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**T-PVS/DE (2013) 5**

**CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE AND  
NATURAL HABITATS**

**GROUP OF SPECIALISTS – EUROPEAN DIPLOMA OF PROTECTED AREAS  
26 MARCH 2013, STRASBOURG  
ROOM G04, AGORA**

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**APPRAISAL REPORT  
POLONINY NATIONAL PARK  
SLOVAK REPUBLIC**

*Document prepared by Mr Hervé Lethier, (Switzerland)*

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## AIM OF THE MISSION

According to the engagement letter<sup>1</sup>, the mission aimed to :

- visit the diploma holding area ;
- discuss the different issues with the local stakeholders ;
- analyze the difficulties encountered to implement the conditions and recommendations attached to the last renewal (**Annex 1**).

The detailed programme of the mission is attached to the present report (**Annex 2**).

This report takes into account the comments of the State party on the draft version (December 2012), with the agreement of the expert. It is considered as the final version of the mission report.

## II OVERALL ASSESSMENT

While affected over the past years by unsustainable uses and activities and by a lack of a clear vision on its management, the area still meets the general criteria on the basis of which the European diploma was awarded in 1998 and renewed in 2003 and 2008.

It still has an “**exceptional European interest**” from the point of view of conservation of the biological, geological and landscape diversity.

### II-1 Various matters

The diploma holding area is however under growing anthropogenic pressure, threatening it seriously; those threats have increased continuously since the 2007 mission, mostly due to intensive logging. The integrity of the area has also been affected by specific works during the same period of time, while others could endanger it in the future will they are achieved:

- since 2007, **an antenna** was built within the diploma holding area, very near the border of one of the strict nature reserves that is also listed on the World Heritage ;
- the State Party (Ministry of Interior) has planned **to deforest a 100m strip of land at the border with Ukraine**, within the diploma holding area, for so-called “security reasons”. Based on the information available during the mission, this border area would be similar to the one existing outside and near the diploma holding area (**Picture 1**). If done, this work will affect several strict nature reserves located within the diploma holding area and listed also on the World Heritage ;

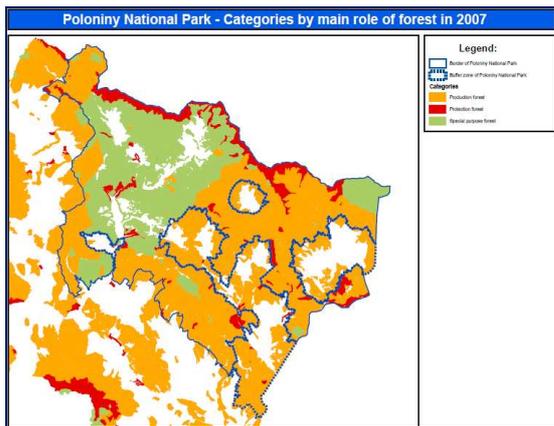


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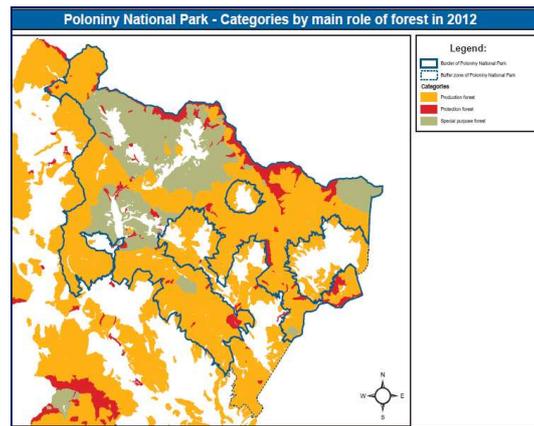
<sup>1</sup> CoE - EGF/ml1-20 September 2012.

**Picture 1** – deforested area at the border of Ukraine, near the diploma holding area visible in the back (Source : EMC2I).

- **production forests** with intensive logging have been extended within the diploma holding area, since the 2007 mission (**Maps 1 and 2**) ; the size of those forests has significantly increased, while the surface of the protected zone has decreased. Further extension would also be planned in some parts of the diploma holding area that may be strictly protected in the future. The logging issue is still very controversial and according to local NGO’s information - to be confirmed - logging is also planned within existing strict nature reserves, like in Grunik Nature Reserve where however, according to the State party, logging would favor conservation of a typical plant species (*Helleborus purpurensis*) ; this point needs to be checked further.

