THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CARPATHIANS

Study

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Contents

1. Executive Summary

The study deals with the Carpathian Framework Convention which was signed in May 2003 in Kiev by seven parties - the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine. The Convention defines itself as "it provides a framework for cooperation and multi-sectoral policy coordination, a platform for joint strategies for sustainable development, and a forum for dialogue between all stakeholders"[1]. Similarly, like the Alpine Convention it is the treaty for the protection and sustainable development of a mountain region.

This study is based on desk research starting with a clear web page www.carpathianconvention.org and on information gathering from other web-page sources and different studies and documents. Several interviews were made with the key Slovak people who are involved in the different activities of the Carpathian Convention project; subsequently, their opinions are included in the assessment.

The study offers main characteristic of the Carpathian region, description of the Convention, its common vision, general objectives, structure and protocols. It describes the mechanisms how respective authorities of the Convention function and work. The highest authority of the project is the Conference of Parties which meets regularly on three-year basis, four Conferences were held so far, the last one in 2014. The presidency during the present three-year term is hold by the Czech Republic. Other authorities of the project are the implementation committee, the working groups, the secretariat and other groups and initiatives. Based on the particular articles on the Treaty eight working groups were established, each of them has regular meetings, and all working groups are described in the study.

The most important related groups and initiatives are the Carpathian network of protected areas and the Wetland Initiative. The secretariat services for the Carpathian Convention project are provided by the UNEP Vienna Secretariat with a head of the Office Mr. Harald Egerer. Each partner country has established its own focal point.

The next chapter of the study is devoted to the most interesting projects implemented in the last years. There are: the Carpathian project, the Access to Mountain project, the Big Foot project, the BIOREGIO Carpathians project, and the Innovation in Rural Tourism project.

UNEP carried out its own evaluation of the project in 2014, what is a very valuable source of evaluation information and main findings and outputs from this evaluation are included in the study. The following parts of the study are dedicated to the short assessment and the opportunities for CESCI-Carpathia.

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[1] http://www.carpathianconvention.org/the-convention-17.html

The Carpathian Convention provides a trans-national platform for cooperation in the field of biodiversity protection and sustainable mountain development of the Carpathians. Thanks to the Convention the Carpathians are developing within the holistic perspective. The meetings and events are open for all stakeholders who would like to be involved.

Five challenges have been identified for CESCI-Carpathia:

1. To help with information sharing, awareness raising and promotion of the Carpathian Convention project objectives, project activities, project outputs and outcomes,

2. To help with harmonizing policies among the Carpathian Convention adopted strategies and local and regional policies in the Carpathians territory,

3. To take part in the work of thematic working groups of the project by participating at the working group meetings and/or being involved in preparing, commenting materials prepared within the working groups,

4. To enter into the related groups and initiatives and be involved in their work. The suggestion is to enter in or be involved in the work of the Science for Carpathians,

5. To submit projects within the scope of the Carpathian Convention project addressed mainly INTERREG A and INTERREG B – Central Europe, Danube, which should be based on "the EU Strategy for the Danube region and the Carpathians" and/or based on "the Priority actions for the Carpathian space" adopted by the third Conference of the Parties (COP3).

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2. The Carpathian Region, main characteristics

The Carpathian region is mostly defined as the Carpathian Mountains and their surrounding areas.

The Carpathian Mountains are the largest, longest, most twisted and fragmented mountain chain in Europe. They cover parts of seven countries, starting from the West in the Czech Republic, they run east and southwards through Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Ukraine, Romania and finally Serbia. Their total surface area is 161 805 km^2, larger than the Alps (140 000 km^2). Their total length is 1500 km (the Alps – 1000 km, the Pyrenees – 500 km). The Carpathians average altitude is 850 m (the Alps 1350 m). The northwestern and southern parts are the highest; the greatest elevation is at Gerlachovsky peak (2655 m) and at Moldoveanu peak in the Transylvanian Alps (2544 m). Most of the Carpathians are located in the middle and the lower parts of the Danube River Basin, with the remainder in the Dniester, Vistula and Oder basins.

Tab 1: Distribution of area and inhabitants in the Carpathian Mountains

Country	Area (km2)	Proportion of total Carpathians´ area (percent)	Inhabitants in the area (million)	Proportion of total Carpathians´ population (percent)
Czech Republic	7124	4	1,46	8,4
Hungary	9626	6	1,77	10,2
Poland	17263	11	3,47	19,9
Romania	69872	43	4,87	27,9
Slovakia	35050	22	3,8	21,8
Serbia	761	<1	0.06	0,4
Ukraine	22109	14	1,98	11,4
Total	**161805**	**100**	**17,41**	**100**

Source: UNEP, Carpathian Environment outlook 2007

The different delimitations of the Carpathian Mountain chain can be found in the specialist literature and they depend on the chosen criteria. KEO report (UNEP 2007) uses similar delimitation like the Hungarian geographer Székely (1968) presented. He distinguished the following sub-division: the Northwestern Carpathians, the Northeastern Carpathians, the Eastern Carpathians and the Southern Carpathians.

Map 1: Division of the Carpathian Mountains
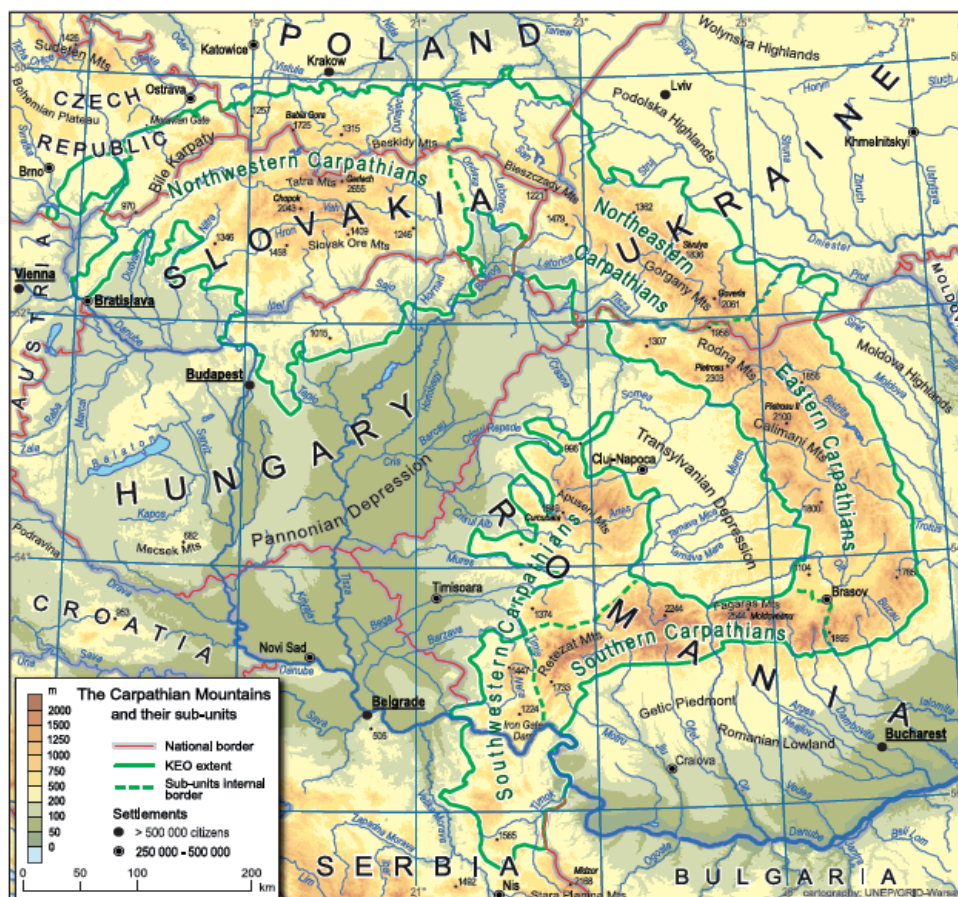
Source: Carpathian Environment Outlook 2007

From a bio-geographical point of view, the Carpathian Mountains represent a link between the taiga of the Northern Europe and the Mediterranean ecosystem of the South. Rich variety of endemic plants and animals, characteristics of the Carpathian ecosystems represent an essential biodiversity component in Europe. The flora includes 3.988 species (486 endemic) what covers about 30% of the European flora. 36 national parks, 51 nature parks and protected landscape areas, 19 biosphere reserves and 200 other protected areas coer 16% of the area (UNEP 2007). The area has many large carnivores e.g. the brown bear, wolf, bison, lynx and many bird species like imperial eagle, Ural owl, black stork, and black grouse. The forests cover 59,2 % of the mountainous area.

The Carpathian region or the Carpathians can be defined in different ways. The most exhaustive study on this issue was done by EURAC (EURAC, 2006). In the next map, there is one option from the study, which uses so-called "threshold value", which specifies what proportion of a municipality lies within the perimeter in order to qualify for complete inclusion in the Carpathian region.

