

The European Permaculture Diploma Report 2008

A snapshot in time

Permaculture Council for Europe

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Introduction

This document came about as a result of the European Permaculture Convergence 2006. During that convergence a new 'Permaculture Council for Europe' was formed. The participants of the convergence created a 'wishlist' of tasks for the council to achieve, one of which was to investigate the current situation in Europe for the Permaculture Diploma.

This is the first attempt by the council to communicate their findings. This is intended as a work in progress and the council would like the input of those interested to alter this in anyway to increase the useability of the data.

This work was carried out on a voluntary basis.

Each council member investigated the countries they knew best and forwarded, by email their findings to Hannah Thorogood, who then compiled the information into this report.

Active Permaculture Council for Europe Members 2006-2008:

George Sobol	Britain & Eastern Europe
Hannah Thorogood	Britain
Pavla Sedlácková	Czech Republic & Slovakia
Sonja Horster	Germany
Margreth Holzer	Austria
Tony Andersen	Scandinavia

Country: **Austria**

Diploma name: **Permaculture Diploma**

Number of Diploma Holders: 2

Current students: 30

Certifying body: The Permaculture Academy in the Alpine Region (PIA)

Contact details: Marlies Ortner
 PERMAKULTUR-AKADEMIE IM ALPENRAUM
 Büro: Herbersdorf 17, 8510 Stainz,
 Tel: 0043 (0) 3463 – 43 84, FAX +13,
 Email: permakultur@therapiegarten.at
 Website: www.permakultur-akademie.com

Prerequisites: Successful completion of the 72 hour Permaculture Design Course

Requirements to complete: As per the International Permaculture Diploma WorkNet (IPDWN).

Process details: As per the IPDWN

10	Documented Designs	
2	Mentors who document meetings	
4	Tutorials	
2	Years Approx.	
6	2 day (16 hrs) Diploma workshops	inc. Design skills Project presentation skills Specific workshop

Accreditation as per the IPDWN

Cost: €33 Registration
 €22 Annual fee
 Diploma workshop (x6)
 Tutorials (x4)

- Country: **Britain**
- Diploma name: **Diploma of Permaculture Design (DipPermDes)**
- Number of Diploma Holders: 75
- Current students: Approx. 100
- Certifying body: Function currently held by the Diploma Development Team
- Contact details: Andy Goldring
Permaculture Association (Britain)
Tel / Fax: +44 (0)845 4581805
Postal address: BCM Permaculture Association, London, WC1N 3XX
Email: diploma@permaculture.org.uk
Web: www.permaculture.org.uk
- Prerequisites: Successful completion of the 72 hour Permaculture Design Course
- Requirements to complete:
Currently as per the International Permaculture Diploma Work Net Model (IPDWN).
- Process details:
The diploma process in Britain is currently under review and alterations are being made. The Interim Diploma Development Team (IDDT) will be launching the new model at the British convergence in September 08.
- Cost: E600 plus membership to the Association

Country: **Czech Republic + Slovakia**

Diploma name: **Permaculture Designer's Diploma**

Number of Diploma Holders: 17

Current students: 2

Certifying body:

Contact details: Email: pk@permakultura.cz
Web: www.permakultura.cz

Prerequisites: Successful completion of the 72 hour Permaculture Design Course

Requirements to complete:

The candidate

has worked on the permaculture field at least 2 years. The work is recorded (photos, pictures, written text). The permaculture project is under control of at least one other PC designer's diploma holder who helps the person to make the project correctly (in terms of permaculture ethics and principles).

has been continually a member of the permaculture association at least 2 years (and is still a member of the association when asking for a diploma)

filled an application form for the diploma holders and sent it to the Council of the association

defends their work and the project in front of the plenary assembly at the PC convergence. To be successful, they may use two other PC designer's diploma holders who can assure the assembly that the project is correct, and the person has been active and ethical.

Process details:

The diploma can be given on 13 different fields of permaculture work.

