

EUROPARC
(Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe)

Activities' Report - Year 2017

Gianfranco Tamburelli

1. Introduction

In 2017 EUROPARC* carried out numerous activities, before and after its annual general assembly and annual conference, concerning in particular, the relations between climate change and protected areas (PAs), the role of agricultural activities in the management of land and conservation of biodiversity, the importance of sustainable tourism also for the renaissance of marginalized and devastated areas, transboundary cooperation in the management of PAs.

It is worth noting, among these activities, the Siggen (Germany) Seminar on: *Sustainable Agriculture in PAs* (10th-13th March 2017); the TransParcNet meeting on: *Changing Climate, Changing Parks*¹ (6th-8th June 2017), hosted by the Julian Alps Transboundary Ecoregion, which encompasses Triglav National Park (Slovenia) and Prealpi Giulie Nature Park (Italy); and the meeting on: *Charter for Sustainable Tourism: Working to Support Recovery and Renewal* (25th -28th October 2017).

With regard to the latter, it seems to be underlined the importance of the *European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in PAs*, which contains practical recommendations on tools and procedures to develop tourism sustainably, by working together with all local stakeholders. The core element of the Charter is the partnerships established to define and implement a tourism strategy and an action plan for the territory, over a period of five years. On 7th December 2017, at the European Parliament in Brussels, EUROPARC welcomed the representatives from 21 PAs for awarding them the Charter; among them, the Riserva Naturale Monte Rufeno, the Parco Naturale delle Alpi Marittime / Parc National du Mercantour, and, for the first, other five Italian PAs: AMP Penisola del Sinis - Isola Mal di Ventre, Parco Nazionale del Gargano, Parco Nazionale del Gran Sasso e Monti della Laga, Parco Nazionale dell'Aspromonte, Reti di Riserve del Trentino. At the moment, there are 164 Charter Parks in 20 countries.

The main EUROPARC 2017 activity was however, the annual Conference on: *New Voices, New Visions, New Values - For People and the Nature in Europe*, which hosted over 300 participants from 37 nationalities at the Magical Mountains (Portugal)². The Conference also analyzed the issues concerning sustainable tourism, thus placing itself in the context of the initiatives desired by the UN, which declared 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.

* EUROPARC is the network for Europe's natural and national protected areas (PAs), which works to improve the management of PAs in Europe through international cooperation, and exchange of ideas and experience. The Federations' members represent hundreds of management authorities and thousands of PAs in 36 countries (cf. <http://www.europarc.org/>).

2. Main activities carried on by EUROPARC during 2017 relevant for Italy and for CNR

All the above-mentioned 2017 EUROPARC activities are relevant for Italy and for the CNR. First, we can observe that the theme *Changing Climate, Changing Parks* was chosen by EUROPARC to celebrate the European Day of Parks across Europe (24th May 2017): EUROPARC wanted to raise awareness on the impact of climate change on parks, but also on how parks and people can contribute to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Second, many natural and national parks working alongside the farming community participated in the Siggen Seminar. The Seminar analyzed a management framework aimed to enable more sustainable agricultural practices; new partnerships were built, new programmes and standards developed. PAs and farmers can be allies; EUROPARC has identified a number of success stories demonstrating the effective partnerships already existing in many European national, regional and peri-urban parks, conciliating farming interests with biodiversity conservation, and fostering the creation of Europe's rural areas as living landscapes. The interdependence between PAs' management and farming should be fully reflected in the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). To achieve this, EUROPARC is positioning PAs (including NATURA 2000 sites) in the current debate on the CAP post-2020, outlining concrete ways how PAs can integrate agricultural interests with environmental concerns.

Third, Federparchi - Italy hosted with Gran Sasso and Monti della Laga National Park the Meeting on the *Charter for Sustainable Tourism in PAs* (the event took place in the "Apennine Floristic Research Centre", Barisciano, L'Aquila). Following the devastating recent earthquakes in this area, the Meeting was aimed also to support the local population and businesses.