Map 2: The Carpathians using a threshold value of 50%

EURAC Research, Institute for Regional Development: Flavio Ruffini, Thomas Streifeneder, Beatrice Eiselt, 2005
Data: Proposed National Designation of the Carpathian Convention, Contact Point of the Carpathian Convention; Major Cities - ArcWorld Supplement © ESRI, 1999; Major rivers, Croatia and Serbia & Montenegro Country Boundaries - DCW © ESRI, 1999; DEM: Mona Pro Europe © GEOSYS, GTOPO30 - USGS, 1996; Seamless Administrative Boundaries of Europe (SABE2001 v1.1) © EuroGeographics.

Source: EURAC, Implementing an International Mountain Convention

Tab 2: Spatial distribution of the Carpathians using threshold value 50%

Country	Carpathian Mountains area (km2)	Proportion of total area	Carpathian region area (km2)	Percent of change
Czech Republic	7 124	4	6 005	-16
Hungary	9 626	6	7 789	-19
Poland	17 263	11	18 514	7
Romania	69 872	43	92 188	32
Slovakia	35 050	22	35 395	1
Serbia	761	<1	2 084	174
Ukraine	22 109	14	23 185	5
Total	161 805	100	185 160	14

Source: EURAC, Implementing an International Mountain Convention

The Carpathian region has been part of different states and empires. Its current ethnic mix (Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Poles, Serbians, Slovaks and Ukrainians and minority groups like Romas) is the reflection of history.

The contemporary ethnic composition of people living in the Carpathian territory is shown on the next picture. More details were presented in (CESCI, 2015).

Picture 1: Ethnic composition of people living in the Carpathian territory

Ethnic composition

- Romanians
- Hungarians
- Slovaks
- Poles
- Ukrainians
- Roma
- Others
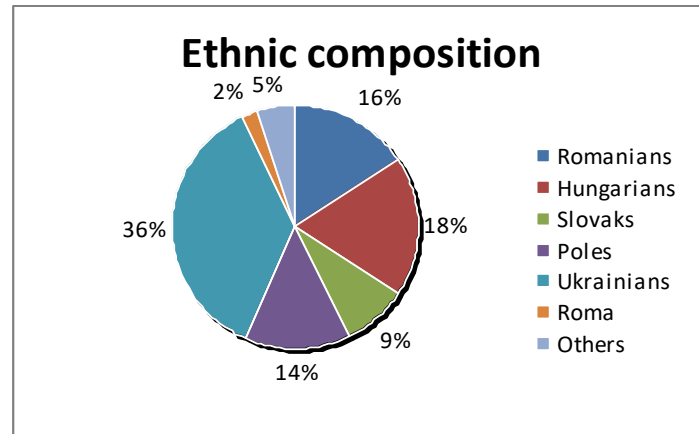
Source: CESCI, 2015

3. The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians

The process started in 2001, when the Ukrainian government asked UNEP to facilitate consultations among the Carpathian countries. The objective was defined as to draft an international convention on the Carpathian Mountains. The Alpine-Carpathian partnership was established in 2002, and was supported by Presidency of the Alpine Convention. UNEP then facilitated consultations between the Carpathian countries during five preparatory meetings, supported by several international organizations, academic institutions and NGOs.

The Framework Convention on the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians (Convention) was signed during the fifth ministerial conference "Environment for Europe", organized by UNECE with participation of 51 countries and which took place from 21 to 23 May 2003 in Kiev. The Convention was signed by seven parties, namely the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine on 22 may 2013.

The Convention entered into force in January 4, 2006 according to the national ratification processes finished in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Ukraine. Ratification processes were finished later, the last one was Serbia in March 10, 2008.

Tab 3: Dates of signature and entries into force of respective countries

Country	Signature	Entry into force
Czech Republic	23 May 2003	4 January 2006
Hungary	22 May 2003	4 January 2006
Poland	25 November 2003	19 June 2006
Romania	22 May 2003	6 March 2007
Slovakia	22 May 2003	4 January 2006
Serbia	22 May 2003	10 March 2008
Ukraine	22 May 2003	4 January 2006

Source: http://www.carpathianconvention.org/

3.1 Common vision and general objectives

The common vision of the Parties to the Convention is to pursue comprehensive policy and cooperation in order to guarantee protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians.

General objectives are defined in the Article 2 of the Convention:

1. improving quality of life
2. strengthening local economies and communities
3. conservation of natural values and cultural heritage

To achieve those objectives the Convention defines the following principles:

    (a) the precaution and prevention principles,

    (b) the 'polluter pays' principle,

    (c) public participation and stakeholder involvement,

    (d) trans-boundary cooperation,

    (e) integrated planning and management of land and water resources,

    (f) programmatic approach,

    (g) the ecosystem approach.

The fields of operation are defined in the next Convention´s articles as follows:

Article 4	Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity
Article 5	Spatial Planning
Article 6	Sustainable and integrated water/river basin management
Article 7	Sustainable agriculture and forestry
Article 8	Sustainable transport and infrastructure
Article 9	Sustainable tourism
Article 10	Industry and energy
Article 11	Cultural heritage and traditional knowledge
Article 12	Environmental assessment/information system, monitoring and early warning
Article 13	Awareness raising, education and public participation

3.2 Protocols and Structure

The Protocols are the most important means in order to complete and facilitate the implementation of the general principles constituted in the Convention itself. Legal basis for that is found in Article 18 in the Convention. Four protocols were proposed and signed so far:

Tab 4: Protocols approved and signed

	Protocol	Date of signature
1	Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity	22 May 2003
2	Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management	27 May 2011
3	Protocol on Sustainable Tourism	27 May 2011
4	Protocol on Sustainable Transport	26 September 2014

Source: www.carpathianconvention.org

Protocols on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge and on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development to the Carpathian Convention are now under elaboration.

The Convention defined and established the following bodies:

1. Conference of the Parties (Conference)
2. Subsidiary Bodies
    a. Implementation Committee
    b. Working groups
3. Secretariat
4. Other Groups and Initiatives
    a. Carpathian Network of Protected Areas
    b. Carpathian Wetlands Initiatives

4. The Conference of the Parties

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the highest authority and it is the main decision-making body of the Convention. It is the body of the Convention, where all Parties are represented. Ordinary meetings are usually held every three years.

The Conference is, in particular, responsible for the adoption of Protocols and amendments to the Convention and for the establishment of subsidiary bodies to the Convention. It sets the political direction, decides on the Working Programme as well as the budget of the Convention, reviews and supports the implementation of the Convention as well as of its Protocols. Article 14 of the Carpathian Convention serves as the legal basis for the COP.

The top representatives of all the Parties usually have ordinary meetings every three years; they had four meetings so far:
- Kiev   11-13 December, 2006
- Bucharest   17-19 June, 2008
- Bratislava   25-27 May, 2011
- Mikulov (CR) 23-26 September, 2014

Conference Kiev 2006

The Conference adopted 19 decisions; among the most important were: establishing the mandate to the WG Biodiversity to prepare the Protocol on the Conservation of Biological and Landscape Diversity, establishing Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) and approval of the INTERREG IIIB CADSES project, aiming at environmentally sustainable development of the "Carpathian space". The Conference also welcomed cooperation with other conventions and international organizations like Alpine Convention, Central European Initiative (CEI), Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative (CERI), Ramsar Convention. The Conference adopted the Carpathian Declaration.

Conference Bucharest 2008

In Bucharest, the Conference adopted 16 decisions, among them there were those ones which supported a "Carpathian Heritage Inventory" as a tool for identification, protection and promotion of Carpathian Heritage. The Conference welcomed the "Science for the Carpathians" initiative, it supported development of the Protocols, like the Protocol and the Strategy on Sustainable Tourism, the Protocol on Sustainable Transport, moreover it declared its readiness to develop a Protocol on Sustainable Forestry, it stressed the need for cooperation with the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR). The Conference

welcomed a Memorandum of Cooperation between the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention and it appreciated the work of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative. The Conference once again stressed its call for the creation of a stand-alone "Carpathian Space" Programme of the ERDF and it invited the EC to accede to the Convention.

Conference Bratislava 2011

The Conference welcomed the adoption of the Biodiversity Strategic Plan, the CNPA strategy, approval of the "BIOREGIO Carpathians" project, adoption and signing of the Protocols on Sustainable Tourism and on Sustainable Forest Management. The participants supported the development of a Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development, enhanced cooperation with the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River and the implementation of the Tisza River Basin Memorandum of Understanding, supported development of a Protocol on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure and supported the work of the Science for Carpathians Network. The Conference stressed an importance of the Carpathian Region in the ongoing discussion on the growing role of the macro regions. They welcomed the approval of the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN project proposal and reiterated their invitation to the EU to accede to the Convention.

