



EUROPARC
Sustainable Tourism
in Protected Areas

Marketing Strategy & Communications Action Plan 2018–2022



EUROPARC
FEDERATION

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About the **EUROPARC** Federation



*The home of the European Charter for Sustainable
Tourism in Protected Areas*



The EUROPARC Federation was founded in 1973 with the aim of supporting protected areas to fulfill their role as preservers of Europe's natural beauty and landscapes.

It is a non-profit organisation based in Germany, with offices in Brussels and Barcelona and is the oldest and largest Network of European Protected areas.

The creation of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

Since 1993, with the publication of the report “Loving them to Death”, the EUROPARC Federation has supported parks, through improving their tourism strategy and actions utilising a **multi-stakeholder approach**.

Now, with over 20 years of application, the methodology has been updated, widely approved, and implemented across a **network of hundreds of Parks and local partners**.



EUROPARC
Sustainable Tourism
in Protected Areas



In a nutshell

The Strategy aims to...

Strengthen the network of Sustainable Destinations

- **build up a solid network** to promote experience exchange;
- **empower Protected Areas and Partners** to better communicate their engagement with Sustainability

Increase visibility and recognition of the ECSTPA

- **develop a common language** and **story line** of the Charter for Sustainable Tourism brand;
- **deliver tools, training and public relations activities** to increase the visibility of the Charter for Sustainable Tourism among local communities, regional & national authorities;
- **achieve recognition** among the professional tourism sector

Identify responsibilities and tasks within the internal network

- **coordinate activities** with EUROPARC Sections and the internal network
- define a review process

To whom

The Strategy is addressed to...

EUROPARC Federation

Protected Areas awarded
Sustainable Destinations

EUROPARC Sections

Business Partners Awarded
Sustainable Partners

Tour Operators Awarded
Sustainable Tour Operators



EUROPARC
Sustainable Tourism
in Protected Areas

Analysis



Internal Analysis

What do Protected Areas need?

Protected Areas can be defined in 4 main groups:

- Parks already members of the Network (0-5 years)
- Re-evaluating Parks (5-15 years)
- Founder Parks (+15 years)
- Non-awarded Parks

Internally

- Tools and capacity building – on visitor management, communications and promotion
- Resources and inspirations from the other destinations, to better implement their plans
- Transparency in ECSTPA management process
- Evidence (numbers and case studies) to showcase the socio-economic benefits they bring

Externally

- License to operate by the local community
- Political support: recognition from their local, regional and national authorities about the added benefits of the ECSTPA implementation
- Visibility among the international tourism sector
- Recognition by environmental conscious travellers
- Visibility and influence at a higher level (international organisations, funding institutions)

Internal Analysis

Who are the Sustainable Partners and what do they need?

Directly involved *Those directly related to the tourism sector*

- **Activity providers** Outdoor sports, agencies, guides, cultural/historical tour providers
- **Accommodation providers** from large hotels to Yurts, Camping areas, Air BnB accommodations, farm houses
- **Transportation** national and regional transport companies, local shuttles and taxis
- **Local tourism bodies** Tourism offices, interpretation centres, environmental education centres
- **Food providers** Restaurants, bakeries, coffee shops

Indirectly involved *Those who do not have an activity directly related to tourism, but benefit with the income of tourists in the region*

- Local shops
- Local producers and artisans
- Farmers
- Building industry

Personal needs

- Inspiration to be involved in sustainable actions and how to implement real actions
- Saving time and money
- To develop partnerships locally, and trust to work together

Professional needs

- Need to be understood by the Park administration
- Knowledge of the **contribution they are making to Sustainability** (*for external recognition and higher motivation*)
- **Tools and training** to help undertake the actions
- **Visibility** in the international market
- **Communication toolkit** (content, tools and training) to help them communicate their commitment to sustainability and nature conservation; and support them **promoting what distinguishes** them from the others.

Internal Analysis

What do Sustainable Tour Operators need?

