

EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section Members Assembly 2018

Time 11 April 2018 at 1330-1600 hours

Venue Finnish Nature Centre Haltia, Espoo, Finland

Present	Rolands Auziņš	Nature Conservation Agency	Latvia
	Elena Bazhenova	Kullaberg Nature Reserve	Sweden
	Elina Ezerina	Nature Conservation Agency	Latvia
	Gunta Gabrāne	Nature Conservation Agency	Latvia
	Juris Jatnieks	Nature Conservation Agency	Latvia
	Stig Johansson	Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland	Finland Sanna-
	Kaisa Juvonen	Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland	Finland
	Kerli Kõue	Environmental Board	Estonia
	Toma Mikutaite	Zemaitija National Park Directorate	Lithuania
	Liisa Nikula	Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland	Finland
	Giedrius Norvaisas	Zemaitija National Park Directorate	Lithuania
	Baiba Ralle	Nature Conservation Agency	Latvia
	Carol Ritchie	EUROPARC Federation	Germany
	Evelina Selander	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency	Sweden
	Nele Söber	Environmental Board	Estonia
	Timo Tanninen	Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland	Finland
	Jolanta Uktverytė	Curonian Spit National Park Administration	Lithuania
	Carina Wennström	Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland	Finland
	Sven-Åge Westphalen	Danish Outdoor Council	Denmark
	Jesper Witzell	Söderåsen National Park	Sweden

1 Opening

Stig Johansson, Director of International Affairs of Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland opened the meeting.

2 Words of Welcome

Timo Tanninen, Director of Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland welcomed all the participants and especially Carol Ritchie, EUROPARC Federation Executive Director, and Nele Söber, EUROPARC Council Member from Estonia. He reminded the participants of the fact that the Nordic-Baltic Section was established already 15 years ago.

3 Greetings from the EUROPARC Headquarters

Carol Ritchie, Executive Director of the EUROPARC Federation shed light on the information sources on the EUROPARC website (www.europarc.org). The **three guiding principles** are: to support parks, to protect nature, and to bring people together. EUROPARC *Vision Sustainable Nature: Valued by People* is an ideal conversation opener: what is sustainable nature? And valued by whom?

The **Sections** are an essential part of the EUROPARC Federation work. There are about 400 member organisations and individual members from 37 countries. These member organisations manage thousands of protected areas.

The new **Commissions** are very important in harnessing the know-how within EUROPARC to benefit members. www.europarc.org/network/europarc-commissions/

Four Commissions with long-term goals deal with:

- **Agriculture and Protected Areas:** especially influencing in EU Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) Reform issues, seeking partners in agriculture, collecting case studies from young farmers to show what the EUROPARC members do in the field, and publishing in February 2018 the EUROPARC position paper *European Protected Areas & Sustainable Agriculture: Working in Partnership for Biodiversity and Rural Development*. It introduces the role of Protected Areas, illustrated by many successful examples of collaboration with farmers from the

EUOPARC network. www.euoparc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Protected-Areas-and-Sustainable-Agriculture_Position-Paper_EUOPARC.pdf

- **Fedenatur/Periurban:** was created when FEDENATUR, the European Association of Periurban Parks, joined the EUOPARC Federation in 2017, and it deals with issues of protected areas close to urban areas. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FEDENATUR_-_European_Association_of_Periurban_Parks
- **Health and Protected Areas:** produced a tool box on Health and Green Exercise. www.euoparc.org/toolbox/health-green-exercise. The Commission will meet in September in Finnish Lapland. Carol Ritchie will also participate.
- **Natura 2000 Areas.** www.euoparc.org/network/europarc-commissions/natura-2000-commission

Shorter-term, task-focussed Commissions include Membership (that has already finished its task of updating membership structure), Communication and Marketing (will get its job done at the end of 2018), and Financing (which will start soon).