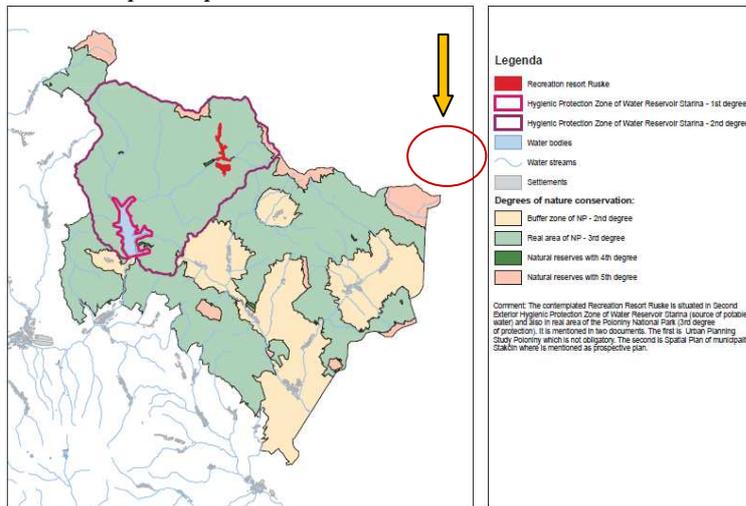


**Map 1** – PNP zoning in 2007 (Source : PNP).



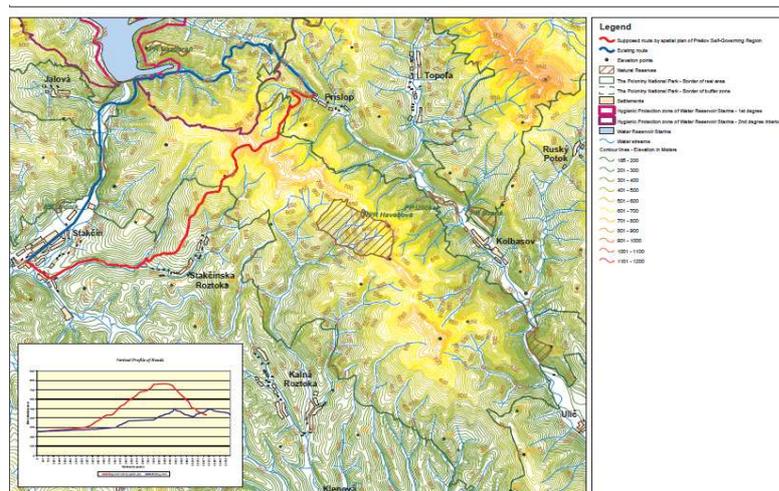
**Map 2** – PNP zoning in 2012 (Source : PNP).

- **construction of new recreational facilities** are planned within the diploma holding area, near the former village of Ruské, in the core zone of PNP (**Map 3**) ; this project is part of a larger programme of activities quoted in the “*Poloniny urbanistic study*” and the “*Stakcin spatial plan*”;



**Map 3** – PNP, Ruske recreational resort (Source: PNP).

- **construction of a new road between Stakcin and Prislop** is also under discussion (**Map 4**) ;



Map 4 – Road construction project (Source : PNP).

The mission collected also updated information on the following important matters :

- **hunting activities** : **Table 1** shows data on hunting districts covering the diploma holding area (**Map 5**) ; half of the 19 districts cover less than 3 000 ha and several of them are located only partly in the diploma holding area. Information on the state of conservation of wolf was also collected during the visit ; according to the State Party, 15 to 20 wolves would live within the diploma area, in three packs. In absence of clear monitoring system, it is however not easy to know the exact situation and the tendencies. **Table 2** shows the wolf annual harvest, since the 2007 mission ; the number of wolves killed every year in the diploma holding area tends to decrease on the referred period of time, while the shooting season was shortened in 2012<sup>2</sup> ;