- **Regional / Local level** Interpretation and guided tours agencies; individual guides/ interpreters; specialised operators (birdwatching, whale watching, scuba divers, trekkers, etc); outdoor activities, outdoor sports operators
- **National Level agencies** working in the field of outdoor experiences, ecotourism
- **International level agencies** working in the field of outdoor experiences, ecotourism

Information about natural and cultural features (by Parks)

- Contents, training and tools provided by the park, about biodiversity, landscape, history, etc

Visibility

- Communications toolkit to promote their commitment with sustainability
- Commercial presentation about the ECSTPA Part III
- Global promotion in the international markets

Connection with the other Tour Operators in the network

- Partnership cooperation between different regions and countries awarded
- Exchanging costumers (access to foreign markets)
- Ability to organise tours in other parks or finding guides in other destinations, to develop join packages



EUROPARC
Sustainable Tourism
in Protected Areas

Marketing Strategy

Strategic objectives
Market Segmentation
Branding & Positioning



1. Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective 1



Build a strong network
of excellent quality
Touristic Destinations

Strategic Objective 2



Ensure EUROPARC
Sustainable Destinations
are living models for
sustainable development

Strategic Objective 3



Increase the recognition of
the EUROPARC Sustainable
Destinations as a quality
brand

Strategic Objective 1



Build a strong network
of excellent quality
Touristic Destinations

Expected outcomes

*Qualitative /
Quantitative
baseline in 2018*

Target 2022

1.1. A highly motivated and cooperative international network of Sustainable Destinations, with experienced destinations sharing their expertise, tools and best practice with new comers

No regular share of information among members.

- **The network works by itself, with direct contacts and regular share of information.**

1.2 Sustainable Destinations recognise the benefits of the network and **renew commitment** after the 5 years of the Award

34% of non-renewal¹

- **Decrease the rate of non-renewals**

1.3 Sustainable Tour operators awarded start working with business partners and tour operators from other awarded Sustainable Destinations

Tour operators awarded can operate in other Sustainable Destinations but are not yet connected

- **Strong cooperation at national level**
- **At least 5 Tour operators cooperating with businesses and tour operators awarded in other countries**

Strategic Objective 2



Ensure EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations are living models for sustainable development

Expected outcomes

*Qualitative /
Quantitative
baseline in 2018*

Targets 2022

2.1. Higher engagement of certified Sustainable Partners and Sustainable Tour Operators working in each EUROPARC Sustainable Destination

The database of Sustainable Partners awarded by Parks is not currently fully known by EUROPARC, as the process is led by each individual Park.

- Increase the number of Parks following methodology II and III
- Increase the number of partners and tour operators awarded by the Parks; increase the number of renewals of partners and tour operators
- The list of partners awarded by Parks is known and regularly updated.

2.2 The environmental, social and economic impacts of the EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations are highly promoted

Charter Magic Numbers survey is realised every 5 years, response rate around 50%.

- Increase Charter Magic Numbers response rate to 75%

2.3 The contribution of the ECSTPA to the Sustainable Development Goals is visible and celebrated

Some data from Partners is collected by Parks, but not communicated to EUROPARC

- Data about the ecological performance of partners and tour operators is collected by the Parks and Communicated to EUROPARC
- Partners' commitment to sustainability is recognised with an awarding system

Strategic Objective 3



Increase the **recognition** of the EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations as a quality brand

Expected outcomes

Qualitative /
Quantitative
baseline in 2018

Target 2022

3.1 EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations, the awarded partners and tour operators become the key ambassadors of the EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations Brand

Parks and partners display the logos but there is no concerted / common message being disseminated

- **Parks and Partners effectively communicate how they are working together for sustainability**

3.2 The ECSTPA is a recognised methodology by organisations working for Sustainable Development at international, national and regional level

The ECSTPA was recognised by UNESCO and by European Institutions

- **Higher recognition by tourism organisations**

3.3 EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations are valued by tourists and tour operators

Destinations are not recognised

- **EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations are valued by the professional sector**
- **Higher recognition of the brand among tourists**

2. Market Segmentation

Internal Network

EUROPARC Federation
EUROPARC Sections
Sustainable Destinations
Sustainable Partners
Sustainable Tour Operators

External Stakeholders

Institutions at International and European level working for sustainable development, including the European Union Institutions

Tourism authorities at national and regional level

Authorities at national and regional level engaged in the management of protected areas;

Local communities: including local authorities, NGOs, schools and citizens;

The professional tourism sector, both at international, national and regional level;

Visitors, both *in situ* and potential;

Potential new destinations.

