



Agenda

1st workshop: The Benefits of Protected Areas (morning session of 23 March 2011)

Project “**Parks & Benefits**”, <http://www.parksandbenefits.net> and EUROPARC Nordic-Baltic Section <http://europarc-nb.org> joint workshop, **chaired by the project lead partner, Olaf Ostermann:**

1. “How to measure carrying capacity in 8 protected areas of the Baltic Sea Region – results of a comparative analysis”, *Jesper Brandt, Roskilde University*
*(please see pdf-Document:
pb_presentation_carrying_capacity_jesper_brandt_march2011)*
2. “Carrying capacity in protected areas – local experiences & strategies” *Martin Kaiser, Müritz National Park & Klaas v. Ommeren, Dovrefjell National Park*
*(please see pdf-Documents:
pb_presentation_carrying_capacity_martin_kaiser_march2011.pdf
pb_presentation_carrying_capacity_Klaas_v_ommeren_march201.pdf)*
3. “Benefit Monitor – Measuring economic and social benefits of tourism in protected areas. Method & Outcomes”, Prof. Wilhelm Steingrube, University of Greifswald
Presentation is requested

All pdfs will be made available on the Parks & Benefits website at www.parksandbenefits.net



MINUTES

“Parks & Benefits” – internal workshop on how to promote the European Charter for protected areas in the Baltic Sea Region, Riga/ Latvia (23 March 2011)

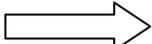
Wednesday, 23rd March 2011 – afternoon session

1. What's the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (ECST) all about – Diana Gallrapp, Europarc

See pdf-document: *pb_presentation_ECST_Diana_Gallrapp_23_March_2011*

- Valuable and practical tool for ensuring sustainable tourism development in Europe's Protected Areas combining elements of a quality label and partnership agreement
- Aim:
 - to increase awareness of and support for Europe's PAs as fundamental part of our heritage
 - to improve the sustainable development and management of tourism in PAs, which takes account of the needs of the environment, local residents, local businesses and visitors
- Europarc:
 - Umbrella organisation of Europe's protected areas founded 1973 in Switzerland
 - 2011: 431 members in 36 countries
- The Charter:
 - Facilitates international co-operation in all aspects of protected area management
 - Sets up efficient communication processes
 - Endeavors and promotes the exchange of expertise, experience and best practice
 - Provides technical support to PAs
 - Provides and organizes capacity building & training
- The Charter has grown in three interlinked areas of development of sustainable tourism:
 - Part I: for protected areas
 - Part II: for local tourism businesses
 - Part III: for tour operators
- Key Elements of the ECST – **Part I**
 - Action plans (5years)
 - Strategy
 - Analysis (SWOT)
 - Stakeholder involvement / Partnership
- The ECST recognises that all those affected by tourism in and around the PA should be involved in its development and management >> Adaptation of working methods based on partnership
 - Public consultation meeting
 - Set up permanent communication platform
 - Facilitate process of co-operation



- Sustainable tourism forum involving partners from nature/landscape, marketing, culture, food & accommodation, sport & leisure, transport, local economy, information & education etc.
 - Taking a strategic approach:
 - Definition of the area
 - Making a diagnosis: assessment of area's natural, historic and cultural heritage, economy, tourism infrastructure, etc. (SWOT)
 - Establishing strategic objectives
 - Allocating appropriate resources
 - Presenting an action plan (5 years)
 - Monitoring results (methods and indicators)
- >> Sustainable tourism strategy
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- The Process:
 - PA needs to be a member of the Europarc Federation
 - Registration as Charter candidate
 - PA starts working with the Charter (1-2 years) 
 - Submission of full application documents
 - On-site verification visit by an independent consultant
 - Final decision on application by the evaluation committee
 - Charter ceremony and signing of the certificate
- ✓ Diagnostic analysis of the Charter area (SWOT)
 - ✓ development of 5 year strategy & action plan
 - ✓ creation of a permanent sustainable tourism forum
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- Charter parks: 77 protected areas in 9 countries (mainly UK, France & Spain)
 - **Charter Part II** for local businesses:
 - mutual commitment between the PA authority and an individual business to be committed to the principles of sustainable tourism and to create multiple mutual benefits from this
 - Aim:
 - to strengthen links and deepen understanding between protected-area managers and their partners in the business community in and around the area
 - to contribute to a sustainable development of the region
 - History:
 - Working Group, formed after Charter Network Meeting in Strasbourg 2006, elaborated the official text
 - Charter Part II officially approved in May 2007
 - Charter businesses: 266 local tourism businesses in 16 Charter Areas
 - Key elements:
 - Action Plan (indicative actions, monitoring indicators, application methodology)
 - Partnership Agreement setting out the commitments of the PA & the tourism business
 - European Charter Partnership Certificate
 - Benefits for PA:
 - Potential for fundraising
 - Marketing visibility



- Opportunity to influence tourism development in the area
- Basis for strengthening relations with local tourism stakeholders
- Higher profile regionally, nationally and across Europe
- Exchange of expertise and experience within the Charter network – raising management capacity
- Benefits for SMEs
 - Close cooperation with the protected area, local stakeholders and other economic sectors
 - Business to business credibility
 - Provision of high-quality information about the protected area
 - Reducing operation costs through audit and sustainable use of resources
 - Participation in a European wide network
 - Opening of new markets / targeting new customers
 - Increased visitor satisfaction and regional economic impact
- Charter projects
 - European Charter Net (2007-09) / BfN - German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
 - STEPPA: Sustainable Tourism in Enterprises, Parks and Protected Areas (2010-11) / EU-DG Enterprise and Industry
 - The value of the “Charter” in identifying sustainable tourism destinations (2010 - 2011) / BFN
 - Parks & Benefits: Creating socio-economic effects for the benefits of protected areas and their regions (2009-12) / EU - Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013
- Next event:
 - Sustainable Tourism Meeting / Charter Network Meeting „Seeking Solutions“
 - Djerdap National Park / Serbia from 28th June – 1st July 2011

