



EUROPARC Sustainable Tourism Working Group:

First meeting held in May

The First meeting of the new EUROPARC Sustainable Tourism Working Group was held on May 24-25 in La Garrotxa PA in Olot, Catalonia, Spain. Seven members of the STWG had opportunity to join the meeting, which began to realise the road map accepted by EUROPARC Council last April (2010).



The Sustainable Tourism Working Group, still smiling after two intense meeting days in Garrotxa. Left to right: Josep Maria Prats, Monica Herrera-Pavia, Lasse Lovén, Paulo Castro, Mike Pugh, Stefania Petrosillo and Richard Partington.

The working group started the meeting by analyzing the roles of different actors in the European Charter processes. Then, the coordination of different working groups and external projects was discussed thoroughly. And, finally, the STWG focused on innovative ideas for possible EU-funded development projects covering sustainable tourism and protected areas.

As chair of the STWG and representative of the Nordic-Baltic Section, I see a remarkably promising future for the park oriented tourism. Quality is now a target for development and there is a wide range of funding opportunities. At the same time, several projects and working groups are developing methodologies towards more sustainable and responsible tourism activities. The follow-up and coordination of these activities is the key issue of the STWG in its role as providing expertise for the

EUROPARC Council, especially on the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism. The STWG will be in place until the end of the year 2012.



The roles Charter Actors gave rise to interesting and lively discussions, that led to a unanimously accepted model. Left to right: Richard Partington, Monica Herrera-Pavia, Lasse Lovén, Paulo Castro, Josep Maria Prats and Mike Pugh. Photo: Stefania Petrosillo.

The STWG will work in close connection with Charter Parks Network, which collects all parks and protected areas awarded with the European Charter Certificate. The Charter Network is coordinated by the EUROPARC Directorate with Focal Points in each section. In the Nordic-Baltic Section the Charter Network Focal Point is Klaas van Ommeren, Dovrefjell Council, Norway. The Charter Parks Network arranges seminars and meetings for the staff of Charter parks. The next upcoming meeting will be held in Djerdap, Serbia on 26.6-1.7.2011. See <http://www.european-charter.org/news/last-chance-to-register-for>

***Written by Lasse Lovén, Metsähallitus
Chair EUROPARC Sustainable Tourism Working Group***