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European Charter for Sustainable Tourism

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Parque Nacional Canaima



Refugio Nacional de Vida Silvestre Ostional, Costa Rica



Middle Age
Game and
Wood

XX Century
Conservation
Temples

Nowadays
Nature, People and
Multifunctional Services
Networks

XIX Century
Aesthetics and
natural beauty

90's
Mainstream and
trendy

Future?
Crisis?
Public Health?
Spiritual Values?



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- What model we want for tourism in our Parks?
- Change the paradigm, from a No policy to a consensual Yes!
- If we don't change ourselves, how are we going to ask others to change?



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-  Parks in Europe are no longer only nature conservation areas;
-  Parks cannot be a confined area;
-  Problems are so complex, that...;
-  Park management should be participated;
-  Tourism is a driving force for the majority of our Parks;
-  Sustainable solutions should engage the local stakeholders (economic, social, cultural and political, public and private).



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- *“A protected area associated with the destination;*
- *A critical mass of local ecotourism businesses;*
- *A sustainability plan under implementation, in developing ecotourism;*
- *Nature and local culture as the main ingredients in product development and marketing;*
- *Active participation of local communities, empowered through education and awareness raising, based on shared values.”*
- Extract adapted from the Declaration of the 2nd European Ecotourism Conference in Brasov 2013



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1991

Sustainable Tourism
Working Group
EUROPARC

1995

Charter methodology
development
(LIFE French Fed)

2008/2009

Development of the
part II and first
businesses awarded

1993

“Loving them to
death”

2001

First 7 parks awarded







2013/2014

Development of the
part III and first Tour
Operators awarded



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-  A brand of the **European Union**;
-  A **certification with a protocol based on quantitative indicators**;
-  A **mechanism of funding**;
-  A **voluntary agreement** of the different local stakeholders;
-  A **practical management tool** for implementing **principles of sustainable tourism in a territory**;
-  A **recognition** of EUROPARC for the work done by/for everyone.



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- Sustainable Tourism in European parks provides a:
 - **meaningful quality experience;**
 - **safeguards natural and cultural values;**
 - **supports local livelihoods and quality of life;**
 - **and is economically viable.**



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1. Giving priority to **protection**;
2. Contributing to **sustainable development**;
3. Engaging all **stakeholders**;
4. Planning **sustainable tourism effectively**;
5. Pursing **continuous improvement**;



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I - Destinations



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I - Destinations

II – Tourism Businesses



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I - Destinations

II – Tourism businesses

III – Tour operators



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EUROPARC
Sustainable Tourism
in Protected Areas



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Sustainable Tourism
in Protected Areas



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Sustainable Tourism
in Protected Areas



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since 2001... 110 destinations in
16 countries!

since 2008... over 500 sustainable
partners in 30 destinations in 5
countries!



since 2015... 25
sustainable operators
in 2 countries!
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What does EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN PROTECTED AREAS mean in numbers?

EUROPARC's European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in protected areas builds partnerships to improve sustainable development and the management of an area's natural and cultural heritage



56 M people

live within one hour of areas managed under sustainable tourism principles. The potential to communicate positive sustainable and conservation message is huge!

In average **1,18 M people / area**



4 M people

live inside protected areas where tourism is managed sustainably. These are budding sustainable development Ambassadors of the future!

In average **97 304 people / area**

Learning Lessons



1.4 M young people

learn yearly about how protected areas manage these places sustainably

In average **28 648 educational visits / area**

4,9 M Promised Land

hectares of land in Europe is protected areas where tourism and conservation is being managed sustainably

Size in average **64 286 ha / park**


14 M

Size in average **276 860 ha / area**

hectares of land cover the protected areas in Europe that have been certified with the Charter for sustainable tourism

700

local products are supported by parks and businesses operating under sustainable tourism principles. Bringing local products and traditions to tourism marketplace

Hundreds of species and habitats are managed and protected within the Charter areas 

Park Partners 

3 206 organisations

across Europe are working in partnership to deliver sustainable tourism and nature conservation.

