a thriving, resilient and sustainable organisation, with active member participation across all its work areas, recognised for its inspirational leadership and innovative communications. It delivers capacity-building and networking that result not just in the recognition of the value and benefits of Protected Areas politically and across the policy framework but also the improvement in Protected Areas management practices and hence the enhanced conservation of our shared natural and cultural heritage.

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The Journey to 2030

The context within which we will need to work over the next decade.

The world in which we live is increasingly complex and constantly changing more than ever before. Protected Areas operate within Climate, Nature and Societal, Technological and Political changes and their associated effects.

With the spectrum of tasks, demands and expectations upon Protected Areas management seemingly more challenging than ever, management responses can struggle to be more than just reactive or confused. Protected Areas staff are required to have much greater awareness of wider trends, to be equipped with tools and skills for faster responses and have a willingness to test scenarios in new situations, yet within nervous political systems that do not tolerate mistakes. The EUROPARC Federation must also navigate this demanding environment as an international NGO supporting the needs of its membership. Given this increasing uncertainty, especially when change seems to overwhelm, EUROPARC is needed more than ever to provide support and indeed solace where members can find unity of purpose through the network.

Through our common endeavour, we will continue to increase resilience, create innovation and find new solutions for the Protected Areas community to build capacity in their management. This new strategy sets the framework for that to take place.



INVEST · INSPIRE · INNOVATE · INFLUENCE · INFORM · Currently, and just prior to COVID, Global, European and National policymakers had formulated policies and strategies such as Sustainable Development Goals, the Green Deal, Climate Treaties and the EU Biodiversity Strategy in response to mega trends such as climate change, biodiversity loss, globalisation, changing demography and indeed pandemics and this is the current world that Protected Areas now must inhabit and indeed need to face to rise in prominence.

The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 'Bringing Nature back into our lives' should transform "30% of Europe's lands and seas into effectively managed protected areas". This represents a great opportunity for Protected Areas to be the major driver for nature management in Europe and to utilise the experience gained thus far, to share and extend that knowledge widely. Biodiversity loss remains critical, but does not yet appear to have societal consensus, and lacks action and knowledge. Protected Areas must not become islands disconnected from wider cultural and natural landscapes or from people and we need to clearly identify and communicate our role in tackling the climate and biodiversity crises.

The Sustainable Development Goals and CBD 30:30 implementation are gaining increasing political traction and could position Protected Areas in the centre of action.

Protected Areas need to be at the forefront in protecting nature, restoring what is degraded and connecting what is fragmented, ensuring that Protected Areas will actively contribute to bringing back the adaptive capacity of communities and territories to face the climate change emergency that will dominate the next decade.

In addition, a re-think of Protected Areas activities, their infrastructure such as buildings, mobility, supplies and communications is needed to reduce our climate and environmental impact so that we can serve as a role model for society.

Strategic Goals

What members indicated to be our priority areas of work.

EUROPARC will seek to <u>Champion the value</u> and benefits of Protected Areas in response to environmental and societal challenges, including climate change, health and well-being and the green recovery. If the key targets such as CBD 30:30 and the Biodiversity Strategy are to be attained, the financing of nature based solutions to which Protected Areas are key, will be an important issue that will need to be addressed through to 2030. EUROPARC will look for financing models that will help Protected Areas, lever both public and private investments for linked agendas on climate change mitigation, restoration and biodiversity.

Change will continue to be a theme of the coming decade as Protected Areas respond to new EU policies on climate, biodiversity and agriculture and of course the response to COVID-19 - these all warrant new skills and capacities from Protected Areas. The choices we make now, in what we invest our time and resources in as Protected Area managers will determine the future landscape within which we work. This EUROPARC strategy will seek to build individual and organisational capacity to Enhance the status of nature on land and sea and people's connection to it and continue to Promote sustainable development tools and approaches for people and nature. Being able to provide ways in which people are more and better connected to nature in a sustainable way, we will contribute to a society where equity to access and enjoy nature are no longer hoped for goals but are achieved in practice.