Number	Hunting District	Number of Hunting Region	Hunting Region	Area calculated from coverage of Poloniny NP	Area calculated from coverage of NFC Zvolen	Stretches into real area of Poloniny NP	Stretches into buffer zone of Poloniny NP	Expire year of lease
				Square meters				
1.	Beskyd	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	46362360,84	46412849,27	yes	yes	2019
2.	Bukovec	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	24059750,3	24048839,92	yes	yes	2014
3.	Javorník	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	25177654,22	25174143,26	yes	yes	2019
4.	Jeseník	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	36203808,56	36136012,08	yes	yes	2019
5.	Kolodník	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	30008653,31	29999738,28	yes	yes	2019
6.	Kolonička	JXX	Vihorlat	64625814,34	64554093,33	marginally	no	2015
7.	Kosmatec	JXX	Vihorlat	22287859,05	22244335,38	no	yes	2016
8.	Kyčera	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	34814143,2	34811330,58	yes	no	2016
9.	Maguriča	JXX	Vihorlat	54453660,05	54491952,48	yes	no	2015
10.	Molyšov	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	22529143,3	22527718,68	marginally	no	2014
11.	Nastaz	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	43747970,2	43823061,13	yes	yes	2012
12.	Pčolín	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	41691368,92	41680354,18	yes	no	2019
13.	Polana	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	21479653,73	21560721,43	yes	no	2013
14.	Polon	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	24801863,22	24808998,61	yes	yes	2019
15.	Romanovo	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	21544745,08	21542597,14	yes	no	2014
16.	Ruské	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	28540728,62	28538572,21	yes	no	2014
17.	Starina	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	31319658,02	31261987,16	yes	yes	2013
18.	Strub	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	35491605,12	35409998,02	yes	no	2013
19.	Veža	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	19846984,2	19849210,89	yes	yes	2012
20.	Vysina	JXXIV	Polominské Karpaty	22694620,22	22717208,66	yes	yes	2017

- hunting district with surface area higher than 3000 ha  
 - hunting district with surface area lesser than 2000 ha

Table 1 – PNP hunting districts (Source : PNP).

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
N	6	5	8	3	3	3

Table 2 – Wolf hunting annual harvest in the diploma holding area, 2007-2012 period (Source : PNP).

<sup>2</sup> Regulation n°125/2012 (wolf shooting is now allowed from 1<sup>st</sup> November to 15<sup>th</sup> January).



More importantly, the absence of management plan for the whole area does not comply with the regulation of the European diploma.

The State party has been urged to adopt and implement a management plan for this area since 1998 when the protected area was awarded ; **fifteen years later and after several decisions of the Committee of Ministers conditioning the renewal of the diploma to the adoption and implementation of a management plan covering all uses and activities performed within the area, no official decision has yet been taken.** No clear and comprehensive explanation has been given by the State party why this process has still not be completed and require so much time, the 2012 annual report referring to “*on-going problems*” linked to “*repeated public tender*”, so that the diploma holding area cannot be seen as managed “*in an exemplary way*”, in the sense of the regulation of the European diploma (**Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1**).

In addition to the serious threats mentioned here above and to the significant damage which have been caused to the area by logging activities in particular affecting its integrity, the State Party has faced continuously, over the years, serious difficulties in implementing the conditions attached to the decisions of the Committee of Ministers. Although progress were made in some specific fields, most conditions and recommendations attached to the award of the diploma in 1998, as well as to its renewals in 2003 and 2008, have still not been fulfilled by the State Party :

- based on available information and documents collected during the visit, illegal activities would still be performed and were recently promoted on the web, inside the diploma holding area (e.g.: publicity for hunting protected large carnivores which is an illegal activity) ;
- instead of being increased as requested by the Committee of Ministers in 2008, the size of the “protected forests” have decreased since the 2007 mission, both in the core zone of the diploma holding area and in its buffer zone, while, as said before, the size of the “production forests” has increased significantly ;
- while progress has been made on some species (e.g. : brown bear survey, establishment of a national large carnivore group, implementation of a Bison management plan), knowledge on the state of conservation and tendencies of the main features of the diploma holding area on the basis of which the diploma was awarded, is still lacking, especially on large carnivores. A comprehensive monitoring programme of biodiversity is still needed, otherwise the PNP administration will never be able to manage the diploma holding area so as to guarantee the long-term preservation of its features and the maintenance of its European interest ;
- some efforts were done very recently to experiment “selective cutting” as well as various forest management techniques<sup>6</sup> ; however this experimentation covers only 5% of the overall surface of the diploma holding area and cannot be seen as a appropriate response to the condition attached to the last renewal to design a strategic plan for forest management.