2. Market Segmentation

Expected outcomes per target groups

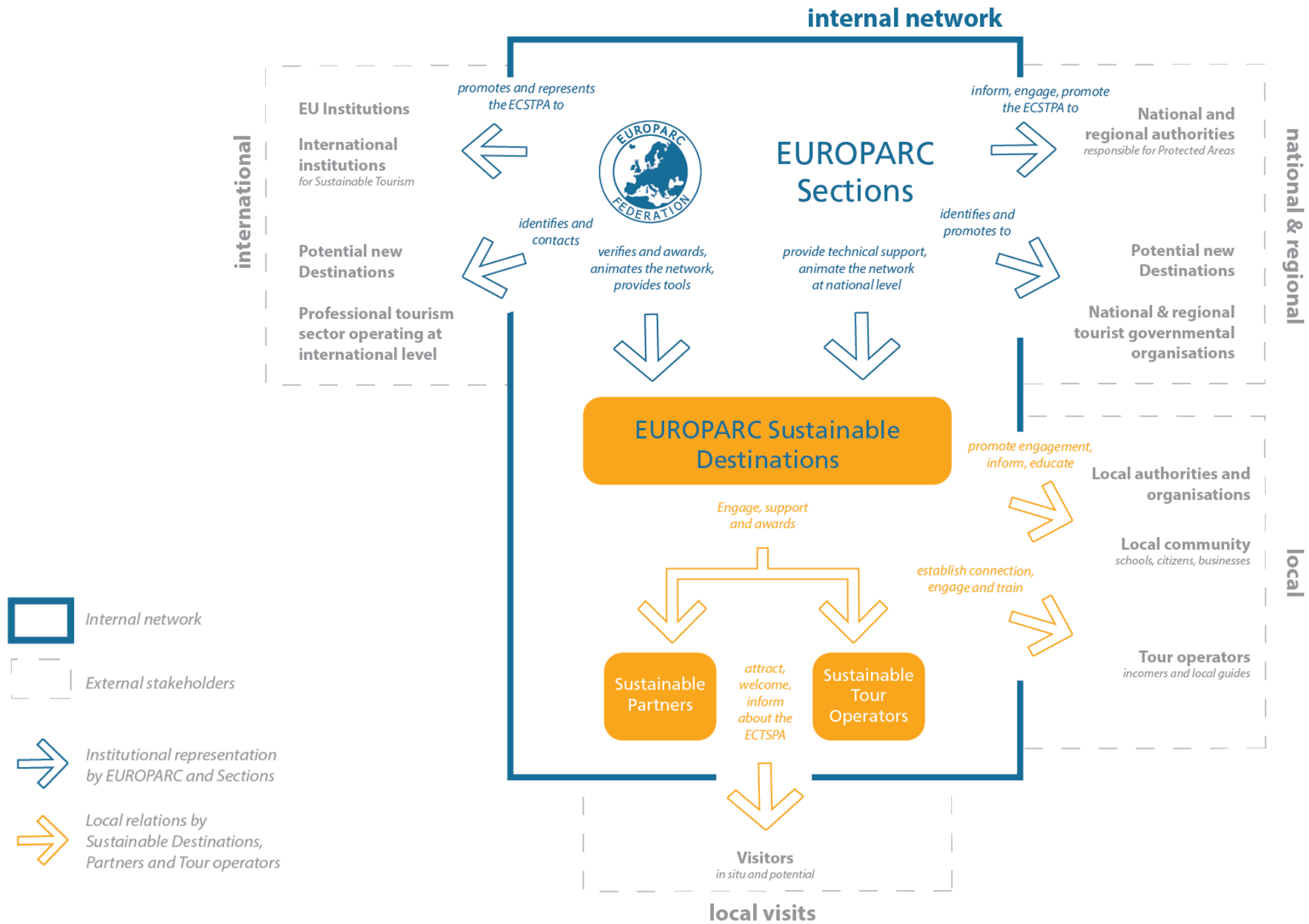
		Main target groups of the actions			Secondary target groups of the actions		Indirect beneficiaries of the actions		
Expected Outcomes	Target groups	Parks awarded	Partners Awarded	EU & International Institutions	National & Regional authorities for tourism and parks	Local authorities & community	Professional Tourism sector (Local, nat. & int.)	Visitors	Potential new Destinations
	1.1.		Yellow	Yellow					
1.2		Yellow	Yellow		Green	Blue			
1.3		Blue	Yellow		Green		Green	Blue	
2.1.		Yellow	Yellow		Green	Blue			
2.2				Yellow	Yellow	Blue		Green	Green
2.3			Blue	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow		Green	Green
3.1					Blue	Blue	Green	Yellow	Green
3.2				Yellow	Yellow	Blue		Yellow	Yellow
3.3		Blue	Blue		Yellow	Blue	Yellow	Yellow	Green