Cost: Just Annual Membership to the Association €19 for a minimum of 2 years

Country: **Denmark**

Diploma name: **Permaculture Diploma**

Number of Diploma Holders: 3

Current students: 3

Certifying body:

Contact details: PERMACULTURE DENMARK – info@permakultur-danmark.dk

Prerequisites: Successful completion of the 72 hour Permaculture Design Course

Requirements to complete: As per the Nordic Convergence model (see appendix 1)

Process details: As per the Nordic Convergence model

Cost:

Country: **France**

Diploma name: Diplôme de Permaculture

Number of Diploma Holders:

Current students:

Certifying body:

Contact details: <http://www.permaculturefrance.com>

Prerequisites: Successful completion of the 72 hour Permaculture Design Course

Requirements to complete:

Process details:

For those who consider that they have sufficient experience and knowledge (and have completed a PDC+ a subsequent 6 months of project work) to shortcut the full Diploma scheme there is an assessment system where they can pre-present their work to at least 2 Diploma holders, should these decide that the required standard is shown said person can pass onto the next accreditation event.

Using either a mentor from the Université or passing into the Compagnons de Permaculture apprenticeship scheme a student can continue from a Permaculture design course towards the Diplôme de Permaculture. This involves 2 years minimum work and the presentation at an accreditation event of their 'masterpiece^o' and their syllabus/format they would use for leading a PDC. These events have at least 2 Diploma holders present and a group of Diploma students. They are organised by the Université who undertake to present these projects on its website.

Les Compagnons de Permaculture

This involves a Tour de France/world of Permaculture sites who agree to participate with the apprenticeship system and have a Diploma holder in residence who also has at least 5 years of practical project experience. The apprentice works out a Tour which will take them to the projects most relevant to their chosen areas of specialisation. After at least 2 years they can present their masterpiece^o and PDC format/syllabus to a normal accreditation event.

A masterpiece is the work produced by an apprentice to show they have developed mastery of their chosen field, generally for the Diploma these will be a collection of apprentice pieces which are the works completed during the 2 years.

Cost:

The Diploma pathway/mentoring and Compagnon system are free.

Country: **Germany**

Diploma name: **Permaculture Diploma**

Number of Diploma Holders:

Current students:

Certifying body: Permacultur Academie

Contact details: Vera Hemme
Permaculture Association
Permaculture Academy
Email: info@permakultur-akademie.net
Web: www.permakultur-akademie.net

Prerequisites: Successful completion of the 72 hour Permaculture Design Course

Requirements to complete:

The students have three possibilities to register with the Academy:

1. Regular diploma pathway (min. 2 years, with max. 6 months break),
2. Advanced studies (starting with 2nd year, for those who have done permaculture work already),
3. Fast Track (those who are fully self-organized and have done sufficient permaculture design work can get their diploma in 6 months, accompanied by 2 tutors).

Process details:

The usual international agreements between permaculture organizations form the basis of the diploma pathway in Germany: participation in a 72-h-hour-course, minimum two years work on individual projects, two design tutors, 10 design projects. From 1984 until 2002, the Permaculture Association has offered the structure to become a permaculture designer with almost no administrative assistance. Since the founding of the Permaculture Academy in 2002, this basic concept has been extended twice: 1. according to the British system with the help of Andy Langford and the British Academy, 2. according to the work of the German Academy founder Jascha Rohr and a concept team in 2007, using pattern language as a design tool.