### **III IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE RENEWAL OF THE EUROPEAN DIPLOMA<sup>7</sup>**

#### **III.1 Conditions**

- *Condition 1 - finalize and adopt the management plan for the park within two years of the renewal*

<sup>6</sup> Programme implemented in the Nizna Jablonka forestry unit since 2012 (1400 ha) (Source : PNP).

<sup>7</sup> CM/ResDip(2008)3.

As said above, no management plan has been adopted and even elaborated since 2008 when the diploma was renewed. The management of the diploma holding area is still led by a document adopted 20 years ago<sup>8</sup> and based on the “*forest care programmes*” focused on the economic exploitation of the forest resources.

**This key condition is not considered as fulfilled ; the State Party should be urged to complete this process in the nearest future.**

- ***Condition 2 - start work on devising a new blueprint for forestry and hunting management in the diploma-holding area, taking greater account of the biological imperatives dictated by its European significance, within one year of the renewal.***

The national authorities were requested to supply a strategic plan for the sustainable development of the woodland during the next period of validity of the diploma and to inform the Group of Specialists on the Diploma each year of the progress made.

It was also expected that this blueprint will include revision of the current hunting allocation in the diploma-holding area, ensuring that the each functional unit covers a surface area of 3 000 to 4 000 hectares, consistent with the biology of large mammals

Progress mentioned above has been made since the 2007 mission, but the current situation cannot be considered as responding fully to this condition.

- forest management still needs to be addressed in a more strategic way ; further attention should be paid to the preservation of the forest, as part of the European heritage, in more sustainable and protective way ;
- hunting is allowed in the whole diploma holding area except in the strict nature reserves which cover only 7% of this area ; game activities remain an important issue that leads to adapt also game management and regulation, in a more exemplary way ; efforts against illegal hunting activities and probably poaching should also be strengthened.

**Condition 2 is not considered as fulfilled as well. The State Party should be urged to implement it fully in the nearest future.**

- ***Condition 3 - create a functional network of protected areas during the next period of validity, meeting international standards in this area and complying with the national Law on Nature and Landscape Protection (notably sections 28 and 30)***

The process to establish three (3) new strict nature reserves covering 1165 ha, is on going ; it has not been finalized yet and there are remaining issues to solve, in relation to logging activities that are still allowed within some of those areas.

Consequently, the existing network of protected areas has not improved, six years after the last appraisal mission. **The State Party should be urged again to speed up this process and to extend it to other areas of European interest, the current situation being not considered satisfactory as well.**

- ***Condition 4 – pursue the steps taken to purchase private forests and draw up a future purchasing plan with specific objectives, indicating the funding to be assigned to this purpose each year.***

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<sup>8</sup> Act. N°543/2002 (Source : PNP).

No offer has been made by private owners since the 2007 mission and the situation has not changed concretely. **The State Party should be encouraged to be more proactive and it should be invited to strengthen its action on that matter.**

- *Condition 5 – set up a scientific programme inventorying and monitoring the large carnivore populations in the diploma-holding area*

Valuable efforts have been made since the 2007 mission, dedicated to specific research activities (e.g. : brown bear, birds, ...), thanks partly to EU funding<sup>9</sup> ; a national working group on large carnivores was also set up in 2011 and scientific cooperation with the surrounding countries was also developed.

**The State Party should be acknowledged for those efforts. It should be also encouraged to go further in the establishment of a strong baseline of information and data on biodiversity in the diploma holding area, additional efforts being needed to get a clear and comprehensive view of the state of conservation of the key species and their habitats, in line with the EU Habitats directive (art. 17), as well<sup>10</sup>.**

### III.2 Recommendations to the renewal

- *Recommendation 1 - give the management of the diploma-holding area greater responsibility for forestry and hunting matters and involve it in the corresponding decision-making process*

The PNP administration is now involved in the “*hunting process*”, however its role remains very weak and not sufficient to expect a strong improvement of game management, meeting the European diploma standards and requirements.