Passing now to the EUROPARC Conference on: *New Voices, New Visions, New Values - For People and the Nature in Europe*, it focused on the role of PAs as model territories for inclusive, environmentally and economically equitable development. Among the invited speakers, we would like to mention Monsignor Francisco Madero Frojan, who introduced the concept of "ecological spirituality" and shared the vision of the Papal Encyclical *Laudato Si: On Care For Our Common Home*, and Mr. Karmenu Vella, EU Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, who sent a video underlining the need for a better connection between nature and people, reaffirming that "PAs raise awareness of the value of nature and deliver multiple benefits".

During the Conference, two members of the Federation network were awarded with the Transboundary Parks Programme Certificate³. Sixteen workshops allowed participants to discuss in depth different topics, as *A New Alternative Solution for PA Management? Private Management of PAs; The Law of Nature: Managing N2000 Sites; Be a Farmers Friend. Sustainable Agriculture in PAs; Climate Change and Tourism Industry - Reducing Carbon Footprint, Resources Use and Pollution; Changing Climate Changing Parks, Adaptation to Climate Change in the Planning and Management of PAs; Transboundary Cooperation - A Model to Connect Wildlife and Unite People; Making an Impact - Measuring the Impact of People in Periurban Parks*.

The General Assembly re-elected Ignace Shop as President, and elected the new Members of the Council, including Enzo Lavarra, President of the Consortium for the Management of the Regional Park of Coastal Dunes from Torre Canne to Torre San Leonardo, for the period 2017-2010. Concomitantly with the EUROPARC Assembly, the Assembly of FEDENATUR (the European Association of Periurban Parks) officially dissolved the Network of Periurban Parks to integrate the EUROPARC network.

3. Activities carried on by Gianfranco Tamburelli within the Union during 2017 and impact on the Italian scientific community

During 2017, Gianfranco Tamburelli developed various research and high education activities of interest, and in dialogue with, EUROPARC. Among them, considering current trends in the field of PAs management in the broader context of the evolution of environmental law, it seems worth mentioning the Report on: *International Cooperation for the Protection of the Environment and Sustainable Development - The Situation Today*, presented at the Conference: “From ‘Legal Protection of Nature’ to the Ecological Law of Ukraine”, held at the ‘Taras Shevchenko’ National University of Kyiv (26th May 2017)⁴.

Then, Tamburelli participated, representing the CNR, in the annual Conference and various activities realized by EUROPARC in Portugal in September. In particular, he intervened in the workshop on: *Transboundary Cooperation - A Model to Connect Wildlife and United People*. Despite the widespread debate about how open or closed national boundaries should be, the PA professionals involved in the EUROPARC transboundary programme have been able to establish positive working relationship and have reached relevant results. Two case studies were broadly discussed: the cooperation between the Oulanka and Paanajärvi National Parks (Finland / Russia), which arises some very current questions, as: *how we can operate at the border between the EU and Russia? ... what kind of benefits, what kind of problems we will have to face?*; and the cooperation at the Czech - German - Austria border area, at the Šumava National Park (CZ) (*what are the persistent barriers and the limits of this cooperation?*)⁵.

In the Assembly, Tamburelli supported the re-election of Ignace Shop as President, and the election of Enzo Lavarra as a member of the new Council of the Federation.

The impact of the CNR participation in EUROPARC and of activities carried out by Tamburelli on the Italian scientific community are clearly related to the themes and the dynamic and innovative approach of the EUROPARC activities. These, as outlined above, range from the researches on climate change, biodiversity conservation, air quality, etc. in the PAs (which are areas of privileged scientific observation), to the enrichment and advancement of knowledge in various fields of law, economics and social sciences.