For more details see Appendix 2 (page 15)

Cost:	Full Design course	€800
	Introduction weekend	€110
	Year 1	€1380
	Year 2	€1380
	Accreditation	€100
	Total	€3770

Country: **Norway**

Diploma name: **Permaculture Diploma**

Number of Diploma Holders: 5

Current students: 1

Certifying body:

Contact details: PERMACULTURE NORWAY - brobyg@start.no

Prerequisites: Successful completion of the 72 hour Permaculture Design Course

Requirements to complete: As per the Nordic convergence model (see appendix 1)

Process details: As per the Nordic convergence model

Cost:

Country: **Spain**

Diploma name:

Number of Diploma Holders:

Current students:

Certifying body: 2 – see below

Contact details:

Prerequisites: Successful completion of the 72 hour Permaculture Design Course;

Requirements to complete:

Process details:

There are two diploma-system 'nodes' available in Spain, both adopting the CriteriaUKDiploma so far (here up in Spanish: <http://instituto.nodoespinal.net/diploma>)

One is through Permacultura Montsant, with Richard Wade and Inez Sanchez, using the UK System.

The other is through Nodo Espiral of the Permaculture Academy, with Stella Strega, John Logos, César Fernandez & others using a new system based on 'chaordic working' and aiming at getting the portfolios up on the web (what originated this pilot for the chaordic institute) in order to:

1. more effectively share emerging knowledge base
2. use the process and the materials of the portfolios for peer-learning (there can be private as well as public parts)
3. in order to do peer-assessment more effectively (less need to travel, less administration)
4. make diploma quality and standards transparent and easily verifiable for anyone
5. make diplomats and their work more widely known and accessible to their world-wide colleague and the public in general
6. assist in making a lot clearer to all what 'design' is about in practice, it's process and methodology, as well as possible results

This method closely resembles the "The Convergence Method" up at [TonyDiplConvergence.doc](#) adopted by the Nordic Institute, using new technologies instead of (only) live convergences. One early prototype for such an 'electronic portafolio' was the diploma work of Aranya and we are hoping they will become the norm in future, for all the above reasons.

One trial "designs book" for the action-learning students at Finca Luna is starting here:
<http://fincalunawiki.pbwiki.com/>

Diploma students are expected to add links and documents with their profile page on the Spanish Institute site (the profile page acting as an index page of their portfolio)

We don't turn down anyone who wishes to submit their diploma in a different way, we just have to ensure we have the available resources for supporting the person's situation, so each candidate is assessed individually.

Cost:

Country: **Sweden**

Diploma name: **Permaculture Diploma**

Number of Diploma Holders: 3

Current students: 2

Certifying body:

Contact details: PERMACULTURE SWEDEN – Permakultur.sverige@swipnet.se

Prerequisites: Successful completion of the 72 hour Permaculture Design Course;

Requirements to complete: As per the Nordic convergence model (See Appendix 1)

Process details: As per the Nordic convergence model

Cost:

Nordic Pamphlets

The Nordic Permaculture Institute

APRIL 2007

PERMACULTURE QUALIFICATION DIPLOMA PROCEDURE CONVERGENCE MODEL

Permaculture as the strategy for connections and combinations of the four basic natural elements – kept together and developed by a sustainable organisation – for the grows and structuring of plantsystems – and thereby regeneration of the natural resources

THE NORDIC PAMPHLETS

The Nordic Permaculture Institute

Through discussions in the Scandinavian Permaculture network, have we realised that in the international Permaculture network there are tendencies to look at Permaculture as a system to implement forms, shapes and colours in natural systems, in a narrow relationship to the mainstream development in the western societies. In our understanding and practise of the Permaculture principles is it an analytical, planning, design and implementation tool. It is based on classic Ecological analysis in relation to natural systems and described

within the 5 elements: soil, air, water, fire (energy) and spirit/organisation, represented by organising species of the former four elements: plants, animals and not least ourselves. To get that straight have we worked out this series of Pamphlets, in the hope that it will bring the strategic and society change potential back into focus.

In relation to the actual situation in the network and to the global situation have we launched the “Plan B”, in relation to the development of the basic strategy the “Permaculture Basics”, in relation to our understanding of the human organisation and our extreme aggressive and exploitive behaviour and in relation to the overwhelming dominance and global impact of the Northern Atlantic culture the “DENGLUSANISM”. To that comes a series of Scandinavian booklets that contains elements as water, soil, people care, Permaculture organisation etc. – most of them in a Scandinavian language.