The table shows the relation between the expected outcomes of each strategic objective, and the respective target groups.

2. Market Segmentation

Reaching out to each target group

Working together is fundamental for the achievement of the strategic objectives.



2. Market Segmentation

Reaching out to each target group

Internal network

External network

Working together is fundamental for the achievement of the strategic objectives.

	Internal network	External network
EUROPARC Federation	Responsible for liaising with EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations	Responsible for the international representation of the ECSTPA with institutions and the professional tourism sector ; communicating to EUROPARC members who can be potential new sustainable destinations.
EUROPARC Sections	Supporting EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations at national level, promoting network and exchange of experience; overseeing the process with Partners and Tour Operators	Main contact for the ECSTPA at national and regional level , both with authorities responsible for Protected Area management and tourism ; identifying and engaging potential new sustainable destinations .
Sustainable Destinations / Protected Areas	Responsible for engaging (and awarding) partners and tour operators with the ECSTPA methodology	The main contact with authorities, community, organisations and other stakeholders at local level . Responsible also for engaging with potential tour operators (incoming agencies and local guides) and main promoter of the ECSTPA with visitors.
Partners and Tour Operators	Providing information to Protected Areas and EUROPARC Sections	The main contact with visitors , potential and <i>in situ</i> . Tour operators and tourism partners also contribute to the connection with other national and international tourism agencies .

3. Branding

The (Brand) Purpose *Why the ECSTPA?*

Quality Sustainable Tourism is good for Parks and good for People.

The Vision *What do we want to accomplish?*

Sustainable Tourism in European Protected Areas provide a meaningful quality experience, safeguards natural and cultural values, supports local livelihoods and quality of life and is economically viable.

The Mission *How are we going to achieve it?*

Through awarding the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, EUROPARC seeks to safeguard cultural and natural values by stimulating quality sustainable tourism, engendering partnerships to support local livelihoods, increase awareness of the need for sustainability, and promote international cooperation.

“A *brand* is the sum of how someone perceives a particular organisation/ product. *Branding* is about shaping that perception”

Ashley Friedlein

3. Branding

The Brand Identity *Core values and Story line*

The brand core values

Union & Connection
Care & Respect
Dynamism
Sustainability

The brand story

The Charter is about bringing people together, provide them a framework to work collaboratively, towards becoming a sustainable destination.

Sustainability is a continuous process of enhancing quality with all local actors.

3. Branding

The Brand Elements *verbal*

Name EUROPARC Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas

Slogan matches the brand purpose *“Quality Sustainable Tourism is good for Parks and good for People”*

Name of the network

- For internal audiences in the transition phase:
Charter Network
- For external audiences: **EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations**

Hashtags

#EUROPARCSustainableDestination(s)

#EUROPARCSustainableTourism (methodology)

#SustainableTourism

The use of #ECST #ECSTPA #CETS #CETD will remain during the transition period.