In this context, Tamburelli has developed research projects and high education activities that place him and the Institute for International Legal Studies (ISGI) in a position of excellence in the fields of international and EU environmental law, and legal systems for the sustainable management of international, transboundary and national parks⁶. It seems also opportune to highlight that in 2017 Tamburelli was nominated individual member of the World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL) of the World Conservation Union (IUCN)⁷.

Information on the EUROPARC activities and the activities carried out by Tamburelli in the EUROPARC context were widespread circulated, in particular through the strengthened cooperation with the Master on “Environmental Law” of the Sapienza University of Rome, and the “Gazzetta Ambiente” journal. At the moment, Tamburelli is carrying out research on the evolving experiences of PAs governance, and on the EU CAP and sustainable agriculture in PAs.

4. Evaluation of the participation in terms of benefits and membership cost

The participation of the CNR in the activities of EUROPARC has been - during the twenty years that now runs from the year of accession - continuous, original, proactive. The CNR, always present at the annual assembly and conference, sometimes promoting events at the European level, is one of the few research institutions members of the Federation. Of such specificity, and of the consequent potential 'originality' of the contribution that the CNR can give, the Federation has been able to make use on several occasions, particularly on legal and institutional issues of cross border cooperation, and UNESCO designations of biosphere reserves.

About the cost deriving from the CNR involvement in EUROPARC, we can observe that the annual registration fee is € 660, and the participation requires at least the attendance by one representative (other experts / researchers would be admitted, but they would have to pay individual registration fees and would not have the right to vote) to the assembly and conference, which usually last four / five days and have place in a European PA. The cost of the CNR's participation in the Federation therefore, is rather limited.

The benefits - already highlighted in the two preceding paragraphs - are significant. Participation in EUROPARC is in fact one of the tools that allow CNR to remain at the forefront of knowledge and research on: *a) the state of health and problems of natural and national PAs in Europe* (including cross-border parks, NATURA 2000 sites, UNESCO biosphere reserves, etc.); *b) the new economic, social, legal needs related to the governance of the PAs*; *c) the EU and national programmes that allow the development in PAs of various activities, including those of scientific research*. It allows also the maintaining and strengthening of a broad network of European partners, with which are continuously monitored and explored new issues, and faced new challenges.

5. Evaluation of Italians' attendance and how to improve interest and involvement

Some representatives / experts from Italian institutions participated in the EUROPARC activities on climate change and PAs, agricultural activities and land management, sustainable tourism, transboundary cooperation in the management of PAs, as well as in the annual conference and the general assembly. Federparchi has become increasingly influential within EUROPARC, and in recent years CNR and Federparchi have often shared positions and initiatives within the Federation.

To improve the Italian attendance and involvement in EUROPARC, the definition of a MoU / an agreement with Federparchi would be really opportune. This MoU should provide a clear framework for the

development of research, monitoring, advanced training, institutional consulting, also establishing regular consultation procedures between the two organizations. Among the first initiatives to be launched together with Federparchi, it should be the setting - on a European scale - of guidelines, and the elaboration of a strategy to launch and develop coordinated scientific research on the role of PAs in modern societies characterized by - among other things - the acceleration of the dynamics of environmental, economic, political, and social change.

In addition, to improve the interest of the scientific community and of the PA professionals, the collaboration between CNR's representatives at EUROPARC and at the IUCN should be strengthened.

6. Italian experts with important roles within the Federation

The Italian representatives and experts have important roles in the Federation. As noted, Enzo Lavarra is one of the six elected members of the EUROPARC Council. The EUROPARC staff has an executive director at the top, then a managing director, who is Federico Minozzi, who is working for the European Federation since more than a decade; three of the other nine staff members are Italian: Brigida Napolitano (membership), Giacomo Benelli (European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in PAs), and Stefania Petrosillo (policy officer).

The President of Federparchi, Giampiero Sammuri (who was a member of the Council in the past) has participated in many conferences and assemblies and remains an influential member; in recent years, also Corrado Teofili (responsible for biodiversity and conservation of Federparchi) has been very active.