PERMACULTURE DENMARK – info@permakultur-danmark.dk

PERMACULTURE NORWAY - brobyg@start.no

PERMACULTURE SWEDEN – Permakultur.sverige@swipnet.se

PERMACULTURE QUALIFICATION

Since the first Permaculture Convergence in Australia in 1985 there has developed a procedure of qualification of permaculturists, based on the certificates, and the diplomas. From our point of view in Scandinavia there has been through the time two criteria essential to the development, without which it would be a damage to the basic democratic and social development of the Permaculture movement and network:

it had to be an open process running through the general forums and decision processes of the network
it had to be highly qualified and directly connected to the practise and development of projects

As such we find that tendencies to enclose any of the phases in the educational system into any kind of mainstream political or economical structures in existing society would be disastrous for the dynamic and society-reforming potential of Permaculture both for the 72-hour certificate course and for the Diploma procedures.

In relation to the two criteria above, in Scandinavia we only run certificate courses in relation to the PC association – and we have never sought to implement them into the official education system. We have run introduction lectures and specifically themed courses at universities etc., but we keep the certificate in our own independent system.

Additionally some mainstream education looks at the certificate as a part of a matriculatory proof. The same goes for the Diploma, as a general recognition of competent qualification. This means that both processes are connected to decisions at the National and the Nordic Convergence. As such is it open for any certificate holder and the decisions and results are reported in the Nordic Permaculture Yearbook.

The qualification controls are based on the Diploma standards. Therefore we uphold the 12 categories that have been developed at International Permaculture Convergences. Students can gain diplomas in several categories, but they must justify themselves within the criteria stated. We feel that this is the best guarantee for accurate understanding of what is required and the actual resources of that specific person.

The demand for 3 different diploma holders as evaluators and the open judgment process and discussion in the Convergence, we feel gives the best guarantee of the understanding of the process and the criteria for the assignment. In addition, this process is a guarantee of the spread of knowledge within the Permaculture network.

In Scandinavia at present we have 11 Diploma holders: 5 in Norway, 3 in Sweden, 3 in Denmark – and there are 5 in progress.

Statement of Nordisk Møde 2006 / the Nordic Meeting of Permaculturists 2006.

"The three Scandinavian permaculture associations wish to maintain our current procedure for issuing diplomas as it has been hitherto, with reference to previous decisions taken in Australia 1985 (IPC1), Nepal 1991 (IPC4) and Slovenia 1997 (EUPC4):

Permaculture Diploma is to be awarded for documented good permaculture work, within one or more of the 12 categories mentioned below, and at a quantity as described below – generally after a minimum of 2 years from having received the Permaculture Certificate.

The application for Permaculture Diploma is to be published in the Nordic Permaculture Yearbook, prior to the presentation of the application.

The application is to be presented for open discussion between the certificate- and diploma-holders convening at Nordic Meeting.

In the process of preparing the application, three diploma-holders are to be involved: One who is closely involved in the preparation process as personal adviser. One who is less closely connected as adviser. And one who is to adopt the role of external examiner, at the Nordic Meeting.

The diploma is undersigned by one diploma holder from each of the three countries – Norway, Sweden and Denmark. If there is not present a diploma holder from all three countries, the assembled certificate- and diploma-holders must decide, whether it is possible to grant an exemption from this rule. Diploma holders from all three countries must have been invited to the Meeting.

After receiving the diploma, a diploma holder can work within all aspects of permaculture, with the rights of a diploma holder, regardless of which categories the application was based on.

After receiving the diploma, a diploma holder has the right to perform professional counselling in relation to permaculture projects; to arrange courses in permaculture without the supervision of another diploma holder; and to represent the permaculture network externally in relation to the general public.¹

As a diploma holder, one can use the title 'Permaculture Designer'.

We find it to be important, that diploma applications are to be presented and discussed openly in a larger forum of permaculturists.² We also find it to be important that the awarding of diploma is based solely on documented professionalism, and not made dependent on financial capacity or graduation from one or another specific educational institution.