The situation is similar in forest management ; the PNP cooperates with the forest managers as expert, however as said above, only few progress can be reported since the 2007 mission ; the PNP administration does not still participate to the decision making process and is only able to recommend or suggest, but not to contribute in the decision itself.

**The State Party should be commended for its efforts in adapting the present regulation and update the national Act on nature protection ; this process is however not yet completed and this new regulation that would strengthen apparently the role of the Pas managers, still needs to be endorsed by the government.**

**The State Party should be strongly encouraged to complete this legal process as soon as possible and to strengthen the technical cooperation between all stakeholders developing activities within the diploma holding area that may, like logging, impact the value of the diploma holding area and affect its integrity.**

- *Recommendation 2 - consider the signature of a simplified agreement between the bodies directly responsible for managing the protected areas on the borders of the three neighbouring countries (Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine), based on the programming of joint activities*

This process is still on-going and a bilateral agreement was signed in 2011 with the Uzhansky NP administration, in Ukraine.

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<sup>9</sup> Project “Research and monitoring of large carnivores and wild cat populations in Slovakia”.

<sup>10</sup> the establishment of a monitoring system of wildlife within the diplomed area, is progressing but still needs to be improved (cf. § (ii), p 2 (Additional data for PNP, with respect to implementation of the Res. of the Committee of Ministers (2008)3, 2012, 3p.).

**The State Party should be congratulated for this agreement and encouraged to complete the on-going process of signature of a trilateral agreement with Ukraine and Poland as well ; both other countries should also be encouraged to finalize this process.**

- *Recommendation 3 - . pursue efforts to upgrade human resources, in particular by taking on more technical staff and wardens, and very substantially step up funding, at least doubling the annual ratio per hectare for the period of validity of the diploma*

As mentioned above, the human capacities of the diploma holding area have remained stable since the last mission and the budget has increased significantly. **The State Party should be thanked for its efforts in a difficult economic context, and it should be encouraged to continue in stepping up those capacities in the future.**

- *Recommendation 4 - give full protection to wolves and ban shooting them throughout the area of the national park*

Wolf hunting is still allowed on 93% of the territory of the diploma holding area ; this activity is regulated<sup>11</sup> and the wolf hunting season was shortened in 2012 ; in the light of the data provided to the expert, the official number of wolves killed in the diploma holding area, decreased since the 2007 mission.

In 2012, recommendations were made by experts, in conclusion of a bilateral meeting between Poland and Slovakia, to protect the wolf strictly – as well as the brown bear - along the national frontiers common to both countries and set up border ecological corridors where hunting is not allowed. If implemented, those measures would improve greatly the legal context in relation to the preservation of large carnivores.

**The State Party should be invited to implement those recommendations and requested to pursue its efforts towards the strict protection of the wolf within the diploma holding area.**

- *Recommendation 5 - strongly consider the designation of a hunting district within the park as a strict cynegetic reserve;*

No progress was made on that matter since the 2007 mission. **Table 1** shows that the hunting districts are leased for various durations; several contracts will expire in 2012 and the next few years. **The State Party should be requested to use this opportunity for adapting the design and regulations of the hunting districts, and to enlarge the areas within the PNP where hunting is banned, giving priority to the protection of functional ecological corridors that may be used by large mammals to move and develop** (see Rec. 4 and recommendations made by the bilateral expert group).

- *Recommendation 6 - pursue the efforts to restore buildings in the traditional regional style; the park might devise a charter of architectural rules for local authorities*

No progress has been done on that matter since 2007; the expert was not informed of any new project or measure in favor of the preservation of the cultural heritage in the diploma holding area and its surroundings, except some ancient and rare wooden churches that have been restored. A large part of this heritage has already been destroyed or degraded unfortunately.

This recommendation should be reiterated. **The State Party should be encouraged to develop a specific strategic project on that matter, in cooperation with the local municipalities, as a basis for developing rural sustainable economic activities in relation to the PNP and its natural heritage. The CoE could support this project through its own activities on cultural routes and preservation of cultural heritage.**

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<sup>11</sup> No more than 3 hunters with one dog.