3. Branding

The Brand Elements *graphics*



Logotype

Composition: Bringing people around the table

Dots: The 5 principles of Sustainable Tourism



Star: The excellence of our Sustainable Destinations

EUROPARC
Sustainable Tourism
in Protected Areas

Connection to EUROPARC logotype

Aim of the Charter

3. Branding

The Brand Elements *graphics*

Colours



EUROPARC blue



Charter Yellow



Grey

4. Positioning & Key Messages

Where do we stand in relation to other similar methodologies for Protected Areas?

**Leading the way in
Sustainable Tourism for
Europe's Protected
Areas.**

*The positioning and key messages help us identifying and reinforcing the added value of the Charter:
a renowned methodology designed to support European Protected Areas achieving Sustainable Tourism.*

4. Positioning & Key Messages

Key messages

1) The Charter means working together with all local stakeholders towards one direction, making sustainable tourism a sign of identity of the territory.

Main targets: local stakeholders, business partners and local tour operators

2) The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is an internationally recognised methodology for sustainable tourism management.

Main targets: tourism sector, international organisations, sponsors, partners, potential Sustainable Destinations

3) EUROPARC Sustainable Destinations provide authentic and high quality touristic experiences, protecting the environment whilst bringing social and economic benefits to the local communities.

Main targets: tourism sector, local, regional and national authorities, visitors



EUROPARC
Sustainable Tourism
in Protected Areas

Communications Action Plan

From Marketing to Brand activation
Implementing the Action Plan
Detailed Action Plan
Timeline



1. From Marketing to Communications and Brand Activation

Product, Price, Place (or distribution), Promotion

	Product The ECSTPA phases	Price	Distribution	Promotion
	Charter for Sustainable Destinations	Keep prices	<p>EUROPARC directorate manages the process.</p> <p>EUROPARC Sections promote in their countries/ regions and support Protected Areas in the application process (in Italy and Spain).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECSTPA section on EUROPARC website • Social media internal network • Institutional brochure, flyers and guidelines • Promotion of case studies & best practice • Magic Numbers • Mentoring programme • Merchandise • Training and capacity building programmes • Communications toolkit
Communication objectives	Increase reputation of the ECSTPA methodology	Increase transparency and value for the money	Empower Sections for a stronger promotion and support to Destinations in their regions/countries.	Increase brand awareness of the Charter Establish a stronger internal network

1. From Marketing to Communications and Brand Activation

Product, Price, Place (or distribution), Promotion

	Product The ECSTPA phases	Price	Distribution	Promotion
	Charter for Sustainable Partners	Varies within each country	Process agreed by the Federation, managed by Sections. Partners are directly awarded by Protected Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECSTPA section- EUROPARC website • Communications toolkit • Inspiration for Parks to better support their partners (toolkit energy saving, best practice)
Communication objectives	Increase retention of Partners committed	Account the benefits implementing the standards (value for the effort)	Empower Protected Areas to better support the implementation of the methodology	Provide tools for Partners to communicate their commitment to sustainability. Increase visibility.

1. From Marketing to Communications and Brand Activation

Product, Price, Place (or distribution), Promotion

	Product The ECSTPA phases	Price	Distribution	Promotion
	Charter for Sustainable Tour Operators	Varies within each country	Process agreed by the Federation, managed by Sections. In France, a national committee manages the process of application and certification, but are the Protected Areas who engage with Tour Operators and promote	Exchanging programme for Tour Operators across the different Destinations
Communication objectives	Increase interest of Tour operators working with the ECTPA	Increase benefits for joining the network	Empower Protected Areas and National Committees to better support the implementation of the methodology	Increase cooperation within the network of certified Tour Operators

2. Implementing the Action Plan: Responsibilities

Why we need a strong network

a) Sustainable Destinations

Provide:

- Connection at **local level** with the managing authorities
- Ensures the continuous involvement of the **Stakeholders forum**
- Seeks to **engage Partners and Tour Operators** for the implementation of methodology Part II and Part III
- Actively **shares good practices** with the Network of Sustainable Destination, both at local, national and international level
- **Widely promotes** the European Charter methodology and the outcomes of its implementation
- **Displays the charter logo** in merchandising and all online and offline products

2. Implementing the Action Plan: Responsibilities

Why we need a strong network

a) Sustainable Destinations

Sustainable Destinations give to EUROPARC Federation and Sections:

- Information about best practices/ examples;
- List of needs for both training and tools;
- List of topics that would like to have covered in webinars (national language and international);
- Suggestions for tour operators at international / national level
- The contact for regional tourism agencies for joint promotion of the charter

2. Implementing the Action Plan: Responsibilities

Why we need a strong network

a) Sustainable Destinations

Sustainable Destinations give to Partners:

- Information about the Protected area natural & cultural values
- Description of clear benefits of belonging to the network
- Seduces partners to join / sign cooperation agreement
- Gives tips on how to make a more efficient use of resources (energy, etc)

Sustainable Destinations give to tour operators certified:

- Training about the park and natural features;
- Description of clear benefits of belonging to the network
- Information and guidance on how to communicate the ECSTPA (in terms of logo usage and key messages to get across)

2. Implementing the Action Plan: Responsibilities

Why we need a strong network

a) Sustainable Destinations

Sustainable Destinations give to visitors

- Information about the Park
- Inspires for nature protection and preservation of natural & cultural heritage
- Shares the ECSTPA story and how they are working together with partners for sust. Development

2. Implementing the Action Plan: Responsibilities

Why we need a strong network

b) EUROPARC Directorate

- **Ow**ns the copyright to all charter methodology and branding
- **Permission (and withdrawal of permission)** to use all branding material and any official Charter documentation
- **Guidelines on how to use the brand and communicate** the ECSTPA
- **Assessment and evaluation** of Charter applications
- **Training of Verifiers**
- Undertakes all **administration and financial management** of the Charter
- Awarding of Charter
- High-profile **Charter Award ceremony**
- Development of projects that bring development, tools and benefits to the Charter network.
- Liaison with sections and all other interested parties on **development of Charter methodologies**
- **Authorisation of methodologies** for charter II – Partners and Charter III – tour operators
- **Official information about the ECSTPA**

2. Implementing the Action Plan: Responsibilities

Why we need a strong network

b) EUROPARC Directorate

- **Advise and information** about charter to all external enquiries
- **Represent the charter network** globally
- Ensures international visibility
- **Sets up and manages internal commission** to develop the work of the Charter and the wider sustainable tourism issues.
- Maintain the **master contact list** of all Charter awarded areas
- Plans and supports the delivery of a 2 yearly **Charter Network Meeting** hosted by one of the Charter members
- Organises, plans and delivers an annual **sustainable tourism related workshop** (usually in EUROPARC conference)
- Oversees the **development of charter internationally**
- **Magic numbers** assessment and results
- **Reports** to EUROPARC Council

2. Implementing the Action Plan: Responsibilities

Why we need a strong network

b) EUROPARC Directorate

EUROPARC Directorate gives to Sustainable Destinations:

- Platform for **experience exchange** (facebook, case studies form)
- **Training** (on communications & capacity building – with life Edu)
- **Networking events** (Charter network meeting and Webinars)
- **Guidelines and toolkit** to better implement the different phases of the ECSTPA (for sustainable destinations, divided in 5 areas following the application form; to support them supporting partners)
- **Comms Toolkit** for Destinations **“How to tell the Story of My Destination?”**
- Regular information on trimestral newsletter
- Qualitative mid-term review for each 5 years’ period

2. Implementing the Action Plan: Responsibilities

Why we need a strong network

b) EUROPARC Directorate

EUROPARC Directorate gives to Sections:

- numbers of the Charter
- Support in the development of Communication Tools
- Agreement with the definition of the Charter Methodologies part II and part III
- Acknowledges the responsibilities for the national management of the network of Sustainable Destinations, Partners and Tour Operators awarded