Conference Mikulov 2014

The Conference appreciated the work conducted in the frame of the BIOREGIO Carpathians project towards the elaboration of Carpathian Red List of Habitats, the Carpathian Red List of Species as well as the List of Invasive Species in the Carpathians, reiterated its call upon spatial planning local and regional authorities of the Carpathian countries, encouraged the Parties and the Secretariat to update the Strategic Action Plan for the Carpathians in accordance with the new EU Territorial Cooperation Instruments for the period 2014-2020, encouraged the Parties to actively participate in the implementation of the already existing EU macro regional strategies, which are relevant for the Carpathians, the European Union Strategies for the Danube Region (EUSDR) and for the Baltic Region (EUSBSR), including by using the Carpathian Convention as a strategic tool to link and complement the relevant strategies. The Conference also adopted the Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management, adopted the Protocol on Sustainable Transport and appreciated the funding made available by the German Federal Ministry, welcomed the outputs of the ACCESS2MOUNTAINS project, adopted the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians and invited stakeholders, especially the tourism sector in the Carpathians to actively contribute to its implementation, welcomed the outcomes of the "Innovations in Rural Tourism" project co-

financed by the EC, appreciated outcomes of the project "Carpathians Unite – mechanism of consultation and cooperation for implementation of the Carpathian Convention", supported by Switzerland. They adopted the Strategic Agenda on Adaptation to Climate Change in the Carpathian Region, welcomed outcome document "The Future we want".

5. The Implementation Committee

This committee is a supporting body implementing decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties. It deals mainly with progress reports, preparing the implementation of the decisions, working groups' work and agenda, preparation agenda for the Conference meetings, etc.

Tab 5: Calendar of events of the Implementation Committee

1	First preparatory meeting to the first Conference of the parties	16.12.2005, Bolzano, Italy
2	Second preparatory meeting to the first Conference of the Parties	11.-12.9.2006, Vienna, Austria
3	Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee Meeting Sibiu	2.-4.4.2008, Sibiu, Romania
4	Meeting of the Bureau of the Carpathian Convention	2.3.2009, Vienna, Austria
5	Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee Meeting	10.-11.12.2009, Vienna, Austria
6	Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee Meeting	29.-30.11.2010, Bratislava, Slovakia
7	Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee Meeting	17.-18.1.2011, Vienna, Austria
8	Meeting of the Bureau of the Carpathian Convention	28.-29.11.2011 Bratislava, Slovakia
9	Fourth Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee Meeting	5.-7.12.2012, Vienna, Austria
10	Fifth Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee Meeting	18.-20.2.2014, Prague, the Czech Republic

Source: www.carpathianconvention.org

The Bureau of the Carpathian Convention also deals with organizational and administrical questions.

6. The Working Groups (WG)

According to the Article 14 paragraph 2 (e) the Conference can establish thematic working groups, as subsidiary bodies, which are deemed necessary for the implementation of the Convention. The working groups are composed of the National Focal Points for the Carpathian Convention and/or persons nominated by them.

Representatives from different partner organizations and NGOs can take part at the meetings and contribute with their expertise. Meetings of the WG are open for the observers. The Convention has so far established eight thematic Working Groups:

1. WG on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure
2. WG on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity
3. WG on Sustainable Tourism
4. WG on Sustainable Agriculture, Rural Development and Forestry
5. WG on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge
6. WG on Sustainable Forest Management
7. WG on Adaptation to Climate Change
8. WG on Spatial Development

6.1 Working Group on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure

The WG was established by the Conference decisions COP1/8 and COP1/9, adopted on the first Conference meeting in Kiev in 2006. Its task is to support the Parties towards their cooperation for the implementation of Articles 8 (Sustainable Transport and infrastructure) and 10 (Industry and Energy) of the Convention.

The WG started to work in its first meeting in Bolzano, Italy in 22.-23 March, 2007 and it organized 7 meetings so far, the last one was held in Vienna on 1.-2 October, 2013.

Key documents concerning the WG are: Terms of Reference for the WG, Protocol on Sustainable Transport and the Action Plan for a regional framework approach for promotion of renewable energy in the Carpathian region.

The main implemented **projects** concerning this field were:

Carpathian project – Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians in a Transnational Framework; Outputs: Handbook for Local Authorities and Development Actors, The Carpathian Environment Outlook, The Carpathian Spatial Development Vision (VASICA), the Carpathian Atlas, 2005 – 2008
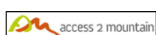
Access2Mountains – Sustainable Mobility and Tourism in Sensitive Areas of the Alps and the Carpathians, 2011 – 2014

6.2 Working Group on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity

WG was established by the Conference decision COP1/4 and implements the Article 4 of the Convention. It organized 7 meetings, the first one was in Vienna, on 25 – 27 March, 2007 and the last one in Vienna in 6 – 8 March, 2013.

Key documents are the following ones: Terms of Reference of the WG, Biodiversity Protocol, Biodiversity Protocol Implementation Report Format and Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the BD Protocol.

Related projects:

Carpathian project – Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians in a Transnational Framework, Outputs: Handbook for Local Authorities and Development Actors, The Carpathian Environment Outlook, The Carpathian Spatial Development Vision (VASICA), the Carpathian Atlas, 2005 – 2008.

Alpine-Carpathian Corridor, The preservation and creation of suitable landscape structures and green bridges for animals, 2008 – 2012

BIOREGIO Carpathians – Integrated management of biological and landscape diversity for sustainable regional development and ecological connectivity in the Carpathians, 2010 – 2013. Main outputs of the project: "Carpathian Red List of Forest Habitats and Species and Carpathian List of Invasive Alien Species" and "Carpathian Red List of Non-Forest Habitat", BIOREGIO Carpathian WEBGIS System, Common Integrated Management Measures, etc

6.3 Working Group on Sustainable Tourism

WG was established by the Conference decision COP1/10 and supports the Parties to implement the Article 9 of the Convention. There were 7 meetings, the first one was held in Lopenik, the Czech Republic on 2 – 5 April, 2015 and the last one in Aggtelek, Hungary in 18 – 19 May, 2015.

Key documents are: Terms of Reference on Sustainable Tourism, Good Practices of Sustainable Tourism in the Carpathians, Strategy for the Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians and Protocol on Sustainable Tourism.

Main projects:

Carpathian project – Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians in a Transnational Framework, Outputs: Handbook for Local Authorities and Development Actors, The Carpathian Environment Outlook, The Carpathian Spatial Development Vision (VASICA), the Carpathian Atlas, 2005 – 2008

ClimAlpTour – Climate Change and its impact on Tourism in the Alpine Space, 2007 – 2011
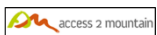
Access2Mountains – Sustainable Mobility and Tourism in Sensitive Areas of the Alps and the Carpathians, 2011 – 2014

Innovation in Rural Tourism, Development of tourism in rural mountain areas by developing and testing innovative tools, 2012 – 2015

CarpatSusTourStra - Development of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy for the Carpathians to be submiited at the 4th COP, 2013 - 2014

6.4 Working Group on Sustainable Agriculture, Rural Development and Forestry

WG was established by the Conference decision COP1/7 and implements Article 7 of the Convention. There were 3 meetings, the first one was held in Vienna, 9 – 10 July, 2007 and the last one in Stara Planina, Serbia on 20 – 22 April, 2015.

Key documents: Terms of reference on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development and SARD-M Report for the Carpathian Convention Member States – regional synthesis.

Main projects:

Carpathian project – Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians in a Transnational Framework, Outputs: Handbook for Local Authorities and Development Actors, The Carpathian Environment Outlook, The Carpathian Spatial Development Vision (VASICA), the Carpathian Atlas, 2005 – 2008.

6.5   Working Group on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge

WG was established by the Conference Decision COP1/6 and it is joined with the Convention by the Article 11. There were organized 4 meetings, the first one in Venice, Italy, on 27 – 28 August, 2007 and the last one in Bratislava, in 25 – 27 March, 2014.

Key documents: ANPED Recommendations Carpathian Heritage Inventory, Terms of Reference of the WG, Road Map to achieve the objectives of the Article 11 of the Convention – Cultural Heritage.

Main projects:

Carpathian project – Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians in a Transnational Framework, Outputs: Handbook for Local Authorities and Development Actors, The Carpathian Environment Outlook, The Carpathian Spatial Development Vision (VASICA), the Carpathian Atlas, 2005 – 2008.

BigFoot Project – Crossing Generations, Crossing Mountains, devoted to intergenerational learning in the European mountain areas implemented in three rural municipalities: Berkovitsa, Bulgaria, Trikala, Greece and Gubbio, Italy, 2011 – 2013

Carpathian Heritage Inventory, 2007 – 2011

6.6   Working Group on Sustainable Forest Management

WG was established by the Conference decision COP2/4 for developing the Article 7 of the Convention. There were 4 meetings, the first one in Bratislava and the last one in Rzeszów on 4 – 6 September, 2013.

Key documents: Terms of Reference of the WG, Criteria and Indicators for Identification of virgin forests in the Carpathians, Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the Forest protocol, Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management.

Main projects:

Carpathian project – Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians in a Transnational Framework, Outputs: Handbook for Local Authorities and Development Actors, The Carpathian Environment Outlook, The Carpathian Spatial Development Vision (VASICA), the Carpathian Atlas, 2005 – 2008.

6.7 Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change

WG was established by the Conference decision COP2/3 implementing the Article 12 of the Convention. It was organized three meetings, the first one in Brussels, in 6 – 7 February, 2012 and the last one in Vienna, in 12 – 13 March, 2014.

Key documents: Terms of reference of the WG, Strategic Agenda on Adaptation to Climate Change in the Carpathian Region.