- ***Recommendation 7 - start experimenting with the selective felling of beech forest in a state-owned woodland unit***

This recommendation relates closely to the **Condition 2**. Very few activities have been carried on that matter since the 2007 mission. It is hoped and expected that such experimentation will be developed at a large scale and in strategic way, thanks to the Swiss-Slovak project.

## CONCLUSION

The State Party met evident difficulties in the implementation of the 2008 decision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe; those difficulties come from various sources and, to be solved, will require a series of priority efforts from the State Party :

- **to confirm and strengthen its willingness to address those preservation and management issues, at national level** : at the last meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, November 2012, the delegate of the State Party appreciated the mission and informed that the country will do its best for implementing of the recommendations of the 2012 mission, after the official confirmation by the Minister;
- **to strengthen the cooperation between the relevant ministries at all levels, national and local**: the expert and the representative of the CoE had a conclusive meeting at the Ministry for environment, Bratislava, on 11<sup>th</sup> October, with the attendance of officials from the Ministry in charge of forest management ; all participants agreed on the necessity to strengthen the cooperation between both ministries at all levels, national and local. The expert was informed that further discussions and meetings were already held recently between those two ministries, giving a positive sign, from the State Party, for the success of the process to develop ;
- **to strengthen the legal capacities of the PNP administration to manage the diploma holding area** : clearly, the PNP administration doesn't have currently the legal capacities to manage the diploma holding area and to respond to the European diploma requirements and standards ; the State Party should take the appropriate measures to give the PNP administration the full and adequate legitimacy and capacity to implement the international commitments of Slovakia, related to the European diploma regulation ;
- **to set up a participatory approach at the local level, associating all stakeholders (officials, municipalities, NGOs, etc), to the management of the diploma holding area** : this approach should be established from the right beginning and at all phases of the management process ; it should start in the nearest future ;
- **to build up an overall vision for the preservation and development of the diploma holding area** : this vision should be common to all local stakeholders and compatible with the maintenance of the exceptional European interest of the diploma holding area and the full preservation of its integrity ;
- **to build up and guarantee an overall coherence between the various public policies** : this coherence should cover the following fields of activities : land use, forestry, hunting, tourism, preservation of landscape and biodiversity. The organization that is designated by the State Party responsible for the overall management of the diploma holding area, should lead the whole process.

Due to **(1)** the serious difficulties met by the State Party in implementing the conditions required by the renewal of the European diploma, **(2)** the significant damages noticed on the integrity of the

diploma holding area resulting from an unsustainable management, and **(3)** to the serious threats that put it in danger, **in the sense of art. 8 of the regulation of the European diploma**, the State Party should be requested to take the following official decision, as an appropriate protective measure:

*“(1) to develop a « **pilot project** » placed under the co-leading of the relevant ministries (environment, agriculture and land use), aiming (2) to elaborate, adopt and implement an overall management plan for the whole diploma holding area, throughout (3) a participatory approach that will associate all categories of stakeholders (State organizations and companies, local municipalities, NGOs, ...), from the beginning and throughout the process”.*

The development of this project should **(1)** be placed under the coordination of a **Pilot Committee**, **(2)** facilitated by the CoE and all other relevant international organizations (IUCN, UNESCO, EU amongst others), **(3)** be supported by external sources, at least partly, and **(4)** benefit preferably from **an external technical expertise**.

This process should start immediately and follows the here below time-frame. Following up its announcement made at the last meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, November 2012, the State Party should:

- **start** immediately the process of elaboration of an overall management plan for the diploma holding area, addressing all uses (land uses) and sectors of activities (logging, game, tourism, ...), in order to fulfill its obligations under the regulation of the European diploma, and commit **to complete** this process by the end of 2014 ;
- 
- by **February 2013** : submit a detailed concept of this project to the Secretariat of the Bern Convention, including a logical framework ;
- 
- in **March 2013**, submit this concept to the Group of specialists, for discussion and adoption ; this concept should detail the specific goals of the project (all uses and fields of activities covered), its governance (Pilot Committee membership) and its time-frame, the methodology used (ex.: seminars, expertise, ...) ;
- in **November 2013**, report on the on-going process to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention ;
- by **February 2014**, submit a first draft of the management plan to the Group of specialists, for comment ;
- by **November 2014**, submit the last draft of the management plan to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, for adoption, and commit on providing appropriate capacities, including funding capacities, to complete it ;
- in **January 2015** at the latest, start the full implementation of the management plan and then report on its implementation to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, on a regular basis, in the annual reports.