In average **61 local organisations / area**

Audience Participation 

73 M people

visit European Charter parks annually. A great audience to see how sustainable tourism can work in practise.

In average **1.6 M visitors / park**

Asset Management 11 M visit

are made to parks committed to making sure conservation and sustainable development are managed with community participation. Visitors are a great asset for the economy and as future nature protectors.

Safe in our hands **7 M ha** of N2000 site 

protected under European law are managed by parks with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism. Europe's nature is safe in Charter park hands. Size in average **140 633 ha / CA**

Natural Capital **441 M Euros** 

are invested by Charter protected areas to accomplish their sustainable tourism actions. A real commitment to words turned into actions that will make a long term difference to how nature and sustainable development are managed.

In average **9 M € / park / 5 year plan**
1.8 M € / park / 1 year





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- Creating a permanent Forum for participation;
- Better coordination between public administrations, in particular environment and tourism;
- Coming closer of the tourism businesses with Park Authority, Tourism and local entities;
- Better and more cooperation between tourism businesses;
- Creation and promotion of tourism products based in local resources;
- **Networking.**



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WHAT IS?

A **practical management tool** with participatory planning to **develop tourism sustainably** in and around parks

WHO CAN APPLY?

Organisations managing Parks:

Regions, Parks authorities, Municipalities, National Bodies

WHO MANAGES IT?

The EUROPARC Federation and National Sections,
through an independent verification process.



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Sustainable Tourism Forum

A **Permanent Sustainable Tourism Forum** should be established between the **protected area authority** and all relevant stakeholders (*eg. local municipalities, conservation and community organisations and representatives of the tourism businesses*)



Strategy and Action Plan

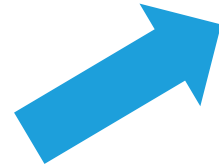
Should include:

1. A definition of the area
2. An assessment of the current situation
3. A set of strategic objectives
4. An action plan to meet these objectives
5. An estimation of resources
6. Proposals for monitoring results



Assessment of the current situation

- Natural, historic and cultural heritage;
- Tourism and recreation
- Infrastructures;
- Current visitors and potential future markets;
- Impacts of tourism;
- SWOT Analysis



Strategic direction

Defining clear **strategic objectives** concerning nature conservation, economic and social development, improving quality of life of locals and quality of tourism.



Action Plan

Description of each action: timing, resources, partners for implementing, monitoring proposal with indicators and results.





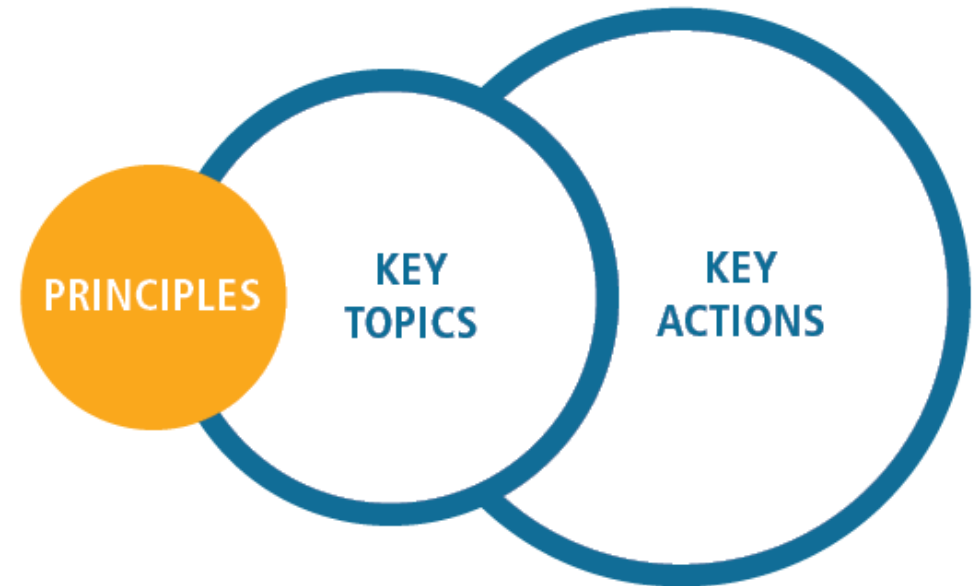
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KEY TOPICS AND ACTIONS

The Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan should be based on local circumstances and priorities as assessed and agreed through the consultation process.

However, to comply with the requirements of the Charter it must demonstrate coverage of the following key topics and associated actions in the Action Plan.





1) Protecting valuable landscapes, biodiversity and cultural heritage

- 1) Influencing land use planning and the control of potentially damaging developments;
- 2) Influencing the location, type and design of tourism developments;
- 3) Managing visitor flows, activities and behavior in sensitive areas and sites.

2) Supporting conservation through tourism

- 1) Encouraging visitors and tourism businesses to support conservation, through donations, volunteering and other activity;
- 2) Using revenues obtained from tourism-related activity to support Conservation;
- 3) Establishing, supporting and promoting tourism-related investments, projects and activities that help to conserve the natural and cultural heritage.

3) Reducing carbon footprint, pollution and wasteful resource use

- 1) Working with tourism businesses to improve environmental management, including use of energy and water, waste management, and noise and light pollution;
- 2) Promoting the use of public transport and other alternatives to cars.



4) Providing safe access, quality facilities and special experiences of the protected area, available to all visitors

- 1) Providing a wide range of access opportunities, with attention to safety and risk management;
- 2) Improving the quality of visitor facilities and services;
- 3) Providing visitors with specific tourism offers which involve discovery, interpretation and appreciation of the area's special natural and cultural heritage;
- 4) Providing facilities and information for visitors with special needs.

5) Effectively communicating the area to visitors

- 1) Ensuring that marketing materials and activities promote the area effectively and responsibly;
- 2) Providing good quality and effective visitor information and interpretation;
- 3) Ensuring that tourism businesses and other local stakeholders are well informed about the area and provide relevant and accurate information to visitors;
- 4) Providing specific information and interpretation for young people, schools and student groups.

6) Ensuring social cohesion

- 1) Anticipating, monitoring and minimising any existing and potential conflicts with local residents;
- 2) Maintaining good communication and engagement between local residents, businesses, visitors and the protected area authority;
- 3) Encouraging and developing appropriate partnership activity with and between stakeholders.



7) Strengthening prosperity in the local community

- 1) Promoting the provision and identity of local produce and services and their purchase and use by visitors and tourism businesses;
- 2) Supporting the economic viability and performance of local tourism businesses and the provision of local employment in tourism.

8) Providing training and capacity building

- 1) Providing relevant training for staff of the protected area authority in sustainable tourism development and management;
- 2) Providing and encouraging relevant training and capacity building for tourism businesses and other stakeholders in sustainable tourism.