We find it to be important that the awarding of diploma is rooted in a regional context, so that the application is published in a regional publication (e.g. the Nordic Yearbook), and presented for discussion and approval in a regional gathering with official status (e.g. the Nordic Meeting)."

Thus decided unanimously at the Nordic Meeting 2006, on August the 26th, Solborg, Jevnaker, Norge (Norway) and published in the Nordic Yearbook 2007, p.40-41.

GUIDELINES FOR QUALIFICATION

(Page 4 of the 'Bulletin of the International Guild of Permaculture Practitioners' – Sept. 1991)

All subject to successful completion of the 72 hour Permaculture Design Course; qualifying period can be prior to the course provided it is permaculture-related.

Site design.

10 designs recorded on paper (or justification of larger projects).

Site development.

At least 3 years involvement, but can be just one site. Process of attaining sustainability for the site should have started. Documentation preferred.

Education.

¹ SPECIAL NOTE (Not part of the original statement): Certificate holders may also do these three things, **if and as long as** it happens within the supervision and understanding of one or more diploma holders.

² SPECIAL NOTE (Not part of the original statement): As different to a smaller closed circle of, say, three diploma holders.

Teaching of 10 design courses (or equivalent in workshops, lectures, etc.); at least 50% of the teaching on these courses; at least 5 design courses. Written evaluation from participants for each course preferred, essential for one course. Curricula also to be submitted.

Administration.

3 years full-time work (or equivalent) in permaculture administration.

Architecture.

10 designs which contain sustainable and affordable alternatives and develop aesthetics.

System establishment and implementation.

3 years full-time work (or equivalent) establishing and proving an essential system for permaculture design and implementation.

Trusteeship.

Establishment and maintenance of legal structures for holding land in perpetuity, over a 5 year period.

Community development.

Establishment and maintenance of alternative community systems, within a bioregional context, which have maintained themselves over a 4 year period.

Research.

A significant contribution to the body of knowledge of permaculture through original research.

Finance.

Establishment and maintenance of systems offering real alternatives to conventional systems over a 4 year period.

Media and communications.

Work which has furthered the spread of permaculture in a significant way.

Manufacturing.

Design or manufacture of appropriate technology that makes a significant contribution to design and implementation of permaculture systems.



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PERMACULTURE DIPLOMA PATHWAY IN GERMANY

Introduction

The usual international agreements between permaculture organizations form the basis of the diploma pathway in Germany: participation in a 72-h-hour-course, minimum two years work on individual projects, two design tutors, 10 design projects. From 1984 until 2002, the Permaculture Association has offered the structure to become a permaculture designer with almost no administrative assistance. Since the founding of the Permaculture Academy in 2002, this basic concept has been extended twice: 1. according to the British system with the help of Andy Langford and the British Academy, 2. according to the work of the German Academy founder Jascha Rohr and a concept team in 2007, using pattern language as a design tool.

Diploma Pathway

The current education concept of the Permaculture Academy can be briefly described as follows:

PREREQUISITES / ELEMENTS	COSTS / DESCRIPTION
	(members of the PC-Association get 10 % reduction on the costs)
Permaculture Design Course (72-h, two weeks)	800 Euro plus acc.+meals
Introduction into the education concept (one week-end)	110 Euro plus acc.+meals (will be credited in case of registration as a student)
Registration with the Academy	Semester starts twice a year in February and August
YEAR ONE	1380 Euro/year (110 Euro/month)
Online course "self organization competence", (8-10 modules, once a month)	Due to the common starting point, there are two action learning guilds each year. They meet via internet or telephone once a month and get exercises to support their self organization process, like "how do I organize my documentation", or "how do I gain easy access to relevant information" etc.
PREREQUISITES / ELEMENTS	COSTS / DESCRIPTION

