

Celebrating 100 Years of National Parks in Europe

Morwenna Parkyn, Carol Ritchie

The EUROPARC Federation



Summary

In 2009 Europe celebrates the 100th anniversary of the establishment of its first nine national parks in Sweden. To mark this occasion the EUROPARC Federation, the foremost and largest NGO representing European protected areas in 39 countries, has developed the project "Celebrating 100 Years of National Parks in Europe". The project aims to proclaim anew the values and benefits of National Parks across Europe and examine their 100 years of history and runs from September 2008 to September 2010.

Keywords

National Parks, Europe, 100 Years, Anniversary, Protected Areas, EUROPARC

Europe's protected areas are the life support system of the continent and the repository of its iconic landscapes and cultural treasures. Our national parks are reservoirs of biodiversity, sources of water, cultural and economic assets and places of recreation and spiritual replenishment. They also play an important role in reducing and adapting to the effects of climate change as well as in the realization of the CBD (Convention on Biodiversity) guidelines.

In 2009 Europe celebrates the 100th anniversary of the establishment of its first nine national parks in Sweden. To mark this occasion the EUROPARC Federation, the foremost and largest NGO representing European protected areas in 39 countries, has developed the project "Celebrating 100 Years of National Parks in Europe". The project aims to proclaim anew the values and benefits of National Parks across Europe and examine their 100 years of history and runs from September 2008 to September 2010.

This project does not focus on scientific research as such but achieves its objective through a number of project activities. The main project outcome will be a publication, whose main purpose is to bring the idea of national parks and nature conservation in Europe, their relevance to European society over the last 100 years and their role in the future of the continent closer to the general public. It will present this information in a tangible, accessible and engaging way and targets those working in protected area management and visitors to and advocates of National Parks. It will be launched at the EUROPARC Conference in 2009 (9 – 13 September).

The book will be mainly visual and will be divided into four main parts:

Part 1 - General information on European national parks, their benefits and values, plus a map and information about protected areas with the same IUCN designation as national parks.

Part 2 – Information, critique and concrete examples highlighting the development of national parks and conservation in Europe over the last 100 years

Part 3 – Profiles of the first national park founded in each EUROPARC member country

Part 4 – What does the future hold for national parks and nature conservation in Europe?

The project will investigate and present the development of national parks in Europe over the last 100 years and will also look to the future of nature conservation, the possibilities or issues that could develop in this field over the next 100 years. This perspective should not only help protected areas across Europe but also other stakeholders in nature conservation to reflect on past issues and solutions and learn from these for the management of protected areas over the next generations. In addition, the project outcomes ensure a greater publicity of these issues and the topic of nature protection and national parks across Europe, raising the profile of Europe's national parks, their management and the role of protected areas in Europe in general.

Other outcomes of the project will include a timeline depicting the last 100 years with information on European national parks at the year they were founded and a mobile exhibition also presenting the pictures and short texts about the first protected area founded in each European country. The exhibition will travel around Europe's capitals from September and will also focus in on the topics of biodiversity and climate change. The centenary of European National Parks will also be celebrated at this year's EUROPARC Conference "100 years of National Parks in Europe. A shared inheritance; A common future", in Sweden in September.

Contact

Morwenna Parkyn
m.parkyn@europarc.org

The EUROPARC Federation
P.O. Box 1153
94475 Grafenau
Germany