9) Monitoring tourism performance and impacts

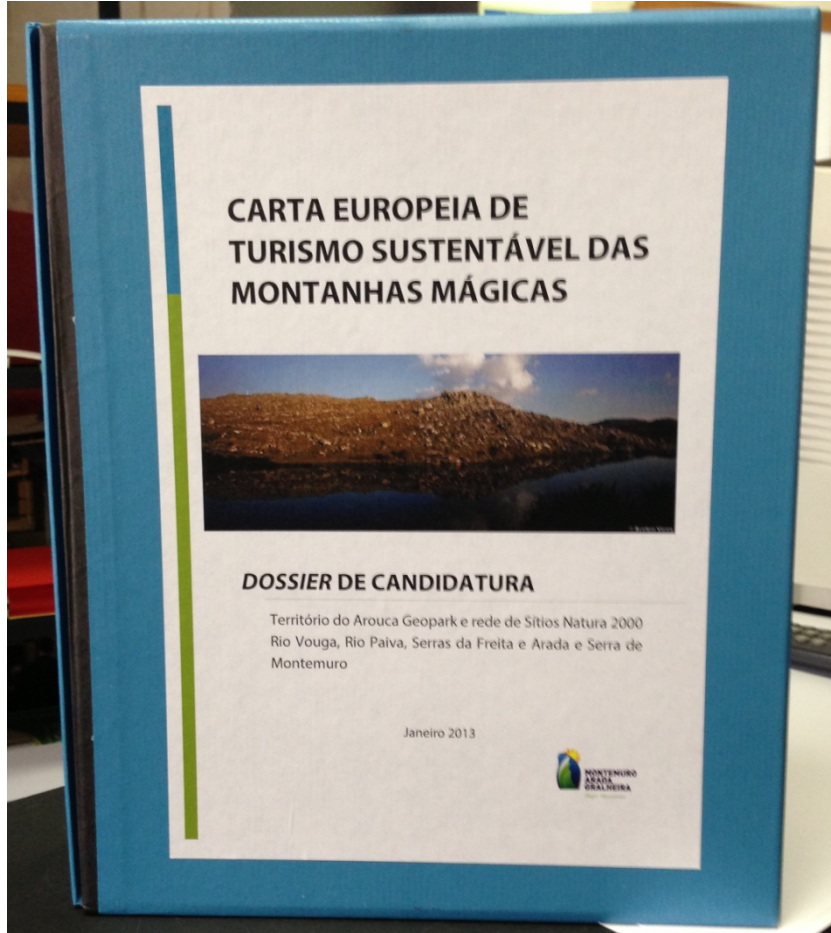
- 1) Monitoring of visitors – volumes, patterns, spending and satisfaction;
- 2) Monitoring of tourism businesses – performance and needs;
- 3) Monitoring of tourism impacts – on the environment, economy and Community;
- 4) Monitoring progress in implementing the action plan.

10) Communicating actions and engaging with the Charter

- 1) Communicating sustainable tourism actions and results to local stakeholders and more widely at a local, regional and national level;
- 2) Promoting and making visible the award of the Charter;
- 3) Engaging with EUROPARC and the Charter Network, including participating in related events and activities;
- 4) Taking steps for re-application and renewal of the Charter.



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Submit an application and sign the Charter principles

1. A **definition of the area**
2. An **assessment of current situation**
3. A set of **strategic objectives**
4. A 5 year **action plan** to meet these objectives
5. An estimation of resources
6. Proposals for monitoring results



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Verification visit to the territory

Mercantour National Park (Fr)



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Evaluation Committee assesses the application and informs the Council about its results

Members of the Evaluation Committee in Italy



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Awarding ceremony

European Parliament, Brussels Charter Award Ceremony 2013

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1. Register and pay the fee
2. Ensure you are a **member of the EUROPARC Federation**
3. Submit a full application dossier within the set deadline
4. Pay the required verification fees

Protected area Charter candidate

- Registration fee (for registration as a candidate protected area): **€500**
- Costs of travel, accommodation and board for the visiting verifier: **will be calculated according to the expenses range of the previous years**
- Verification fee (for administration of the application and verification process): **€5000 + VAT** (as applicable)

5. Verification visit takes place
6. Evaluation Committee meets and assess
7. Get your award
8. Fully participate in the network
9. Plan for re-evaluation

The EC

Re-evaluation of charter area

(following successful verification)

- Re-evaluation, i.e. evaluation for renewal of Charter membership (after 5 years): **€5000 + VAT**
- Costs of travel, accommodation and board for the visiting verifier: will be calculated according to the expenses range of the previous years

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Supporting Parks
Protecting Nature
Promoting Sustainability
Bringing People Together

Thank you!

Շնորհակալություն

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