EUROPARC will continue to embrace the change in how we and our members work, with new digital tools, reinstating the importance of international cooperation and connection as well as ensuring a place for our youth to be involved.





to 2030

The virtual world is here to stay and we will utilise its potential to connect and equip our members, whilst reinforcing the bonds we will make when face-to-face. As a family of European parks, we stay and stand united as we **Strengthen and grow our network.**

Through our networking and convening platform, during the period of the strategy EUROPARC will seek to work with our members to generate collective foresight for Protected Areas policy and practice. By being open to an approach of continual development, we will stimulate new ways of thinking and learning from each other that will enable different ways in which our shared future can unfold.

> For more thoughts on future trends in Europe see; Global Trends to 2030 - Challenges and Choices for Europe, ESPAS. EU

Protected Areas need not be passive bystanders of a future shaped by others, but be empowered to bring to bear the huge experience, wisdom and potential of the biggest Protected Area network to shape that future themselves.

Having this strategy as a guide to do so will ensure that the Parks and Protected Areas of Europe can and should be the Change Makers of the Future - for the future of our climate, our biodiversity and the health of our Parks, Protected Areas and our People, so that we can fully realise a Sustainable Nature: Valued by People and Championed by EUROPARC members.



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EUROPARC STRATEGY TO 2030

As EUROPARC enters its 5th decade, we embarked on an ambitious consultation exercise, to ensure members could express their needs and wishes for a new strategy. This was due to start in Spring 2020, just as lockdowns were happening all over Europe. Thankfully our investment in technology paved the way for the entire consultation to take place online. Dialogue Matters were commissioned to facilitate the process with Directorate staff and Sections creating the online member exchanges. We received 86 responses to the online questionnaire. 9 online consultation workshops have been organised, lead by directorate team, in different languages (French, Spanish, Italian, English and German). In total those involved 110 participants from 19 different countries. A specific 2 day workshop with Council, Section representatives and EUROPARC Team was organised to present results, collect further inputs, agree priorities and follow up process. All results were analysed and summarised, with a Council task force created to support the strategy creation process. A small dedicated Drafting Team convened over 3 months to distill all members' contributions into a working strategy. With a further consultation process on the draft, the final document was presented to the members at the 2021 General Assembly.

The strategy reflects how we might build the EUROPARC Federation for the future, endeavouring to scan the horizon for trends and challenges ahead. Naturally, the strategy takes a "big-picture-view" of the Federation, showing the areas we will work across and what will be achieved overall. As the strategy timescale has been extended to cover the period to 2030, indicative 3 year work programmes will be produced, with annual work plans giving more details, whilst yet allowing for a flexible and opportunistic approach to the complexities and vagaries of changing conditions and the need to identify resources.

This document explains the strategy: it indicates the thinking behind the strategy, however it is not a strategic plan, which details how the strategy will be implemented. That will be indicated in the 3-year programme and annual plans.

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Principles by which we as EUROPARC will work

We believe it is important that our work is underpinned by a set of values that should permeate our organisation. All the work of the strategy has been identified in order to accomplish the mission and work towards the vision. We will also ensure that the set of values espoused by EUROPARC is embedded in both what we do and how we do it. These underpin the ethos of the Federation and should be embedded in our corporate thinking and actions.

Cooperative

To learn and work with each other across Europe in order to develop and innovate Protected Area management.

can be best overcome and positive approaches to common issues developed.

Enjoyable To create enjoyable networking experiences where cultural and professional barriers can be best overcome and positive

To listen and engage in all aspects of our operations, ensuring we treat everyone with respect, care and empathy and are equal, fair and welcoming in our actions.

Sustainable

To track the impact that the work of our organisation has on the natural and cultural heritage and seek to maximise innovative solutions and practice.

Excellence

To adopt the practise of continual improvement by providing networking opportunities for learning that offer and develop an understanding of best practice across all areas of our activities.

Who is this strategy for?