Among the other most active Italians: Andrea Beltrame and Stefano Santi (respectively, president and director of the Parco delle Prealpi Giulie, which has been awarded for its cross-border cooperation with Triglavski Narodni Park); Sonia Ferrari (president of the Park of Sila, which has obtained the UNESCO designation of the biosphere reserve); and Giuseppe Antoci (president of the Nebrodi Regional Park, awarded in 2016 of the Alfred Toepfer Medal for actions in favor of nature conservation and biodiversity).

7. Conclusions

EUROPARC is committed, as highlighted above, in numerous activities aimed not only to the conservation of biodiversity, but also to the improvement of health, culture, and the quality of life of the communities living in the PAs territories. Not by chance, on the official launch of the European Year of Cultural Heritage, EUROPARC announced a partnership with Interpret Europe (European Association for Cultural Heritage)⁸, and the theme chosen for the 2018 Siggen Seminar was the role of natural heritage and PAs in exploring cultural identity, in the light of experiences from across Europe.

Various other events are planned for 2018. Among them, the annual TransPareNet meeting will focus on river landscapes conservation (it will be hosted by Podyjí and Thayatal National Parks and supported by INTERREG Austria - Czech Republic), and a webinar on: *Building Green Infrastructure around Cities*⁹, from

the protection of single Periurban Parks towards the setting-up of a large green territorial system, will celebrate the EU Green Week 2018 “Green Cities for a Greener Future”.

The EUROPARC 2018 Conference will be held at the Cairngorms National Park, in Scotland, in September. The theme will be: “European Parks: Inspired by the Next Generation”; the focus of the work will be on the changes needed to manage the PAs for future generations¹⁰.



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¹ The TransParcNet meeting is the annual gathering of PA professionals involved in the EUROPARC Transboundary Park Programme; they gather to share experience, best-practices and learn from each other.

² <http://www.europarc.org/europarc-conferences/previous-conferences/europarc-conference-2017/>

³ The EUROPARC's “Transboundary Parks - Following Nature's Design” programme aims to promote and facilitate transboundary cooperation between European PAs. Since the *Basic Standards Evaluation System* was launched in 2003, twenty-three European PAs have been successfully certified as 10 Transboundary Parks by the Federation.

⁴ G. TAMBURELLI delivered also a Lectio Magistralis on: *International Law on Environment and Sustainable Development* at the ADAMAS University of Kolkata (India, 10th March 2017), a Lectio Magistralis on: *Current Trends in International Environmental Law* at the Mariupol State University (Ukraine, 19th May 2017), and an invited Lecture on: *International Cooperation for the Protection of the Environment - Achievements, Open Issue*, at the Borys Grinchenko University (Kyiv, 23rd November 2017).

⁵ See MARTIN STARÝ, <http://www.europarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Workshop-11-SumavaCaseStudy.pdf>

⁶ Among the other ongoing researches at ISGI, it is worth mentioning those on the international cooperation for the protection and equitable use of transboundary resources, international and EU designations of PAs, and the Nagoya Protocol to the Convention on biological diversity.

⁷ One of the most recent articles of G. TAMBURELLI, that on: *International Cooperation for the Protection of the Environment and Sustainable Development: Real or Supposed Innovations?* Has been published at the WCEL website (under the theme *Governance*, at <https://www.iucn.org/commissions/world-commission-environmental-law/resources/online-papers>).

⁸ Interpret Europe is a membership-based organisation, registered as a charity in Germany. It has more than 500 members from more than 45 countries (<http://www.interpret-europe.net/feet/home.html>).

⁹ The EU Green Infrastructure Strategy was launched in 2013 to help stop the loss of biodiversity and enable ecosystems to deliver their many services. It basically consists of a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services such as water purification, air quality, space for recreation.

¹⁰ <http://www.europarc.org/europarc-conferences/>.