The **European Charter for Sustainable Tourism** has been granted to 164 protected areas in 19 countries. The Charter has been rebranded. www.euoparc.org/sustainable-tourism

There are 300 potential **Transboundary Certificate** areas the EUOPARC countries. So far transboundary cooperation has been certified in 10 cross-border sites, some with two, some with three protected areas across national borders:

www.euoparc.org/network/transboundary-network,
www.euoparc.org/toolbox/transboundary

The **Junior Ranger Programme** is one of the focal activities of the Federation. This will be one of the topics during the seminar “Young People - Secret for Park Future” on 12 April, and at the Europarc Conference in September in Scotland.

The **Europarc Conference** is the biggest protected area event in Europe. It will be organised in Cairngorms National Park in Scotland from 18 to 21 September 2018.

EUOPARC **membership fees** bring about half of the income of the Federation, the remainder comes from other sources, mostly projects.

EUOPARC **project on capacity building** will offer online learning opportunities for protected area managers.

The Members Assembly 2018

4 The Members Assembly was opened by Stig Johansson.

5 Election of the President of the EUOPARC Nordic-Baltic Section

Stig Johansson was elected as the President of the Nordic-Baltic Section. During the Finnish Presidency of 2018-2020, the Nordic-Baltic Section aims at generating added value to the members, helping the members to network for joint benefit, and helping the members to show the benefit that protected areas create to society.

6 Tour de Table

All the 20 participants from 6 countries presented themselves.

7 Updates from Members

- Juris Jatnieks of **Latvia** said that Latvia would welcome any support from the EUOPARC Federation and the Nordic-Baltic Section in CAP issues. One country cannot raise the importance of nature conservation and restoration alone to the level that is necessary to influence the CAP process.
- Nele Söber told that **Estonia** will establish the 6th national park in the eastern part of the country. Of the present national parks in Estonia, Lahemaa National Park is a Charter Park, and Soomaa is applying for a certificate.

- Sven-Åge Westphalen told that **Denmark** has now 5 national parks which are established by the Minister of the Environment. The Danish Outdoor Council grants the certificates to the nature reserves that now number 8, but new ones are in the process to be established by NGOs and other organisations. The main challenge is getting private landowners committed to protecting nature.
- Giedrius Norvaisas from **Lithuania** said that the forestry administration in Lithuania has been re-organised, and the nature conservation administration will probably be re-organised by the summer of 2019. Giedrius reminded that Nordic-Baltic seminars could be organised together with international projects, funded by EU or other external sources, as they did during Zemaitija National Park Presidency of the Nordic-Baltic Section.
- Jolanta Uktverytė from **Lithuania** said that there is no national organisation for nature and environmental education in Lithuania.
- Evelina Selander of **Sweden** told that Lake Åsnen National Park, Sweden's 30th, will be opened on 25 May. Other national parks will be opened in the coming years and others will be expanded. After this programme the number of national parks will be 40.
- Elena Bazhenova of **Sweden** seeks cooperation in the Charter II phase for Kullaberg Nature Reserve. They also need updated Charter II Guidelines for their project.
- Timo Tanninen of **Finland** told there has been a reorganisation at Parks & Wildlife Finland with the aim of increasing efficiency. Before the parliament elections in 2019, the P&WF works to get nature conservation included in the new government programme and more nature conservation funds in the new government budget.
- Stig Johansson conveyed the message from **Norway**, Olov Nord-Varhaug of Norwegian Environment Agency had reported that the agency is undergoing reorganisation.
- Carol Ritchie told that there is a new member in **Norway**: Norwegian Parks Association (Norske Parker). The association represents regional parks.

8 Updates from Commissions, Carol Ritchie & Nele Söber

Carol Ritchie did the commissions update in her presentation. See chapter 3 of the minutes.

Nele Söber of Estonia told that, as a new Council member elected at 2017 Conference in Portugal, she has participated in two Council meetings. She also thanked Finland for helping promote her candidacy last year.

At this year's conference in Scotland, there will be a workshop on nature education. There will also be a health-themed mobile hiking trail.