Main projects:

CARPIVIA – Carpathian Integrated Assessment of Vulnerability to Climate Change and Ecosystem-based Adaptation Measures, 2011 - 2013

6.8 Working Group on Spatial Development

WG was established by the Conference decision COP1/11 to develop Article 5 of the Convention. There were organized 3 meetings of the WG, first one in Brussels, in 6 – 7.2.2012 and the last one in Vienna, 12 – 13.4.2014.

Key documents: ToRs WG, Strategic Action Plan for the Carpathian Area, EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Input submitted by UNEP Vienna – ISCC on behalf of the Convention

Main projects:

Carpathian project – Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians in a Transnational Framework, Outputs: Handbook for Local Authorities and Development Actors, The Carpathian Environment Outlook, The Carpathian Spatial Development Vision (VASICA), the Carpathian Atlas, 2005 – 2008.

7. The Other Groups and Initiatives

Two initiatives, namely the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) and the Carpathian Wetlands Initiative (CWI) have particular position in the Convention. Subsequently, the following parts of the research looks at these two initiatives.

7.1 The Carpathian Network of Protected Areas

The Carpathian Network of Protected Areas was established by the Conference decision COP1/4 in order to constitute thematic network of cooperation of mountain protected areas in the Carpathian region and to encourage cooperation in the management of protected areas within and between the Carpathian countries. The CNPA aims to contribute to the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians and accomplish goals listed in the Article 4 of the Convention. The three main fields of cooperation are:

1. Thematic network – organizing events, establishing tools for cooperation, leading special projects etc.
2. Ecological network – establishing an ecological continuum to improve the potential for species migration and for conserving habitats
3. Awareness raising activities – information and educational activities to conservation.

CNPA has established its steering committee (SC) and a unit in the Secretariat in Vienna. The CNPA SC is composed of the National Focal Points of the Convention and/or persons nominated by them. CNPA SC elects a chair for a 2-year period. The CNPA SC meets at least twice a year. CNPA SC had 11 meetings so far, the first one in Vienna, 26 January, 2007 and the last one in Prague on 20 February, 2014.

Key documents connected with the CNPA are Terms of Reference CNPA, Carpathian protected Areas Clearing House Mechanism develop by WWF, CNPA Medium Term Strategy, and CNPA Medium Term Work Plan.

CNPA organized two conferences.

The first CNPA Conference[2] took place in Brasov, Romania on 22 September, 2008 with five thematic working groups:

1. NATURA 2000, Management planning, Forestry, Wetlands
2. Wildlife management: large carnivores and herbivores, birds of prey
3. Local communities, cultural heritage
4. Sustainable tourism and visitor management
5. Financial sustainability

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[2] http://www.carpathianconvention.org/related-groups-and-initiatives-50.html

The conference gave a lot of recommendations and inputs and adopted a declaration in which agreed with the CNPA Medium Term Strategy, the CNPA work plans for 2009 and 2010-2015.

The second CNPA conference[3], namely "Challenges and opportunities in the Carpathian Protected Areas" took place in Tatranská Javorina, Slovakia on 23-26 April, 2013. There were representatives from WWF Danube Carpathian Program (DCP), Alpine Network of Protected Areas (APLARC), European Academy Bolzano and others participants. Several workshops were organized during the conference:

1. Sustainable financing of protected areas management
2. Governance of protected areas in Europe
3. Sustainable development opportunities in and around protected areas with a focus on stakeholder support for protected area management and financing
4. Connectivity and continuity – ecological corridors in the Carpathians and the Alps
5. Cross Border Cooperation in the Carpathians
6. Exchange of ideas for future cooperation

The Conference adopted a declaration in which appreciated the Medium term CNPA Work Plan 2013-2017 and the establishment of provisional CNPA Management Unit.

7.2 The Carpathian Wetlands Initiative

Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI) is a Ramsar regional initiative, whose mission is to ensure and support the effective conservation and wise use of wetlands in the Carpathian region and beyond, through local, national, regional and international activities.

The mission of the CWI is to contribute to the implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Convention on Wetlands[4] (Ramsar Convention) and UNEP Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (UNEP Vienna ISCC) signed on 13 December 2006 in Kiev, Ukraine. CWI will facilitate collaboration between the two Conventions and its Parties.

CWI organized two conferences:

Conservation of Wetlands in the Carpathians, 16 - 19 November, 2009, Tatranská Štrba, Slovakia, whose aim was to support exchange of information on conservation and best practices

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[3] http://www.carpathianparks.org/cnpa2ndconference.html
[4] The Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty adopted on 2 February 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar and went into force in 1975. The official name of the treaty is „The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat ", but it has become known as the Ramsar Convention. Nowadays the Convention has 169 contracting parties, or member states, in all parts of the world.

between the Carpathian countries. 65 participants from all Carpathian countries took part at the conference. Main topics of the conference included:

- Status of wetlands, their conservation and wise use in the Carpathian Eco-region;
- Identification of missing information and proposals for priorities to fulfill gaps and needs for wetland protection in the Carpathians;
- Mire ecology – main mire types in the Carpathians, their ecology, threats and processes, inventory of mires;
- Active and restoration management – description of management techniques and their impact on fens, management planning;
- Restoration of hydrological regime – studies and proposals for hydrological restoration, demonstration of case studies as practical experience with restoration and monitoring of fens.

Wetlands for the future, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, 19 – 21 May, 2011

The conference had two sessions: Wetland Inventory and Wetland Management and one workshop: "How to proceed with wetland inventory and management in the Carpathian region?"

CWI has its own Terms of reference.

Several other initiatives were created since the establishment of the Convention. These initiatves include: the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative, Science for Carpathians, the Alpine-Carpathian Cooperation Forum and Europe of the Carpathians.

7.3 Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative

CERI is an international coalition of 45 NGOs and research institutions, which cover seven Carpathian countries. Its aim is to support the implementation of the Convention and its vision is „to achieve the long-term conservation of the unique nature of the globally important Carpathian Mountains, while supporting its economy and culture for the lasting benefit of people through international partnership".

Since 1st March 2006 the headquarters of CERI are based in Bratislava, Slovakia. The CERI Secretariat is hosted by Daphne - Institute of Applied Ecology.

CERI organized four general assemblies since 2005 till 2007. The last event was in 2008 and the last project, presented in their web page[5], was ended in 2010.
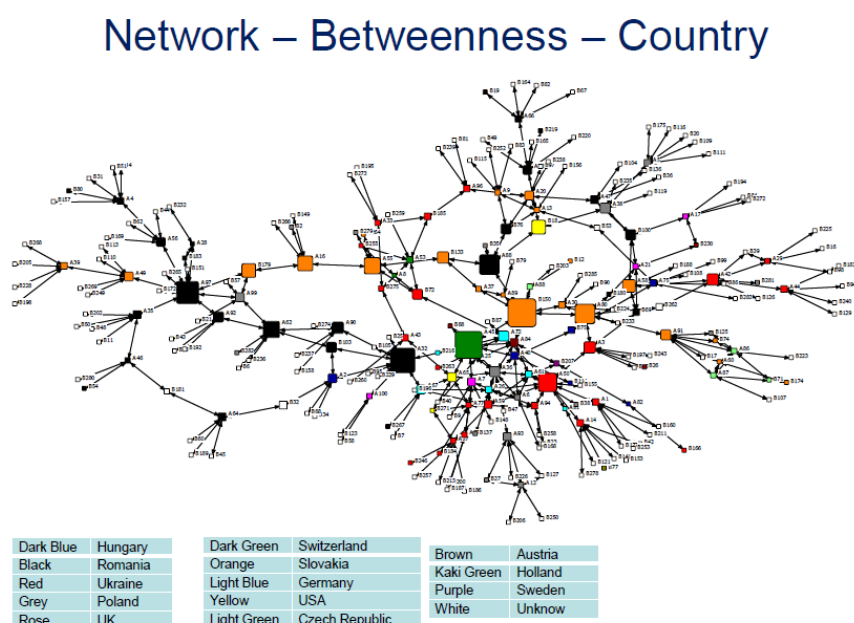
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[5] http://www.carpates.org/

7.4 Science for Carpathians

S4C is a networking initiative enhancing global change research in the Carpathian Mountains. It consists from more than 350 scientists and stakeholders. The Conference welcomed its establishing by its decision COP2/9 adopted on second CoP meeting in Bucharest in 2008.

In 2012 Mr. Gillez Rudas, University of Geneva, presented his own survey on regionalized scientific networks S4C in the Carpathians. The composition of the S4C membership is in the next picture.

Picture 2: The composition of the S4C membership

Network – Betweenness – Country

Dark Blue	Hungary
Black	Romania
Red	Ukraine
Grey	Poland
Rose	UK

Dark Green	Switzerland
Orange	Slovakia
Light Blue	Germany
Yellow	USA
Light Green	Czech Republic

Brown	Austria
Kaki Green	Holland
Purple	Sweden
White	Unknow

Source: Gilles Rudas, Survey on regionalized scientific networks in the Carpathians, 2012

S4C organizes conference "Forum Carpaticum" every two years. It started in Krakow, in 15-18 September 2010, it continued in Stará Lesná, Slovakia, in 30 May – 2 June 2012 and the last one was in Lviv, Ukraine, in 16-19 September, 2014.

