

Recommendations and Proposals for development on Friends of Parks Network activities

This report is listing and summarizing the development ideas produced by participants of the seminar.

1. Proposals on national level; Case Finland

Key question:

How would you develop the friends of the national parks activity in Finland after hearing six presentations of Finnish models for Friends of Parks? Write down 1-2 ideas.

The proposals listed in the seminar:

- Develop Junior Ranger movement locally
- Youth+Senior together work for nature
- Have clear responsible coordinators
- Local activities and the self-helping-power to future network
- To involve private sector
- Adopt sites locally
- Ask the big NGOs for special parks help the local park NGOs
- Provide facilities and food
- Provide a place for the NGOs
- Find out to activate different groups not just nature people
- Inform and get contacts to local hunting clubs –cooperation with them
- Use of new media – fb and so on
- Parks & Wildlife staff more actively involved (but not the wrong way)
- New ways to reward the most active and innovative ones
- Make a communication project to active people to join friends of the national parks
- More publicity to associations (together) – helps find volunteers
- Have a clear website
- Make it easy them to join in
- Sharing best practice from Leivonmäki
- Increase awareness that such organizations exists
- Ease of accessibility to associations (actual logistics, practical approach)
- Show them the difference they can make.
- Some co-operating with the association of nature conservation of Finland could be done
- Working together
- Mutual strategy government-friends
- Seed money from government to friends
- Strengthen the position of friends vs other actors
- A nationwide Junior Ranger for parks involvement
- To make some competition between existing and potential friends, for example, competition of the best event in the national park
- Involve all Finnish parks to develop park friends

- Don't get in to attach the honour of volunteer war to the beast of official administration
- Communication between the Finnish associations
- To involve private sector (national companies)
- Foundation for the friends of the parks project (no local NGOs)

Summary

Three main groups of actions were proposed. These are:

1. Develop the means of communication between the Friends of the national parks, between Parks & Wildlife Finland and the Friend groups and the Friends and NGOs on national level
2. Develop communication about the activities of Friends and create easy-access actions and events for parks, which show the importance of volunteering in all age and target groups.
3. Sustain the resources and the development of the Friends thru for example a supporting organisation for the Friends activities.

2. Proposals on international level

Key questions:

How to develop international networking?

Solutions we want to see?

The proposals listed in the seminar:

- EUROPARC can arrange a workshop at next/future conference to explore further work of friendships
- EU funding shall be applied in international co-operation
- Develop and change best practises
- Integrate GEOPARC Friends to National Park Friends
- Develop the role of 3rd sector societies in park management
- LIFE+ project to be developed on volunteer work for parks
- Project development with 12 organisations who joined the Koli-seminar
- Develop joint EU projects on this idea
- Develop EU/HORIZON project on innovative solutions in partnerships
- Develop and decide some common standards
- Be organised on the national and the international European level
- Annual event of the "Friends of EUROPARC"
- EUROPARC can offer friends groups a platform like members e-group webpage to exchange ideas and make networking
- In EUROPARC Fed. Platform for Friends of Parks organisations (NGOs)
- EUROPARC can look to arrange workshop at next /future conference on topic of working with Friends groups
- A financing network of European Clubs of Friends
- Good network relation of 1) volunteers and 2) clubs of Friends
- Development of good national networks of clubs of Friends

- Transboundary and international project to make platform for Park Friends organisations, co-operation and influence
- Have the Friends of EUROPARC working group/section
- Create international brand for Friends of national parks
- Annual meeting in EUROPARC
- Mail connection between Friends and NPs in Europe
- More contacts between NP administration
- A platform for Friends organisations
- Identify areas of greatest mutual benefit first; “quick wins”
- Clearing the vision statement of circles of friends on national level and European level; who is responsible of that?
- Possibility to exchange volunteers
- Volunteering abroad through the “Friends of EUROPARC”
- Co-operate but be aware of interests and geography
- Thematic network within EUROPE
- Visit each other and benchmarking; exchange at least every two years
- Information on www, Facebook, twitter
- Ideas to-do list
- We could meet in different parks in Europe and spend some time in nature. That itself will bring the solutions
- International level of Friendship staff for NPs in Europe
- Thing that every person can do for planet, nature, people could be defined through the idea of Friends of National Parks
- Contribution really makes sense on local, national and international level
- We have different professions; how to make use of it in multidisciplinary approach?
- News flashes of success or best practises
- Sharing of best practises
- A new meeting and exchange of models in 2020
- Benchmarking visit from park to another in Europe; park staff and Friends group together
- EUROPARC can offer vacancy/support to Park staff to inspire help them work with friends groups
- We could discuss about big environmental and social challenges that we are facing in the future and how the Friends of Parks can work together to save the planet to our children

Summary:

Three main groups of actions were proposed. These are:

1. To create a structure, platform and support within EUROPARC Federation to develop Friends of Parks activities in an European level
2. Develop EU funded co-operation projects to make the development and networking financially possible.
3. Develop the exchange of persons and knowledge and information.