This strategy is for the EUROPARC Federation and is based on the extensive consultation with members. It is a mechanism to bring clarity to the purpose of our organisation and to enable us to discover "imaginative" means to achieve our mission and vision. Also, it will assist partners and funders to understand better who we are and support our work.

The success of the strategy will require the involvement all parts of EUROPARC including the Council, Directorate, Sections and members.

The strategy is the basis of the work of the Directorate, determining our priorities and investment in human and financial resources. The strategy gives direction to the development of projects that will develop the outcomes that benefit all members of the Federation and will enable Sections to align their national and regional work.



The EUROPARC Council has ultimate ownership of the strategy and oversees the work of the Directorate who accomplish it on behalf of the Council and the membership. All annual workplans and 3- year work programmes are derived from the strategy and annual reports will inform the members of progress in achieving the strategic goals. A series of indicators is agreed, monitored and reported against annually. Members will be informed of the progress of the strategy throughout, with opportunities to be involved in its delivery.

Throughout the implementation of the strategy, we will seek to inspire, innovate, invest, influence and inform in order to have the IMPACT we seek for our Parks and the People who live and work in them.



In order to describe succinctly and encapsulate our aspiration as an organisation we have condensed our thinking into a vision, mission and strategy.

The VISION describes what EUROPARC wishes for European nature. The MISSION indicates the role, EUROPARC as an organisation, believes it can play, in realising that vision. The strategy indicates broadly how EUROPARC intends to accomplish the mission and deliver the vision.



Sustainable nature, Valued by People or Sustainable Nature; Valued by People; Championed by EUROPARC Members

Our Mission

To improve and champion the policy and practice of Protected Areas to ensure that our natural and cultural heritage is protected and enhanced for current and future generations.

Strategy Structure

With the complex deliberations arising from the members consultation, a simple strategy structure showing what we are seeking to achieve, the tools we will utilise and how we will measure the impacts of our work has been devised.

The STRATEGIC GOALS are the elaboration of the ambitions of the members across 4 areas in which the EUROPARC Federation has competency to operate. These relate to not only to how we function as an organisation, but what we seek to do on behalf of our members and what we do collectively as a community of Protected Areas. This effort is to further the bigger vision of a Sustainable Nature, resilient, thriving, well-managed and resourced within and out with Protected Areas that are Valued by People who recognise the consequence of societal choices on nature and make changes to address that.

These strategic goals have been divided into a series of THEMES. These are areas of work that enable the Federation to align with relevant policy and practices that are relevant to Protected Areas. The **OUTCOMES** are descriptions of the final results of the work we will have delivered to achieve the goals and have the desired impacts we are seeking.

To achieve these OUTCOMES, EUROPARC has a number of TOOLS at our disposal. These "tools" are what we deploy to do the work we do. They are what members and other external stakeholders will most often recognise and see in action. These tools are COMMUNCATIONS, NETWORKING AND CAPACITY BUILDING, GOVERNANCE, LOBBYING AND POLICY ENGAGEMENT, DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES.

Through utilising these tools across the spectrum of the themes of the strategy, and indeed by developing HOW these tools will themselves be improved, we describe how we will work to achieve our goals.

Strategic Goals

Champion the value and benefits of Protected Areas in response to environmental and societal challenges.

Enhance the status of nature on land and sea and people's connection to it.

Promote sustainable development tools and approaches for people and nature.

Generation and grow our network.



1 Champion the value and benefits of Protected Areas in response to environmental and societal challenges





Involve youth in the work of Protected Areas

Strengthen the Status of Protected Areas

Develop and nurture cross-sectoral partnerships



THEMES

Strengthen the Status of Protected Areas

OUTCOMES

The visibility, functions and roles of Protected Areas has been highlighted to policy and decision makers, through enhanced advocacy.

² Financial investment and management practice have been improved through considering in particular financing and implementation at the Protected Area level.

Wider public across Europe are more aware of the role of Protected Areas across Society.

Develop and nurture cross-sectoral partnerships . 7 There will be more alliances and cooperation on management, in particular in transboundary areas and between Protected Areas and local stakeholders, with new tools and learning created.