The 1st Forum Carpaticum (FC2010) identified the need for better data generation, availability, and accessibility to information in the Carpathian Mountain ecological region. The 2nd Forum Carpaticum addressed this need by covering the whole Data-Knowledge-Action cycle, i.e. focusing on how data are generated and transformed into useful knowledge, how the knowledge is transferred to policy and practice, and how it can feed back to research planning. The 3rd Forum Carpaticum aimed to explore ways to address global challenges in the local and regional context.

Main themes of the 3ʳᵈ Forum Carpaticum conference were related, but not limited, to the policy priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Horizon 2020 Programme, it focused on major challenges which affect the Carpathian ecoregion:

1. Ecosystem services and land use change (e.g. rational utilization of mountain resources, role of mountain communities in regulating access to various ecosystem services),

2. Climate change, water and extreme events/hazards (e.g. problems of flood protection, water availability and use under changing climatic conditions),

3. Natural and cultural heritage (e.g. assessment, monitoring and forecasting changes in complex and valuable Carpathian landscapes),

4. Smart mountains (e.g. mountain areas and technology development, or interrelations between rural mountain areas and urban centers in and outside the Carpathians).

S4C issues regularly the Newsflash[6]. S4C established an Executive Board and a Steering Committee. The members of the Board are:

- Ľuboš Halada, Slovakia
- Jacek Kozak, Poland
- Ivan Kruhlov, Ukraine
- Katalin Mázsa, Hungary
- Elena Matei, Romania

S4C has been working on the new Research Agenda for 2015-2020. The preliminary topics are:

- chemical environment,
- climate change,
- natural hazards and risks,
- tourism and sustainability,
- urban and rural development,
- water resources and management.

More information can be found on the webpage: http://carpathianscience.org/.

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[6] http://carpathianscience.org/s4c-newsflash/

7.5 The Alpine-Carpathian Cooperation Forum

This initiative is an international "fair-conference" type of events, which has been organized by the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion Poland for three times so far[7]. The Forum creates a basis for political and economic cooperation, it addresses broad audience like politicians, diplomats, local authorities, entrepreneurs, investors, scientists, experts, businesses, etc. The first Forum was held in Rzeszów, 14-16 September, 2012 focusing on "people – institutions – capital – cooperation". The second one was held in Rzeszów, 7-8 September, 2013 and it focused on "The Alps – the Carpathians, mountain energy". The third one was organized once again in Rzeszów, on 13-14 September 2014 under the headline "Alpine-Carpathian Cooperation Forum". The motto of this last event was "Carpathians – between mysticism and intelligent development" and it was devoted to the inauguration of the new Carpathian brand "Carpathia". The main part of the event was International Trade Fair with more than 120 exhibitors. Within the program organized conference was focused on political and economic conditions of the development of the Carpathians, Carpathian new brand "Carpathia" and delivery of the Swiss innovative experience.

7.6 Europe of the Carpathians

This Polish initiative is a cycle of conferences, and the aim is to consolidate parliamentary cooperation of the Parties. The first conference was held in February 23, 2013 in Krasiczyn near Przemyśl in the occasion of 20th anniversary of the Carpathian Euroregion. The conference supported all activities for the Carpathians development including newly establishing that time project Via Carpatia. The conference in 2014 was held in Krynica, 2-3 September and it had a broad portfolio from geopolitical significance of the Carpathians, through investment potential, energy security, infrastructure, free trade, CBC, education of elites. The next conference was held in Smerek, near Wetlina, July 25, 2015 under the auspices of Mr. Marek Kuchcinsky, Vice-marshal of the Polish Sejm and it had three issues: environmental protection, sustainable tourism development and cooperation.

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[7] www.alp-carp.com, www.forum-karpackie.pl

8. The Secretariat

The Secretariat acts as the main reference and service point for the Parties in the Convention. It organizes and supports the work of the different bodies of the Convention, coordinates the programme of the work and assists in project development and implementation. The Secretariat facilitates research, communication and information exchange on matters related to the Convention and prepares reports for the COPs. The Article 15 of the Convention provides a legal basis for its establishment and it identifies concrete functions of the Secretariat. The Secretariat is an out posted Office of the UNEP´s Regional Office for Europe located in Geneva since 2004, and it is administered by UNEP on an interim basis and hosted by Austria in the Vienna International Centre. The Secretariat is also assisted by the European Academy (EURAC) through the EURAC representing Office in Vienna. The Secretariat has its own staff consisting from 9 people and it is headed by Mr. Harald Egerer[8]. According the evaluation done by UNEP Nairobi in 2014 the Secretariat was valuated as effective, transparent, client-orientated, sensitive, result-based, but overloaded staff.

Except the Secretariat each Party established National Focus Points in which the following persons have been nominated:

Tab 6: National Focal Points

Country	Person	Ministry
The Czech Republic	Ms. Zuzana Tollrianová	Ministry of Environment
Hungary	Ms. Klara Szeker	Ministry of Agriculture
Poland	Ms. Božena Haczek	Ministry of Environment
Romania	Ms. Ramona Cherascu Ms. Liliana Virtopeanu	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
Serbia	Ms. Aleksandra Doslic Ms. Nevena Piscevic	Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection
Slovakia	Mr. Vladimír Druga	Ministry of Environment
Ukraine	Mr. Serhij Gubar	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

Source: www.carpathianconvention.org

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[8] Mr. Harald Egerer was born on June 5, 1968 in Vienna, graduated in Law at the University of Vienna. After studies of the international relations and environmental law and sciences he had been working as an environmental reporter for the Austrian press Agency. In 1996, he joined UNEP with the Secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Trans boundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their disposal. Then he specialized on environmental cooperation in the European region and supported the seven Carpathian countries in the development of the Convention. Since 2004 he has been heading the UNEP Vienna Office – Secretariat of the Convention.

9. The Outputs from the Most Interesting Projects

Tab 7: List of the most interesting projects

Logo Funding	Name Lead partner, number of partners	Duration website
INTERREG IIIB CADSES	Carpathian Project - Protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians in a transnational framework UNEP Vienna – ISCC, 18 partners	September 2005 – August 2008 www.carpathianproject.eu
South East Europe	Access2Mountains - Sustainable Mobility and Tourism in Sensitive Areas of the Alps and the Carpathians Environment Agency Austria, 32 partners	May 2011 – April 2014 www.access2mountain.eu
Lifelong Learning Programme	Big Foot, crossing generations, crossing mountains Comune di Gubbio, 8 partners	January 2011 – December 2012 www.bigfoot-project.eu
EU	CARPIVIA project: Carpathian integrated assessment of vulnerability to climate change and ecosystem-based adaptation measures Alterra-Wageningen University and Research Center, 6 partners	January 2011 – December 2013 www.carpivia.eu
South East Europe	BIOREGIO Carpathians - Integrated management of biological and landscape diversity for sustainable regional development and ecological connectivity in the Carpathians NFA ROMSILVA Piatra Craiului National Park, 16 partners	January 2011 – December 2013 www.bioregio-carpathians.eu

Logo Funding	Name Lead partner, number of partners	Duration website
	Innovation in Rural Tourism	January 2012 – November 2015
EC Lifelong Learning Programme	IMC University Krems, 9 partners	www.inrutou.eu

Source: web pages of the projects

9.1 The Carpathian Project

The objective of this Carpathian Project was "to enhance the sustainable development of the Carpathian region based on its rich natural and cultural heritage"[9].

The main outputs of the project were:
1. The Handbook for Local Authorities and Development Actors
2. The Carpathian Environment Outlook (KEO)
3. The Carpathian Spatial Development Vision (VASICA)
4. The Atlas of the Carpathian Macroregion

The objective of **the Handbook** was the definition of a short-medium term development plan to be used by public and private stakeholders to promote sustainable tourism in the Carpathians.

The Carpathian Environment Outlook from 2007 is still a very valuable geographically integrated report on the state of, and trends related to the environment of the Carpathian Mountains region. The study was based on analyses of socio-economic and environmental processes and focused on sustainable development issues, notably the economic efficiency and environmental effectiveness of policy actions. Target audiences were governmental authorities on all levels in the Carpathians. The study offers three development scenarios: "Business as usual", "EU policy first" and "the Carpathian Dream".

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[9] http://condesan.org/mtnforum/content/carpathian-project

The analytical part of the **VASICA** consists of the analysis of demography, agriculture, industry, urban network, cultural and natural heritage, transport and environment, tourism and ETC in the Carpathian region. In the strategic part the authors identified four main strategic objectives:

1. Strengthening the internal cohesion of the Carpathian region,
2. Strengthening the cohesion with the other parts of the European territory,
3. Enhancing economic growth and job creation in the Carpathian area,
4. Improved management of the region's environment and natural-cultural heritage.