The Health and Protected Areas Commission has produced a toolbox, as was mentioned in chapter 3 of the minutes. They will organise a health webinar in September during the Commission meeting in Finnish Lapland.

9 Nordic-Baltic Section Activity Plan 2018-2020, Sanna-Kaisa Juvonen

Sanna-Kaisa Juvonen, the Nordic-Baltic Section Coordinator, presented the Activity Plan 2018-2020 (attached to the minutes). During Finnish Nordic-Baltic Presidency, Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland will send out a questionnaire before the Europarc Conference (18.-21.9.2018) to the membership to get their ideas on what kind of activities they wish to have during the three years.

The Nordic-Baltic Section Presidency will seek project financing.

There will two workshops with Nordic-Baltic involvement at the Europarc 2018 Conference:
1) Nature Education and 2) Citizen Science together with Italy.

Charter II Guidelines for the Nordic-Baltic Region

The Nordic-Baltic Section will update the Charter II Guidelines for the Nordic-Baltic region. The Guidelines have not been updated since 2011, as they should have been every five years.

Carol Ritchie told that no Charter Park in the Nordic-Baltic Section has applied these guidelines. There are also Spanish Guidelines that can be applied or consulted. The EUROPARC Federation can also participate in the update of the Charter II Guidelines for the Nordic-Baltic region. One should also notice that the Charter Marketing has been updated since the Charter II Guidelines were

made. The EUROPARC Federation will approve the Guidelines once they have been updated. All Charter Parks need to meet certain common requirements, but there can be regional criteria in addition to the common ones. When updating the Guidelines, it is important to look at the process and how it affects the partners.

It was agreed that Elena Bazhenova from Kullaberg Nature Reserve of Sweden will coordinate the update and gather experience and thoughts from Charter Parks. Sanna-Kaisa Juvonen and Elena Bazhenova will meet online to further this project.

Carol Ritchie reminded that the update will take time, so this should be considered by Kullaberg, who were planning to use the guidelines very soon. Sanna noted that there is no project funding for this work.

Communication

Carina Wennström will work as Nordic-Baltic Communicator together with the Section Coordinator Sanna-Kaisa Juvonen.

The Nordic-Baltic Presidency will keep the members updated on Nordic-Baltic Section news and news from the Federation. Members will be informed by email of any news or other items put on the Nordic-Baltic Section website www.euoparc-nb.org.

The Nordic-Baltic Section Facebook will be updated at: facebook.com/EuroparcNordicBalticSection.

The pages for featured member parks will be updated, too, at europarc-nb.org/protected-areas.

Nordic-Baltic members were asked to send information of seminars and webinars so that information can be disseminated to the Nordic-Baltic membership to Sanna-Kaisa Juvonen.

Country Focal Point

To be able to reach all the correct representatives of the member organisations, and individual members, the Nordic-Baltic President Stig Johansson proposed that a Country Focal Point would be nominated for all the eight countries within the Nordic-Baltic Section. Some countries (Latvia and Finland) have already introduced this system earlier. The proposal was approved, and some names were already given for several countries.

Denmark	Sven-Åge Westphalen
Estonia	Nele Sober will consult Kaja Lotman
Finland	Liisa Nikula
Iceland	To be determined.
Latvia	Rolands Auziņš
Lithuania	Giedrius Norvaisas
Norway	To be determined.
Sweden	Someone in the Swedish EPA. To be determined.

Sanna-Kaisa Juvonen, the Nordic-Baltic Coordinator, will ask those countries that did not give a name now to nominate a Country Focal Point, who would update the member list with necessary email addresses for each member or member organisation in their country, so that all members could be served by the Section and the Federation as well as possible.

The Nordic-Baltic Section Activity Plan 2018-2020 was approved and the updated version will be disseminated members with these minutes.

10 The meeting was concluded at 16.00 hours.

Att: EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section Activity Plan 2018-2020
EUROPARC Federation Partnership Agreement with EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section (2016)