

EUOPARC

(Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe)

Activities' Report - Year 2018

Gianfranco Tamburelli

1. Introduction

Europarc is the network of 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 responsible authorities of PAs, and various public institutions and environmental NGOs from 38 countries (cf. <http://www.euoparc.org/>).

In 2018, Europarc carried out numerous activities, before and after its annual conference. In particular, before the conference, it is worth noting that it developed, together with Interpret Europe, some initiatives on the connection between Europe's natural heritage and cultural identity. In the European Year of Cultural Heritage, both Europarc and Interpret Europe were in fact committed to enhance the understanding of the interrelationships between landscape, culture and history. On 9th February 2018, a webinar on: *Natural Heritage and Cultural Identity: The Role of Interpretation* was organized, then Europarc invited Interpret Europe to co-lead the annual Siggen Seminar.¹ The theme of the Seminar was: *Youth Involvement in PAs* (Germany, March 2018).

The annual Conference was held at the Cairngorms National Park on 18th September 2018. The theme of the Conference was: *European Parks: Inspired by the Next Generation*. Over 600 delegates were invited to consider the opportunities and challenges of youth involvement in PA management.

2. Main activities carried on by EUROPARC during 2018 relevant for Italy and for CNR

The main Europarc 2018 activities were the above mentioned Siggen Seminar; the Assembly, the Conference and the Workshops held in Cairngorms (Aviemore, Scotland); the development of the programme on transboundary protected area (TBPA); the analysis of participatory mechanisms

¹ Every year, thanks to the support of the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung F.V.S., Europarc members have the chance to join the Siggen Seminar, a 2-3 day training on a topic relevant for the work of PAs. At the 2018 Seminar, there were 26 participants from 14 countries representing PAs, regional and local authorities, and youth.

for the PA management, and the promotion of sustainable tourism in PAs. All these activities are of great current interest, and relevant for Italy and for CNR.

At the General Assembly held in Aviemore, the President of the Federation, Ignace Schops, illustrated the activities of the Council, which during the year had discussed various issues concerning membership, lobbying and advocacy strategy, roles of the sections of the Federation, the establishment of a fundraising commission.

The directorate team and the executive director, Carol Ritchie, provided some highlights of their activities. Among others, the launch of two new LIFE Projects: *E-Natura.2000.edu Supporting e-learning and capacity building for Natura 2000 managers*², focused on capacity building, and *NaturAdapt*, aimed at developing methods for climate adaptation planning, and to integrate them in wider park management plans.

The Chairs of the four EUROPARC Commissions presented an update on their work. In 2018, the Natura 2000 Commission put a focus on management, developing a toolkit to combine guidelines and web-links per country and themes; the Health and PAs Commission developed a healthy parks programme for Europe; the Sustainable Agriculture Commission defined a policy position paper, trying to develop a tool to award parks and partners committed in sustainable farming; the Periurban Parks Commission prepared a position paper for future actions, and organised learning exchanges among parks.

The youth representative, Laura Peters, gave an overview of the activities undertaken for and with youth, in particular the creation of a youth council, and the preparation of a Youth Manifesto.

Thereafter, the Workshops allowed participants to discuss in depth a vast array of topics. In particular, I would like to mention the Workshop on *land management*, and the Workshop for delegates under 30 *on how young people can take the lead for nature*.

At the Conference, the key speakers shared their experiences, and highlighted the reasons why reconnection with nature is so critical in our times, and how direct exposure to nature is essential for our physical and emotional health.³ The themes of how involving young people in the management of national parks, and approach and expectations of young people were explored. In this context, the

² This innovative three-year Project explores the potential of building new approaches and learning methods to improve knowledge and capacity amongst Natura 2000 Managers in both public and private land, across the EU. The Project will analyse training needs and make available new ways of accessing information about the multiple skills required for Natura 2000 management and policy implementation.

³ Among the Speakers, Richard Louv, who uses the term 'nature-deficit disorder' to explain the correlation between an increase in social, mental and physical health problems with less time spent in nature because of busy, technology-driven lives (see *Last Child in the Woods and The Nature Principle*, 2016).

Conference welcomed the Youth Manifesto, which sets out what simple actions can be taken to support young in maintaining a closer link with nature and the outdoors.