In order to strengthen the internal cohesion of the Carpathians VASICA suggests the following actions:

- Development and improvement of transport and communication networks across and within the Carpathians;
- Supporting partnership and cooperation agreements between Carpathian countries, regions and cities;
- Supporting the creation of Euro regions and converting them to regions of genuine common projects and efforts;
- Enlarging the Schengen zone with Romania as soon as possible;
- Facilitating border crossing also for citizens from non-EU Carpathian regions;
- Establishing cross-border passenger transport networks between the neighboring parts of the Carpathian countries to strengthen micro-regional linkages, to promote tourism and facilitate commuting;
- Formulating more joint cross-border projects for improving the systems infrastructure;
- Enhancing exchanges of pupils and students and supporting language courses on the languages of the neighbors;
- Supporting mutual visits of theatres, ensembles and artists in the Carpathian regions.

In order to strengthen the cohesion with other parts of the European territory authors suggested the following main actions to implement:

- The strengthening of transport and communication links between the Carpathian and the Pan-European transport and communication corridors;
- Connecting the Carpathian region with the European waterways;
- The inclusion of the mountain tourist tracks into the international structure of tourist tracks and area, and its active international promotion;
- Integrated actions aimed at attracting new economic investment projects, especially in the field of new technologies;
- The development of information society on the basis of integrated systems of state-of the-art telecommunication infrastructure.

In the third strategic objective VASICA suggests four main axes:

- Tourism development model and branding
- Infrastructure
- SME´s creation and consolidation
- Training

The following common points were identified for purpose of improving management of the environment and natural-cultural heritage potential:

- Common and coordinated care for cross border natural parks and reserves;
- Implementation of European nature conservation programmes (like green belts);
- Protection of cross-border rivers against pollution and improvement of water quality in the catchment basins of rivers, crossing the borders;
- Coordination of actions regarding the use and protection of hydro-geological structures which cross the borders, including the restoration of hydro-geological balance in areas with disrupted water systems.
- Protection of areas both with underground and with cavern water;
- Cooperation in preparing environmental and strategic impact assessments for cross border areas;
- Integrated monitoring of air quality;
- Sustainable management of forests in the border areas and increasing the woodland cover;
- Preparation of studies, assessing the capacity to reclaim and redevelop industrial and degraded land, and preparation of joint reclamation and redevelopment projects;
- Strengthening and conservation of regional architectural traditions;
- Raising of social awareness and education for cultural and natural environmental protection;
- Revitalization of cultural landscapes in rural areas;
- Promotion of the tourism to industrial heritage places;
- Organizational and technical efforts aimed at protecting cultural heritage.

The Atlas of the Carpathian macro region consists of valuable maps which portray geography, population and culture, economy and cooperation areas.

The Carpathian Project resulted in the formulation of **the Carpathian Space Vision**. Its main objective was to continue the provision of support to the Carpathian Space, as an area of economic, social and environmental progress and sustainability in the heart of Europe during the following programming periods. In order to bring the Carpathian Space Vision into life in

the EU programming period 2014-2020, the authors suggested that a full-fledged "Carpathian Space" programme, following the successful example of the Alpine Space programme, should be established It may be possibly in combination with (an) existing programme(s), or it can stand-alone as a new programme for the new period. This was a project which was co-financed by the EU-Community Initiative Programme for transnational cooperation: INTERREG CADSES in the Programming Period 2000-2006.

9.2 The Access to Mountain Project

The project was a transnational project with 12 partners and 20 observers from 17 countries located in the Alps and the Carpathians. Project activities aimed to raise awareness, promote knowledge, provide regions with solutions for sustainable mobility development, to integrate peripheral regions through attractive offers to visitors, and improve the quality of the environment. The Project was funded by the Southeast Europe programme.

Outputs of the project[10]:
* 7 pilot regions committed to sustainable mobility management
* Decision support tool for regional mobility management
* Transnational exchange of best practices in the areas of regional railways and multimodal transport
* Policy dialogue at transnational level involving the Alpine and the Carpathian Convention
* Final common charter including policy recommendations for the promotion of environmentally and socially sustainable tourism and mobility at regional, national, and transnational/EU levels.

9.3 The Big Foot project

The idea was to establish inter-generational learning and dialogue in the rural mountainous areas, enabling and valuating the skills and knowledge of the older generation of locals, combining traditional knowledge with modern communication tools and expertise in order to enable innovative, creative and productive joint solutions for local sustainable development.

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[10] http://www.access2mountain.eu/en/downloads/Documents/brochure_final01_web.pdf

The main goals of the Big Foot Project were:
- Involving communities into an innovative and effective process for creating development opportunities in mountain areas, via identifying useful local resources and finding ways to benefit from them using the present–day means
- Elaborating a model for the development of rural areas focusing on reliance on internal resources for its implementation - through the valorization of local elderly people
- Establishing connections between participating local people from different mountain areas across Europe to enable their cooperation and experience exchange
- Finding and compiling good practices that can be disseminated at regional level
- Through data collected during the project, allowing a comparison of mountain areas across Europe, providing a better understanding of their commonalities and differences, and therefore possibly providing guidance for future interventions and policy-making
- Presenting and disseminating the findings to a wide public and in a way that would stimulating reflection on the media and in the society, eventually fostering evidence-based policy making

The project was applied in three communities – mountain areas of: Municipality of Gubio, Italy, Brkovitsa municipality, Northwestern Bulgaria and Trikala prefecture in the region of Thessaly in Greece.

The main publications - outputs of the project are:
- Transferability Tool Kit
- Intergenerational Approach Handbook
- Intangible Heritage Guides of all three communities
- Participatory Mapping Guidelines

9.4 The CARPIVIA project

The project aimed to assess the vulnerability of the Carpathian region to climate change in combination with other anthropogenic pressures[11].

The following ecosystems had been studying: forestry, wetlands, grasslands, agriculture, and tourism. In each system, the authors suggested key measures.

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[11] http://www.carpivia.eu/

Forestry:

- Promote (transnational) sustainable forest management enabling natural processes (concepts like close-to-nature-forestry, reduced clear-cutting, natural regeneration). Progressive implementation forestry plans, e.g. after extreme event
- Erosion control measures (close to villages) in relation to logging & rains
- Monitoring: Supporting and harmonizing regional and European forest monitoring schemes, including newly emerging pests and pathogens, changes in species distribution
- Preservation of large-scale, not fragmented green areas, including corridors and network of areas with non-intervention management
- Financial support programme to promote and encourage the introduction of locally adapted tree species in the lowlands (mainly oak)
- Increase awareness on the importance of integrated watershed management and effects of forests on water retention and drinking water[12]

Wetlands

- Develop and support ecosystem monitoring systems, network to monitor the state of waters and aquatic ecosystems in the region
- Integration of wetland protection with flood control practices: Support programmes aiming for wetland and peat land restoration, floodplain rehabilitation and creation of new wetland and lakes to enhance local water retention capacity and support biodiversity
- River and floodplain restoration
- Small scale water retention in lowland forests

Grassland

- Implement agri-environment measures and Natura2000 management plans
- Diversify species and breeds of crops and animals
- Manage through grazing, mowing, not abandonment, mulching, fertilization

Agriculture

- Small-scale traditional farms, which are an important economic activity in the Carpathian region, deliver multiple ecosystem services and should be supported
- Agro-environment programmes are critical to maintain and enhance biodiversity and viability of semi-natural grasslands and mixed agro ecosystems

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[12]

http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/03%20Meetings%20and%20Events/Others/WED%202015/presentations_CZ%20seminar/WG%20Adaptation%20Climate%20Change_Szalai.pdf

Tourism

- Continue diversification resorts
- Market diversity
- As for tourism activities, ecotourism, health tourism active tourism with cycling would be more preferred.
- Broadening tourism service structure connecting existing accommodations
- Supporting tourism information networks in region among accommodations, suppliers and tourism organizations; up to date information about current touristic situations (snow depth, hazards, traffic jams, etc.)
- Protecting the environment and its natural character / landscape

CARPIVIA project was linked to two other projects: CARPATCLIM[13] (harmonized gridded climate data in the Carpathian Region (historic data 1961-2010) and CARPATH-CC[14] (a framework contract for in-depth assessments of knowledge gaps identified during first year of CARPIVIA).

9.5 The BIOREGIO Carpathians Project

Project focused on integrated management of the Carpathian natural assets and formulated policy recommendations to foster the elimination of natural, legal, social and economic barriers that affect the ecological connectivity in the Carpathians. Main outcomes of the project are:

- Red list of species and habitats and Red list of invasive alien species in the Carpathians
- The study "Regional Development Opportunities of Protected Areas and Natural Assets in the Carpathians"
- The study "Financial mechanisms and innovative economic tools for protected areas and natural assets"
- The study "Common integrated Management Measures for Natural Assets and Protected Areas in the Carpathians"
- Analysis of Continuity and Connectivity for main animal species
- Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System15
- Trans-boundary management plan and pilot actions: Duna Ipoly/Poiplie National park, Iron Gates/Djerdap National park, Maramures/Carpathian Biosphere Reserve
- The study on transferability of the project results to the Dinaric Arc

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[13] http://www.carpatclim-eu.org
[14] http://www.carpathcc.eu
[15] http://geoportal.ccibis.org/

The Lists of threatened species and habitats (Red list) are widely recognized as the most comprehensive, objective global approach for evaluating the conservation status of plant and animal species, and during the past years also of habitats. The Red Lists are designed to determine the relative risk of extinction or collapse, with the main purpose of cataloguing and highlighting those taxa that are facing a higher risk of extinction, or those habitats that are under threat.