EUROPARC Directorate gives to Partners & Tour Operators:

- List of benefits of belonging to the network and access to the international network
- Networking events (Charter network meeting and Webinars)
- Comms Toolkit for partners **“What makes me different?”**
- Inspiration and examples from other businesses
- Award system based on environmental performance

2. Implementing the Action Plan: Responsibilities

Why we need a strong network

c) EUROPARC Sections

Provide:

- **Connection** between the Directorate and the Sustainable Destinations and Partners awarded
- Represents the Charter at National level, within Protected Area management and tourism Authorities
- **Engages with regional and local administrations** for the promotion and expansion of the Charter Network
- Develops, updates and improves the implementation of methodologies Part II and Part III
- Follows the Sustainable Tourism agenda at national level and assures the recognition of the Charter methodology

2. Implementing the Action Plan: Responsibilities

Why we need a strong network

c) EUROPARC Sections

EUROPARC Sections give to EUROPARC Directorate:

- The updates from the country / region
- Number and list of partners and tour operators awarded
- Suggestions of case studies and good practices from the network
- The needs of the network at national level
- Translation of the official communications materials and guidelines in native language

2. Implementing the Action Plan: Responsibilities

Why we need a strong network

c) EUROPARC Sections

EUROPARC Sections give to Sustainable Destinations:

- Updated information about the ECSTPA in native language
- Support the technical implementation of the methodology Part I by parks
- Overview the technical implementation of the methodology for partners and tour operators
- Annual meeting for the network at national level and annual webinar in native language

EUROPARC Sections give to Partners & Tour Operators:

- Manage/overview the technical implementation of the methodology for partners and tour operators
- Support to Parks implementing Part II and Part III

3. The Action Plan in a nutshell

STRATEGY

Write strategy 2018-2022
Create short version + presentation
Mid-term review
Analyse network expectations
Develop new strategy 2023-2028

MEETINGS

Charter Awards*
Bi-annual Network Meeting **
Annual Seminar CETS in Spain
Annual meeting in France
Meeting in Italy

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Review brand guidelines
Review agreement contracts
Design Certificates II and III
Update brochure Good for Parks
Promotional Film
Annual digital strategy
Promotional tools for Parks
Promotional tools for Partners
Customisable flyer/placard for Destinations
Facebook group activation
Promoting best practices and regular info
Trimestral Newsletters in English
Bronze, silver, gold Destinations for Mentoring programme

3. The Action Plan in a nutshell

TRAINING AND TOOLS

Communications Toolkit for Parks “How to tell the Story of My Destination?”

Communications training for Parks (TBD)

Communications Toolkit for Partners “What makes me different?”

Toolkit (Parks) implementation part II & III

Webinar Destinations (1/year in English; 1/year in each language)

Webinar for Tour Operators (tbd)

Webinar for Partners

Best practices on eco-friendly measures

Mentoring Programme

Visitor management tool + quality control

NETWORK MANAGEMENT

Collect information about Partners

Update Parks within the network

Define qualitative mid-term review system

Define benefits of TOs to join the network

Guidelines for TOs - network

Exchange programme for Partners & TOs

1 park certified outside of Europe

DATA COLLECTION

Methodology Partners – Environmental impact

Charter Magic Numbers Results 2018

Digital infographics and presentation for the Magic numbers

Short Comms plan for Magic number

Prepare new simplified survey

4. Detailed Action Plan & Provisional Timeline

PDF version

The activities mentioned before should be taken into consideration by **Sustainable Destinations** when writing their five years Action Plan; and by the **EUROPARC Federation** and **EUROPARC Sections** when defining their annual work plans.

5. Revision

- 1) Space for discussion about the implementation every Charter Network Meeting (2019, 2021)
- 2) **Mid-term review in 2020**
- 3) **2022** internal analysis to build up next strategy

Working together



to show how

quality Sustainable Tourism is
good for Parks and good for
People.



Short history of Communication



CONNECT NOW!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/europarc.charter.parks/>



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