YEAR ONE	
Action learning design week-end	Personal meeting of the student group with the focus on "how can I find out about and support my personal way of learning?"
Four design tutorials (two with each tutor)	One tutorial ca. half a day; monthly short reports via mail recommended
One or two Academy Weekends	The Academy organizes regular weekends (3-4 per year) for all Academy members and interested people to give the opportunity for exchange, presentations, tutorials etc.
Interim presentation	To share the project work, train the individual presentation style and get a feedback from the pc-community
YEAR TWO	1380 Euro/year (110 Euro/month)
Design workshop (one week)	Intensive design workshop to repeat and deepen design methods and principles
Four design tutorials (two with each tutor)	One tutorial appr. half a day, monthly short reports via mail recommended

One or two Academy Weekends	
Contribution to the annual project report	About 3 pages text and fotos of individual design projects
ACCREDITATION	100 Euro
	Handing in the documentary, final design project and statement of the tutors 6 weeks before the presentation date
Other elements that are not included in the costs:	
More learning guild meetings	
Subject-specific tutorials	
Participation in two subject-specific workshops per year	
Practical training (6 weeks)	Can also be split, 6 weeks altogether

STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION:

Structure

The German Permaculture Academy is a “Zweckbetrieb” of the Permaculture Association, which means that it is a business that fulfills the purpose of the charity (environmental education). Furthermore, it is an official project of the UNESCO-World Decade “Education for Sustainable Development” (no money, but good reputation). The Association’s funding is mainly guaranteed by member fees, the Academy has to survive on course and student fees so far. Since the fusion of the two organizations in January 2007, the Association has supported the Academy financially because of low income. Fundraising activities have not yet been successful.

Administration

To maintain the infrastructure of Association and Academy, there are two offices run partly voluntarily, partly on a free-lance basis by two board members of the Association in their private homes (Hamburg and Konz). The board of the Association has five members altogether, situated in four different cities. The activities of the Academy take place all over Germany.

The students have three possibilities to register with the Academy: 1. Regular diploma pathway (min. 2 years, with max. 6 months break), 2. Advanced studies (starting with 2nd year, for those who have done permaculture work already), 3. Fast Track (those who are fully self-organized and have done sufficient permaculture design work can get their diploma in 6 months, accompanied by 2 tutors).

Problems/Solutions

It became clear recently that the current concept is on the one hand an improvement because it offers a better support for the students’ diploma pathway, but on the other hand it needs continuous and quite intensive care. The Academy work includes course organization, marketing, networking, finances and fundraising, regular communication (email, telephone), internal coordination (students, tutors), and is done by two people at the moment with officially 24 h/week (12 h each). Inofficially it is a 40 h/week-job, at least. Because of the decentralized team structure, communication and work atmosphere can be difficult sometimes.

At the moment, we are re-evaluating the design for the Academy. It seems advisable to separate Association and Academy responsibilities. Furthermore, the different working fields of the Academy should be placed on more than two shoulders. Ideally a group of 4-5 regionally close people should work together, while payment should be done on a profit-share basis until there is a more solid financial foundation.

2008

The European Permaculture Diploma Report

May 15th, 2008

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Additional factors requested at the EuPC9

This report was presented at the European Permaculture Convergence #9 (EuPC9) on the 21st June 2008 in its current format. There followed a group brainstorming session to suggest additional factors concerning the diploma. They are as follows:

- Tutor accreditation
- Number of active tutors
- Quality criteria for accreditation procedures
- Start date of diploma process in each country and a brief history
- Contact details of diploma holders
- Previous diploma portfolios
- Dates of previous accreditations
- Number of Design Course graduates.

It was suggested that participants of the EuPC9 add any additional information they have whilst at the event. The information will then be handed over to the Permaculture Association of Britain to put onto their website.

The next steps will then be to put a survey out to the known European Diploma Organisations and Associations to complete the information. This could then be a project for the new educational working group of the Permaculture Council for Europe as proposed at the EuPC9 by Angus Soutar, Margreth Holzer and Marlies Ortner.