Tab 8: Carpathian Red List of threatened habitats and species

Groups assessed	EX, (EX?)	RE, (RE?)	CR (CR(PE))	EN	VU
Forest habitats	0	0	13	10	17
Non-forest habitats	0	0	10	26	69
Vascular plants	(1)	20 (13)	95 (3)	135	219
Mollusca	0	0	1	6	30
Araneae	0	5	8	44	114
Ordonata	0	0	0	4	5
Orthoptera	0	0	0	10	10
Lepidoptera	0	2	0	25	27
Petromyzontes, Osteichthyes	0	2	2	7	16
Amphibia	0	0	0	0	6
Reptilia	0	0	1	3	3
Aves	0	1	5	14	8
Mammalia	1	0	2	3	17

Source: BioRegio Carpathians final publication, June 2014

Legend: *EX = Extinct; EX? = probably extinct; RE = Regionally Extinct; RE? = probably regionally extinct; CR = Critically Endangered; CR (PE) = Critically Endangered (possibly extinct); EN = Endangered; VU = Vulnerable (IUCN "threatened" categories)*

The aim of the regional assessment was:
- to identify those species and habitats that are threatened with extinction and in danger of disappearance in their natural range, or have a small natural range following their regression or by reason of their intrinsically restricted area, or present outstanding examples of typical characteristics of the region at the Carpathian level – so that appropriate conservation action can be taken to improve their status,
- to use it as an indicator for assessing the condition of ecosystems and to identify areas and habitats that need conservation measures to prevent extinctions,

- to contribute to regional conservation planning and to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention and European legislation,
- to contribute to averting European/global biodiversity loss,
- to monitor on a continuous basis the status of a representative selection of species (as biodiversity indicators) that cover all the major ecosystems of the region.

According to IUCN guidelines the red lists include only species and habitats in danger of becoming extinct or in risk of collapse. Many others were left out due to e.g. lack of data and knowledge.

According to the Protocol on Biodiversity to the Carpathian Convention, each Party shall:
- pursue policies aiming at the prevention of introducing or releasing invasive alien species,
- implementing early warning systems for new invasive alien species.[16]

Tab 9: Invasive alien plant and animal species in the Carpathians

Group assessed	Number of species
Vascular plants	37
Mollusca	11
Malacostraca	1
Orthoptera	1
Hemiptera	2
Lepidoptera	6
Coleoptera	4
Osteichthyes	10
Reptilia	1
Mammalia	4

Source: BioRegio Carpathians final publication, June 2014

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[16] http://www.ccibis.org/carpathian-values/95-red-list-of-species-habitats-and-invasive-alien-species

The study **"Regional Development Opportunities for Protected Areas and Natural Assets in the Carpathians"** was developed during the BioREGIO project under Work Package 4. The study covers six sectors, namely tourism, agriculture, forestry, non-timber forest products, fisheries and energy.

The scope of the study was to provide:
- short analysis of the characteristics of the Carpathians having an impact on regional development in protected areas,
- outlook on the six sectors and their relation to protected areas and natural assets, including definitions, existing guidance, standards and initiatives, challenges and opportunities[17].

The study **"Common Integrated Management Measures for Natural Assets and Protected Areas in the Carpathians"** promotes the harmonized management of natural assets and protected areas including Natura 2000 sites in the Carpathians by involving all relevant stakeholders and by building on the existing framework of cooperation of the Carpathian Convention, its Biodiversity Protocol and other related transnational networks and initiatives.[18]

The study was prepared during a period of 18 months by a group of over 50 experts from all the participating countries, and through much wider consultation within expert communities in each country and at a number of specialist consultation workshops and regional stakeholder consultation meetings. It includes four main sections related to each of the focal areas (biodiversity assets). The assets are:
- Forests
- High nature value grasslands
- Wetlands
- Large mammals

The study includes a large number of case studies from the region highlighting examples of good practice. Most case studies include web references for further investigation and a comprehensive reference list is also provided. The authors formulated concrete measures for each of the four natural assets.

The Analysis of Continuity and Connectivity analyses human-wildlife coexistence for main animal species: the Eurasian lynx, the grey wolf, the brown bear, the Eurasian otter, the western capercailzie, the chamois and the European hare.

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[17] http://www.ccibis.org/carpathian-values/102-sustainable-development-in-the-carpathian-region
[18] http://www.southeast-europe.net/en/projects/approved_projects/?id=129

The Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System[19] (CIBIS) is a very useful tool, which includes information on protected areas, biodiversity, tourism, successful projects, case studies and best practices, guidelines as well as funding opportunities and more. The CIBIS is accessible at different levels for the general public, protected area workers and teams or individuals who use, develop/compile and print the interactive maps for their work on a web page.

The common management measures and harmonized strategies are of high importance in case of trans-boundary ecosystems, where adjacent habitat types and nature values have to be preserved under different legal, social and economic circumstances. The Carpathian Region has several locations where bilateral nature management is crucial. The following parks were selected as pilot regions for the BioREGIO Carpathians project:

- Duna-Ipoly National Park: Ipoly-valley (HU) / Poiplie Ramsar site (SK)
- Iron Gates Nature Park (RO) / Djerdap National Park (SRB)
- Maramures Mountains Nature Park (RO) / Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (UKR)

The project BIOREGIO identified main challenges for the future and formulated a set of recommendations. The four main challenges are as follows:

1. Time limitations: especially regarding the data collection and analysis, which can create fragmentations in the database coverage.
2. Financial limitations: some activities may cost more than previously planned. Furthermore, it is often difficult for partners to find the co-financing budget money.
3. Communication: the language barrier as well as the personal motivation can have impacts on the communication between partners.
4. Administrative issues. Internal as well as external administrative procedures can create bottlenecks and hinder activities. For example, related to the implementation of new financial mechanism, legal and administrative procedures can delay the process extensively.

Among different kinds of recommendations there are some affecting NGOs.

Regional development opportunities for NGOs:
Well organized and scientifically sound green non-governmental organizations are traditionally great catalysts of sustainable development and nature conservation. They assist both policy makers in establishing the necessary legal and funding structures and local people in accessing funds, starting up projects, initiatives and investments. The awareness raising role of NGOs is key in communicating environmental goals and viable solutions to the people.

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[19] http://geoportal.ccibis.org/

NGOs shall further engage in

- Awareness raising and the assistance of policy and decision makers.
- Boosting sustainable development in their region; they are encouraged to offer professional advisory services to businesses/locals. They are often perfectly situated to help locals/businesses in identifying their dependence on biodiversity and ecosystems as well as opportunities and methods, but also to access funding.
- Becoming the link between nature conservationists and locals, helping the good working together.
- Using their capacities and knowledge not only for initiating change but also for the monitoring of the outcomes.

9.6 The INRUTOU (Innovation in Rural Tourism) project

The project was developed and launched in 2012 by organizations from seven countries. It was financed by the European Commission. It addressed the following challenges:

- Rural mountain communities – excluded from the development processes
- Lack of knowledge about valorization, entrepreneurship, management, promotion of tourism resources, new media use
- Lack of specified vocational educational training opportunities

According to the authors[20], the InRuTou project was developed to address the above challenges and to facilitate sustainable tourism in rural mountainous areas, by creating and testing a set of tools and innovative models and by training existing and new local tourism operators.

The project brought together partners (universities, research institutes and regional development organizations) from seven countries, and its activities were implemented in six pilot areas located in five countries and across three different mountain ranges:

1. The Alps: National park Kalkalpen region (Austria)
2. The Apennines: Parco dell' Aveto (Italy)
3. The Carpathians: Tara Dornelor (Romania)

   Beskidy Mountains (Poland)

   Kosiv district, Storozhynestky district (Ukraine)

Source: UNEP, 2014

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[20] http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/04%20Publications%20-%20Press%20-%20Gallery/Documents%20and%20Publications/InRuTou_Final%20Publication.pdf

A twofold methodology has been used by the InRuTou partners:

1. The background analysis which helped to:
    a. determine the level of technology usage, perception of competencies needed in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude
    b. gather demographic data to better understand the target audience of the training
2. A structured literature review of the main published well-cited papers and books about rural tourism competencies and skills.

The research objective of the structured literature review was to gain insights from the academic literature about the competencies needed by rural tourism managers. Several keywords were chosen in order to search through the literature: rural tourism, rural tourism competencies, rural tourism strategy, and rural tourism innovation. The final sample consisted of 91 articles and 9 books.

The authors gave a following advice: to find a balance between theoretical and research work and applied or practical project activities to generate benefits for local pilot areas and at the same time make a contribution for the scientific community. However – depending on the goal of the project – the practical activities should prevail.

Six competencies were found to enhance business for rural tourism, and form the basis of the course:

1. **Sustainability in Tourism** - understanding of sustainability, especially with respect to the field of tourism, will improve the development of sustainable strategies for the eco-tourism activity plan. This competence covers most of the important topics regarding the rural tourism customers and sustainability in the business management. This competence is important to attract tourists and to help develop a new range of business packages to improve business and environmental responsibilities.
2. **Entrepreneurship** is a well-known topic for new business managers. This competence will allow trainees to improve their skills in management and business model's development, as well as improving the entrepreneurial skills and attitude to forward new business to the rural tourism pilot areas.
3. **ICT** is highly important for the development of the business promotion in rural areas. This competency will help improve website management and online communication with the customers, also improving innovation and ICT skills and the digital rural tourism development. It covers ICT development and management for business strategic leadership. The knowledge and skills will enable business managers to manage customer satisfaction and improve performance standards.