In addition, a Transboundary Parks Programme Certificate was awarded to the Pasvik - Inari Trilateral Park, which consists of 6 nature PAs: 3 in Norway, 1 in Russia and 2 in Finland. Environmental awareness and the promotion of sustainable nature-based tourism are the key elements of their recognized collaborative work.⁴

Finally, Agnė Jasinavičiūtė from Lithuania, Baiba Ralle from Latvia and László Patkó from Hungary were the winners of the 2018 edition of the Alfred Toepfer Stiftung award (scholarships) to young professionals wishing to make study trips in European PAs.

After the Conference, on 28th November, Europarc organised jointly with Interpret Europe an event in Brussels on: *Nature and Culture in Dialogue*, to analyse the interrelations between natural heritage and cultural identity.

On the 29th November, 19 Sustainable Destinations were awarded the *European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in PAs*, in a high-level ceremony organised at the European Parliament.⁵ Among the 4 new sustainable destinations awarded, 2 Italians: the Alpi Apuane Regional Park, and the Porto Cesareo Marine PA. Among the sustainable destinations re-awarded, Alpe Veglia e Alpe Devero Nature Park (already awarded in 2013); Val Grande National Park (already awarded in 2013); Sila National Park (already awarded in 2011); D'Abruzzo, Lazio e Molise National Park (already awarded in 2011); Colli Euganei Regional Park (already awarded in 2012); Coastal Dunes from Torre Canne to Torre S. Leonardo Regional Park (already awarded in 2012); and Adamello Brenta Nature Park (already awarded in 2006 and 2012).

Finally, on 7th of December, Europarc co-organised with the DG Environment of the European Commission, in Brussels, a Seminar on: *Partnerships for Biodiversity: European Policies and the Role of PAs*, aimed at analysing issues concerning Natura 2000 management, agriculture in PAs, and the connection between culture and nature.

⁴ The Europarc's Programme "Transboundary Parks - Following Nature's Design" aims to promote and facilitate transboundary cooperation between European PAs. Since the *Basic Standards Evaluation System* was launched in 2003, 23 European PAs have been successfully certified as 10 Transboundary Parks under the Programme. The Pasvik - Inari Trilateral Park is following the Transboundary Parks Programme methodology since 2008.

⁵ The *European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in PAs* is a methodology to promote sustainable development destinations. By implementing the methodology, PAs become an active player in the development of sustainable tourism in their region, through a strong participatory process with their local community and authorities, for the definition of a sustainable tourism strategy and 5 years action plan.

3. Activities carried on by Gianfranco Tamburelli within the Union during 2018 and impact on the Italian scientific community

During 2018, Gianfranco Tamburelli developed various research and high education activities of interest of Europarc and of the Italian scientific community. In particular, he developed some research on current trends in international environmental law⁶, on the UNESCO biosphere reserves⁷, and on environmental impact assessment (EIA) in land uses.

Then, Tamburelli participated, representing the CNR, in the Assembly, in the annual Conference, and in other activities in Cairngorms in September. In particular, he intervened in the workshop on *land reform, and land management* in PAs.

The impact of the CNR participation in Europarc, and of the activities carried out by Tamburelli on the Italian scientific community, are related to the themes and the innovative approach of the Europarc activities. These range from the researches on climate change and biodiversity conservation, to the advancement of knowledge in various fields of law, economics and social sciences.

Thus, the participation in Europarc has been and is important for the development of research projects and high education activities that place Tamburelli and the Institute for International Legal Studies (ISGI) in a position of excellence in the fields of international and EU environmental law, and of legal systems for the sustainable management of international, transboundary and national parks.⁸ At the moment, Tamburelli is carrying out research on legal models for PA governance.

Information on the Europarc activities and the activities carried out by Tamburelli in the European Federation context were widespread circulated, in particular through the cooperation with the Master on “Environmental Law” of Sapienza University of Rome, and the “Gazzetta Ambiente” journal.

⁶ Cf. *International Law for the Protection of the Environment: The Situation Today - 2018*, in *Influence of International Integration Processes on the Development of Agrarian, Environmental, Natural Resource and Energy Law*, Proceedings of the Conference organized by the Environmental and Agrarian Law Department of the Law Faculty, Belarusian State University, Minsk, 26-27/04/2018. Among other things, Tamburelli delivered a speech on: *International Environmental Law - Current Trends*, at the ADAMAS University of Kolkata, India (January 2018); and a Lecture on: *International Co-operation for the Protection of the Environment: Real or Supposed Innovations?* at the Hungarian Section of the International Law Association - ILA, Budapest (April 2018).

⁷ See *La creazione di una Riserva UNESCO della Biosfera in Ucraina*, Tamburelli G., Kovalenko T., in *Gazzetta Ambiente*, 2/2018, pp. 135-244.