New allies for dialogue and change and to connect people to nature will result in a broadened and strengthened connections with other sectors and networks, with new guidance and tools created for Protected Area to do at local level.

Better health outcomes for society and better investment in parks that help deliver it, by connecting with the health sector through HPHPE network.

Involve youth in the work of Protected Areas

Youth are engaged in decision making and delivery across all areas of Protected Area work integral to our work.

Youth and Junior Ranger are experienced ambassadors and advocates for biodiversity in protected areas, and for taking forward the youth manifesto, through taking part in on and offline capacity building networking and training.

Youth have been given opportunities to be represented at European policy and decision makers.

2 Enhance the status of nature on land and sea and people's connection to it

A Stronger more Sustainable Nature

Inspire Everyone to look after Parks

Improve Protected Areas planning, practice and management effectiveness



THEMES

OUTCOMES

A Stronger more Sustainable Nature The status of protected areas, ecosystems and biodiversity conservation is identifiably improved and strengthened through legal mean and political acceptance.

Parks will have contributed to policy and implementation of the EU targets for Protected Areas.
There are more and better alliances including transboundary and cooperation on management between local stakeholders and Protected Areas.

Improve Protected Areas planning, practice and management effectiveness The Competency and Capacity of Protected Areas Staff is improved, additionally through access to the online centre of excellence (European Natura Academy).

Protected Areas on land and sea are better managed, have adaptive management plans and monitoring tools in place that support measurement of management effectiveness.

There is more strategic cooperation and networking between Protected Areas.

Inspire Everyone to look after Parks

Society across Europe is more aware and has an interest in Protected Areas through engagement with European Day of Parks, other events, campaigns and volunteering in Parks.

The "Nature for all" approach is championed by Protected Areas throughout Europe.

Through enhanced networking and sharing and innovating good practice interpretation, environmental education and parks communications are refreshed and able to address people from all backgrounds that visit and enjoy protected areas, to learn more about them, and to engage in behaviours and activities that enable then to care from them.

3 Promote sustainable development tools and approaches for people and nature

Improve visitor management and sustainable tourism

> Protected Areas contribution to a net zero Europe

Build partnerships with key land and marine sectors

Strengthen the role of Protected Areas in the transition to a well-being economy



THEMES

Improve visitor management and sustainable tourism

OUTCOMES

Sustainable Tourism is thriving as a result of new strategies, guidance and processes developed and implemented through the Charter of Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas.

 Recreation and Sport in Protected Areas is well managed and communication through collaborative work with ENOS (European Network of Outdoor Sports).

Visitor management capacity and biodiversity expertise, particular in periurban parks is better understood with management practice and tools devised to support managers.

Protected Areas contribution to a net zero Europe The role of protected areas in climate change mitigation and adaptation has been demonstrate and promoted, with new tools to support managers created.

Parks are able to create a carbon budget and adopt model sustainable practices in their own management that have contributed to further implementation of SDGs.

Build partnerships with key land and marine sectors Protected Areas on land and sea are better managed, have management plans and monitoring tools in place and have an enhanced role in supporting sustainable agricultural policies and practice

Relationships with marine sectors, including fishing and aquaculture have been developed.

Strengthen the role of Protected Areas in the transition to a well-being economy 7 New thinking and practice developed on the role that protected areas play in providing jobs and sustaining healthy and resilient communities across Europe has been developed and implemented.

Natural capital accounting by Protected Areas as a means to better capture the value of the ecosystems services they provide has been utilised.

4 Strengthen and grow our network

Increase the human and financial capacity of the network Promote greater inclusion and equity within and by our network

Build the capacity of our organisation and its members



Increase the human and financial capacity of the network The membership of EUROPARC has have grown by 30% net, with more marine protected areas becoming members.

 The organisation will have diversified its income, with 10% coming from corporate funding and will be more financially sustainable.

EUROPARC has sustainable and sustained directorate that has capacity to meet members expectations and build on current strengths.