In the event of failure to comply with the here above provisions, should any of the mentioned activities be not performed timely, **it is recommended that the European diploma be withdrawn immediately, according to the art. 8 of the regulation of the European diploma.**

**Finally, it is strongly suggested that a coordination meeting be held early 2013, with the attendance of representatives of the State Party, the Secretariat and the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, as well as the other international organizations directly concerned, namely UNESCO/World Heritage Centre, IUCN/WCPA-WH Programmes and EU.**

This meeting would aim to finalize the design of this process, and to facilitate appropriate fund raising activities to complete it.

## **Annex 1**

### **Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)3 on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Poloniny National Park (Slovakia)**

**(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 2 July 2008 at the 1031st meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)**

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.a of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Having regard to Resolution (65) 6 instituting the European Diploma, as amended by Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1 on the revised regulations for the European Diploma of Protected Areas;

Having regard to Resolution (98) 26 awarding the European Diploma to the Poloniny National Park (Slovakia);

Taking into consideration the expert's report presented at the meeting of the Group of Specialists on the European Diploma of Protected Areas on 17 and 18 March 2008;

Having regard to the proposals of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention;

Renews the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Poloniny National Park until 18 September 2013;

Attaches the following conditions to the renewal:

- finalise and adopt the management plan for the park within two years of the renewal;
- start work on devising a new blueprint for forestry and hunting management in the diploma-holding area, taking greater account of the biological imperatives dictated by its European significance, within one year of the renewal. The national authorities shall supply a strategic plan for the sustainable development of the woodland during the next period of validity of the diploma and inform the Group of Specialists on the Diploma each year of the progress made. This blueprint shall include revision of the current hunting allocation in the diploma-holding area, ensuring that the functional units each cover a surface area of 3 000 to 4 000 hectares, consistent with the biology of large herbivores;
- create a functional network of protected areas during the next period of validity, meeting international standards in this area and complying with the national Law on Nature and Landscape Protection (notably sections 28 and 30);
- pursue the steps taken to purchase private forests and draw up a future purchasing plan with specific objectives, indicating the funding to be assigned to this purpose each year;
- set up a scientific programme inventorying and monitoring the large carnivore populations in the diploma-holding area; the national authorities shall submit the scientific protocol for that programme for opinion to the Group of Specialists on the Diploma within one year of the renewal;

Attaches the following recommendations to the renewal:

1. give the management of the diploma-holding area greater responsibility for forestry and hunting matters and involve it in the corresponding decision-making process;

2. consider the signature of a simplified agreement between the bodies directly responsible for managing the protected areas on the borders of the three neighbouring countries (Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine), based on the programming of joint activities;
3. pursue efforts to upgrade human resources, in particular by taking on more technical staff and wardens, and very substantially step up funding, at least doubling the annual ratio per hectare for the period of validity of the diploma;
4. give full protection to wolves and ban shooting them throughout the area of the national park;
5. strongly consider the designation of a hunting district within the park as a strict cynegetic reserve;
6. pursue the efforts to restore buildings in the traditional regional style; the park might devise a charter of architectural rules for local authorities;
7. start experimenting with the selective felling of beech forest in a state-owned woodland unit; the national authorities shall inform the Group of Specialists on the Diploma each year of the progress made.

## **Annex 2**

### **AGENDA OF THE MISSION**

#### **8/9 October**

Geneva-Humenné (flight + overnight train)

#### **9 October**

morning : meeting with the staff of the Poloniny National Park (PNP)

afternoon : field visit of the PNP

late afternoon : meeting with local NGO (Wolf)

evening : meeting with PNP staff and Ministry of environment (MINENV)

#### **10 October**

morning : meeting with local stakeholders

afternoon : Snina-Bratislava (car)

#### **11 October**

morning : meeting at the MINENV with Ministry of agriculture and land use and secretariat of the Bern Convention

afternoon : departure Bratislava-Geneva

evening : arrival Geneva