2. General overview about the situation of sustainable certificates in BSR protected area –
Martin Kaiser, Müritz National Park

See pdf-document: [pb_presentation_comparison_certificates_23_March_2011.pdf](#)

- Results of a desktop research:
 - 4 sustainable tourism certificates for protected areas in Europe exist
 - European Charta for sustainable tourism in protected areas (76)
 - Pan Parks (11; wilderness areas; 20.000ha min size, 10.000 ha non-fragmented area)
 - European Diploma (71 areas in 26 countries; established in 1965, awarded by Council of Europe)
 - Transboundary Parks (17; 1999 first thought, set up in 2003; at least two NP close to border)



- Absolute no. of protected areas using a certificate:
 - European Charter: high no. of nature parks
 - Absolute no. European Diploma: high no. of national parks
 - Transboundary parks: mainly national parks
 - Pan Park: only national parks

- Coverage of certificates across Europe:
 - European Charter: mainly in southern & western Europe
 - European Diploma: central Europe, rather smaller parks apply for the diploma, awarded mainly in the 1960es/70es
 - Transboundary Parks: south-eastern Europe, Finland, green belt reference
 - Pan Parks: northern Europe, south-eastern Europe

- General comparison of certificates:
 - All 4 certificates are important but only European Charter of sustainable tourism & Pan Parks integrate social and economical relations

3. Open discussion

- Why are so few protected areas in the BSR certified? Is there no need for sustainable tourism in protected areas of the Baltic Sea Region so far?
 - If there is any tourism in the protected areas the only answer can be sustainable tourism
 - It has been discussed whether the protected areas themselves act as tourism destination or not. Some felt that parks themselves can hardly be a tourism destination when they are part of a tourism destination. Others hold a view that they are a destination of their own and their regions support this development (i.e. in Denmark or southern Europe where many Charter parks are not part of tourism destinations).
 - The reason why there are so many Charter parks in the south of Europe is that in France and Spain the tourism strategy is highly concentrated on quality aspects. Protected areas needed a tool to evaluate the success. The tourism sector is very strong in southern Europe & the Charter is strongly supported by the ministries of environment encouraging the parks to get certified.
 - In Denmark sustainability is a basic but growing subject. Right now they have not put the focus on it but it needs to be considered in future.
 - Basically it is impossible to have long term success without political support. It often is not understood what sustainable tourism really is (nature tourism vs. eco tourism) & there is much to do on state level to improve the understanding & knowledge.



- Shall parks get more engaged with the region?
 - Role of parks in regional development needs to be considered much more in the Baltic Sea Region; in the south i.e. the parks are actively promoted as engines for regional development. It needs to be discussed further whether it is wise to start the process in the BSR primarily in regions which are not tourism destinations yet to support regional development.
 - If we adapt conservation work to modern issues the parks have to open up to the region and their businesses. But the Charter must be adapted to the different landscape systems. Norwegian and Finnish Charter parks act now as test rabbits.
- What needs to be done to change the situation:
 - Promote a clearer profile of the Charter & focus on the benefits, gather data to prove the benefits & to raise acceptance
 - Create good reports of approaches & communicate success stories
 - Establish a monitoring system & define the impact on economic level, ecological level and social level (few good indicators)
 - In Dovrefjell a study tour for the board of Dovrefjell and politicians is planned in October 2011
 - Pan Parks have a lot of studies, analysis about the benefits of their certificates. There is a need to prove the benefits & visitor satisfaction
 - Referring to missing figures in terms of the ECST:
 - Report from Vilm on benefits is available
 - General impact is much wider than only on tourism
 - But: too little hard data in the report & indicators
 - Parks can contribute by showing how to develop nature in a certain landscape (using a more general perspectives)
- What's going on after the P&B project ends? How can the Charter be further promoted and the work continued that has already started?
 - NBS continues to communicate the produced material. They will keep the heritage from PARKS & BENEFITS. But their daily work is not politically influenced. The NBS (secretariat) will discuss a more active involvement, but usually other departments lack dialogue >> needs time
 - Metsähallitus offers help to other parks and invites them visit Finnish parks (benchmarking) i.e. Syöte – learning from the experts.
 - Europarc offers support wherever needed, but all parks need to keep in mind that Europarc needs the experiences/ feedback of their members as well (pilot actions, new developments & strategies).



- Summary of the discussion – what needs to be done to promote the Charter and develop a sustainable tourism in the Baltic Sea Region? :
 - Develop a clear profile – tell success stories & best practices
 - Promote it as a tool to make things easier
 - Adapt it to the system of Nordic Baltic Countries
 - Do lobbying towards national / regional ministries of environment & involve politicians
 - Proof the success by impact / monitoring analyses that act as good indicators
 - Continue networking between parks
 - Let the Charter parks function as ambassadors
 - Do benchmarking and learn from good examples
 - Deliver your best-practises to others / Europarc
 - Include Charter Part II into Part I at once