

Summary in English

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has developed a global management categories system for protected areas, which among others is used by the UN and the EU to assess whether individual countries achieve targets for nature protection.

A group of Danish IUCN commission experts has on behalf of the Danish Nature Agency assessed five nature national parks according to IUCN's guidelines. The assessed parks are Tranum, Stråsø, Fussingø, Gribskov, and Almindingen. They are the first five of a total of 15 nature national parks that a coalition of parties in the Danish Parliament has agreed to designate, and which are planned to be established over the coming years.

The nature national parks are a new initiative for nature protection in Denmark. They consist of relatively large areas where nature gets more space and at the same time the parks provide exciting new nature experiences. Agriculture will not be practised in the parks and forest areas will be left untouched. Large grazing animals such as cattle, horse, red deer, and moose will be introduced to help create a more dynamic and wild nature with many habitats for animals and plants.

Our assessment results show that all five nature national parks meet IUCN's definition for protected areas and thus can be assigned one of the six management categories that exist in IUCN's system.

The nature national parks, Fussingø, Gribskov and Almindingen have been assigned IUCN management category "II National Park". This is because the protection of these parks primarily aims at protecting relatively large ecosystems that will be self-sustained to the greatest extent possible. At the same time, the parks' nature values will have a high visitor interest and the planned management practices will ensure sustainable outdoor activities and tourism.

The nature national parks, Tranum and Stråsø have been assigned IUCN management category "V Protected Landscape". This is based on the assessment that the areas are relatively large and will be managed with the primary aim to create diverse and nature-rich landscapes with a mosaic of heathland and former plantation forest, and where human interaction from military use will be retained.

In the assessment of IUCN governance types, we have categorised all five nature national parks with the type, "Governance by governments - national". This is based on the fact that after their inauguration, the management and governance of the parks with regards to both the proposed regulation for the parks themselves and the existing regulation for overlapping Natura 2000 designations, will be handled primarily by the Danish Nature Agency as a national authority.

The nature national parks' designation of governance type is independent of the assessment of the areas' compliance to IUCN criteria for nature protection and has no impact on the choice of management category.