⁸ It seems also opportune to note that Tamburelli is an individual member of the World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL) of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) since 2017.

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

Since more than 20 years, the participation of the CNR in the activities of EUROPARC has been continuous, original, proactive. The CNR, always present at the annual meetings and conferences, sometimes promoter of events at European level, is one of the few research institutions members of the Federation. Of such specificity, the Federation has been able to make use on several occasions, in particular with regard to legal - institutional issues concerning cross border cooperation and international designations of PAs.

With regard to the cost deriving from the CNR involvement in EUROPARC, we can observe that the annual registration fee is € 660, and it is required the attendance by one representative to the annual general assembly and conference⁹, which usually last four / five days and which 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 preceding paragraph - 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) trends and issues concerning national and natural parks in Europe* (including cross-border parks, Natura 2000 sites, UNESCO biosphere reserves, etc.); *b) the new social and legal needs related to the governance of the PAs*; *c) EU and national regulations concerning scientific research and development of sustainable activities in PAs*.

Participation in the Europarc activities also allows the maintaining and strengthening of a broad network of European partners, with which new issues and new challenges are continuously monitored and explored.

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

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 opportune. The MoU should provide a clear framework for the development of research, advanced training, institutional consulting, also establishing regular consultation procedures between the two organizations.

As underlined in previous reports, 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

⁹ Other experts / researchers would be admitted, but they would have to pay individual registration fees and would not have the right to vote.

societies, characterized by - among other things - the acceleration of the dynamics of environmental, economic, and social change.

6. Italian experts with important roles within the Federation

Italian representatives and experts have important roles in the Federation. Enzo Lavarra, President of Dune Costiere Park, 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, Italian who is working for the Federation since more than a decade.

Three of the other staff members are Italian: Brigida Napolitano (membership), Giacomo Benelli (European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in PAs), and Stefania Petrosillo (policy officer).

Tamburelli promoted the publication in *Gazzetta Ambiente* of an article on: *Il ruolo dei giovani nella gestione delle AP, Conferenza Europarc 2018 "Parchi europei: ispirati dalla prossima generazione"*, written by Giacomo Benelli, a member of the staff of the Federation (n. 2/2018, pp. 103-114).

Giampiero Sammuri, President of Federparchi, who in the past was a member of the Council, has participated in many conferences and assemblies and is an influential member of the Federation.

7. Conclusions

Europarc is committed, as highlighted above, in numerous activities aimed to the conservation of ecosystems and biodiversity, as well as to the improvement of health, culture, and the quality of life of the communities living in PAs' territories and in surrounding areas. Among the ongoing researches at ISGI - CNR, there are those on good governance and new models for PA management, transboundary UNESCO biosphere reserves, the human right to a healthy environment, and sustainable tourism in PAs.

In this regard, it seems opportune to note that in Italy some proposals for amending the *Framework Law on PAs* (no. 394/1991) stem from the affirmation of the need to provide the management bodies of PAs (11% of the national territory) with a more efficient organizational and governance model. The text of these proposals as already approved in the previous Legislature assigns new objectives to the park plan, in particular that of promoting sustainable development, also in application of the *national green community strategy*, and of the *national strategy of climate adaptation*.¹⁰

¹⁰ Cf. Senato della Repubblica, Dis. L. no. 834, *Modifiche alla L. 6 dicembre 1991, n. 394, e ulteriori disposizioni in materia di A.P.* (1.10.2018). Article 1 intervenes on the classification of

The Europarc 2018 Conference will take place (September 24-27), in Jūrmala, a resort city partly situated within Ķemeri National Park, the pioneer PA in Latvia (awarded with the European Charter for sustainable tourism). The theme of the Conference will be: *Nature on Your Mind: Understanding Our Values*. It will be aimed at defining “green prescriptions” to address and integrate the role of nature in politics, business, health, arts.

Various workshops will provide excellent opportunities for a fruitful, intense analysis of some management priority issues. Among these workshops, of particular interest those on *how parks and PAs can realise their potential for contributing to health and wellbeing in our towns and cities*, and *on cost-effective and low-impact models to manage sustainable tourism in PAs*.

Rome, 12 July 2019

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gianfranco Tamburelli". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial 'G'.

Gianfranco Tamburelli

Research Project on:

Environment and Development Cooperation in International and EU Law

PAs, regulates the establishment of TBPA and the definition of national parks with extension to the sea, provides measures for PAs included in the Natura 2000.