Operating processes, training and skill sets to ensure strong governance at all levels of the organisation have been refreshed and delivered.

Build the capacity of our organisation and its members

The European Natura Academy is a centre of excellence on Protected Area capacity building will be delivering online and blended learning opportunities for all EUROPARC members.

Networking, on and offline, across the membership remains integral to EUROPARC's work.

The governance of our organisation is strengthened by developing the role and contribution of Sections and ensure opportunities for direct member participation across the Federations work.

Promote greater inclusion and equity within and by our network The principles of the Federation are embedded in work programmes and organisational processes and procedures.

Following a review, gathering and promotion of best practice and new alliances with inclusion and equality groups on this issue, EUROPARC and its members are more reflective and inclusive of wider society in their management and visitor profile.

Tools

EUROPARC TOOLS that will deliver the strategy.

Communications

This will include all internal and external on and offline media, by which we use to create and disseminate information across our networks. This means our Website, Social media, Print and publications, Video and graphics, Online meeting and conferencing.

Throughout the strategy we will seek to ensure our communications remain high quality, relevant and inspiring to our members, with messaging that engages the audiences we seek to work with. We will be alert to new media and utilise that as appropriate. At the commencement of the strategy, a new communications plan will be generated which will guide the communications outputs of EUROPARC.

Networking and capacity building

Sharing learning and working together are integral to the work of EUROPARC. They builds knowledge, skills and capacity in the staff who work for Protected Areas, as well as progress a sense of a shared natural and cultural heritage through international cooperation. So, we will continue to advance, improve, diversify the networking and capacity building opportunities for members, both on and offline, throughout the period of the strategy.

To do this we will:

- Build and utilise the membership database as a mechanism to produce more specific content for members
- Continue to develop the eNatura2000 app as an online forum of exchange for members
- Further produce online Webinars, conferences and other types of events
- Create in person workshops, seminars and conferences at a European and regional /national level with EUROPARC sections
- Build the online 'European Natura Academy' and continue to innovate in the delivery of capacity building for members, in multiple languages.

Governance

Governance is the concerned with structures and processes for decision-making, accountability and management of our Federation. Over the course of the strategy, we will review and adapt the work of the Council and Sections to ensure that good governance models are applied and create participatory structures that enable the expertise of members to be utilised in forming policy and programmes. In so doing, a common approach to the ambitions of the strategy will be achieved. Governance will consider:

- The work of Council
- Ensuring that the role of youth is integrated throughout the work of the Federation
- Integration of Sections and relations between members, Sections and the Federation

• The creation of member-led Commissions, Task Forces and other Structures

Lobbying & policy engagement

EUROPARC works across multiple European and national organisations to highlight the importance of Protected Areas and the need to include biodiversity conservation, restoration and climate policies in all major European programmes. We also look to ensure that the role of Protected Areas in rural development is recognised and seek support for the work of our members. To this end, we will continue to seek funds that support the policy work based from the Brussels office and to work across all themes indicated in the strategy.

At the commencement of the strategy a new lobbying and advocacy plan will be developed and implemented across the strategy period. The role of Sections and members will be enhanced and elaborated in this plan.

Programmes

EUROPARC already operates a number of successful and mature programmes and these will continue and be further developed over the course of the strategy, ensuring that they are aligned to our strategic goals. We will review all programmes to ensure their relevance and that they are 'fit for purpose' for Protected Areas. Further, we will seek to develop new programmes that are relevant and useful for Protected Areas and take forward the goals of our strategy.

They include:

- European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas
- Transboundary Parks Programme Following Natures Design
- Healthy Parks Healthy People Europe
- Junior Rangers and Youth +
- European Day of Parks
- Sustainable Agriculture









Projects

The strategy will give guidance to the types of projects EUROPARC will develop. There is of course never any guarantee of funding: however, working with Sections and members, we will develop projects at European and national levels that deliver the goals of the strategy.

We do not see nature with our eyes, but with our understandings and our hearts.

William Hazlitt

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