4. **Management** is often highlighted as important skill to enhance rural tourism business. Management includes different skills and knowledge, including management of employees, organization, competition and conflicts, problem solving, as well as strategic thinking. The service level and risk management will help rural tourism providers achieve expected results and improve their business and services.

5. **Marketing** - this competence encompasses a range of skills to improve marketing of the rural business, their communication to the customers and selling their products in a smart way, giving the business a new way of monitoring their online business and analyzing niche markets. Marketing is a big topic that covers different kinds of skills, analyzing the needs of the business managers and training them. It will enable trainees to improve the sales management, generate new tactical sales plans and actualize their products and customer services, as well as develop a proper strategy to deliver expected results.

6. **Community Networking** - in order to develop sustainable tourism and attract visitors in a coordinated way, the community should learn how to share information and cooperate among all local actors. This competence will support identification of value chains, and finding innovative solutions in cooperation with other business.

The project produced four digital tools:

1. **The project website** - contains information about the project goals, the partners (with links to all partner organizations' websites), and information about project meetings and events. The website also provides the links to the main project outputs, and the eLearning and Sharing platforms. The website is in English, and the key contents are available in all partner languages.

2. **The e-learning platform** which integrates
    a. Self-regulated learning, as each learner is able to set her/his own pace in learning
    b. Project-based learning, as all learning activities are connected with the learners' projects
    c. Collaborative learning, fostering networking and sharing

   The content of the platform includes the following modules:
   - Cultural and natural heritage
   - Entrepreneurship
   - Hospitality
   - Management
   - Marketing
   - Community consultation

3. **The sharing platform** - this Social Media Platform is dedicated to the sharing of experiences among participants in the InRuTou project pilot training in Austria, Romania, Italy, Poland and Ukraine. The aim of the platform is to document country progresses towards the design and development of innovative rural tourist products and to inspire colleagues in other European countries.

4. **The InRuTou (M)APP** – the desktop and mobile application

   The InRuTou (m)app is a software application that works both on a desktop/laptop computer and on mobile smart devices (iOS and Android). It offers (prospective) visitors a range of tourist attractions in the given areas, accessible through a map of the area itself. Tourists will be able to browse all the available attractions and to review the attractions and to post comments.

The project ended in 2015 and produced several interesting materials like: "Innovation in rural tourism, Cases from European Mountain Communities", "Inrutou transferability manual", which can be found on www.inrutou.eu

10. The Evaluation of the UNEP

In 2014 UNEP made a report in which presents terminal evaluation of the project "Best practice of sub-regional cooperation: Partnership for the support of the Carpathian Convention and other Mountain Regions". The Project was recognized as an innovative instrument to foster cooperation, to support harmonization, to strengthen integration and to place the Carpathians within a holistic development perspective. The overall rating on the project was viewed as "satisfactory". Ratings on respective criteria are in the next table:

Tab 10: Criteria and Ratings of the Project Evaluation

Criterion	Rating
Strategic relevance	Highly Satisfactory
Achievements of outputs	Highly Satisfactory
Effectiveness: Attainments of project objectives and results	Satisfactory
Sustainability and replication	Likely
Efficiency	Satisfactory
Factors affecting project performance	Satisfactory
Overall project rating	**Satisfactory**

Source: UNEP, Terminal evaluation of the project

According to the evaluation **the UNEP Vienna secretariat** is provided a clear leadership and a strong coordination in the process. It is effective in servicing the Convention and steering regional cooperation amongst the Parties. During the evaluation of the project the main intended impact of the project was reformulated as: '*Sustainable development and environmental protection of mountain regions through strengthened regional and inter-regional cooperation in Central and South-Eastern Europe with an outreach to other mountain regions in the world*', what is a main objective of the secretariat.

The effectiveness of **the project management** is generally well perceived. The cooperation with UNEP Vienna – SCC is seen as uncomplicated, effective, transparent, integrated, client-orientated and result-based. The team of the Secretariat is well managed by the head of the office and well accepted by the partners.

Participatory approach led by the Secretariat what means that all meetings are open to everybody and - whenever possible - priorities and needs of the stakeholders were taken into account was appreciated by all parties. **Public awareness** about the CC project varies from country to country and should be improved.

The secretariat services including the location of the secretariat have been on an interim basis. But the parties have not been able to reach a consensus in where a new secretariat should be placed. The situation will be reviewed again in COP5 in 2017.

The financial sustainability of the project was assessed by the UNEP as likely, what is less than satisfactory. Main reasons were: the project addresses countries with economies in transition, possible impacts of financial and economic crisis and that environmental issues have low priority in the political agenda. Negative impacts of that should be mitigated.

As regards **environmental sustainability** of the project, infrastructure development (in particular roads and railway lines under the TEN-T Programme), hydropower development and intensive land management might have negative environmental impacts (if not carefully planned), leading to habitat fragmentation and biodiversity loss. The conflict between nature protection and economic development can be mitigated by establishing ecological corridors for the maintenance of ecosystem resilience and stability and secured through integrated participatory planning and management approaches. The project addresses these issues on several levels, e.g. working group on spatial planning, the negotiation of relevant protocols (transport, energy), the development of future project, e.g. within the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, etc.

According to the UNEP, evaluation **the level of commitment within the Carpathian countries to implement the Convention has to be strengthened**. There is a gap between policy papers, such as the adopted Protocols and practical implementation on the ground. Some opinion among NGOs representatives is that the CC is a so-called "soft" legislation without financial fines and sanctions, different than EU directives and regulations.

The evaluation staff defined **lessons learned** as follows:
1. The importance of robust and operational institutional frameworks to guarantee sustainable governance structures
2. Leadership and strong coordination at regional level is strengthening cooperation towards sustainable mountain development, and on national levels, it enhances ownership and sharing experiences among stakeholders
3. Capacity building through joint projects responding to and implementing policy decisions ('learning by doing') is leading to improved communication and contributing to awareness raising
4. Biodiversity protection is only possible through regional, integrated, and participative approaches

5. Investing in catalytic interventions with the potential of transferability of results contributes to make mountain development in other regions of the world more environmentally sound

6. Emphasis on the project design but keeping a certain decree for adaptation and flexibility

7. Ensuring appropriate human capacity according to realistic workloads as a prerequisite for efficient and effective management of a project

8. The Carpathian Convention is perceived by stakeholders as a neutral and consensual framework of cooperation jointly 'owned' by all participating countries, organizations and institutions.

The evaluation staff found some **shortcomings** as:

1. In some meetings, too much time is spent with endless discussions with no real output or impact (e.g.: location of the Permanent Secretariat)

2. There is still no agreement between the Parties on the delineation of the Carpathian Mountains

3. The question of the location of the permanent Secretariat of the Convention is not yet solved

4. A discrepancy exists between commitments made by governments (e.g. the adoption of policy documents) and practical implementation

11. The Project Assessment

During the study preparation, several discussions were made with key people in Slovakia who are involved in the CC project. The most important and interesting were discussions with Mr. Ján Julény (the Ministry of Environment SR), Mr. Ján Kadlečík (the State Nature Conservancy SR) and with Mr. Luboš Halada (the Slovak Academy of Science). They think that the CC project is meaningful, "tailored" for the Slovak environment, and a lot of good outputs have been produced so far. The whole process has higher speed compared to the case of the Alps, because "we are more active". Concerning the relations to the other similar projects in the territory like the Carpathian Euroregion and to the other CBC structures (like EGTC) they think that more coordination and harmonization is needed and that they should implement further exchange information among themselves. Discussing the initiatives like CNPA, CWI, CERI, S4C, Alpine-Carpathian Cooperation Forum, they did not have so much information, but they thought that a lot of good project ideas have been created, which have not been used. They think that more activities of the CC project should be oriented towards civic society and local and regional governments in the territory. In question of connectedness of the CC project with the macro regional strategies of EUSDR and EUSBSR, they thought that at least information interconnection between structures is missing. Concerning the considered new macro regional strategy in the Carpathian region they thought that it has a little chance to succeed and that the DG REGIO declared recently that this MRS is not planned.

Other issue in the CC project is that from the CC side there is no one to submit projects. Regarding the potential role of CESCI, they can imagine that CESCI could find its role in the project, to take the project ideas and to submit them, to communicate directly with the Secretariat or to spread information towards the local and regional governments and the civic society.

According to the above-mentioned ideas and the conclusion from the UNEP evaluation, we can sum up that the Carpathian Framework Convention is really an innovative instrument to develop cooperation in the area of biodiversity protection and sustainable mountain development in the Carpathians. It provides a real trans-national platform for multi-stakeholder cooperation and constitutes a valid basis for the implementation of the most relevant EU policies across the Carpathian region. Signing the Carpathian convention was a unique idea to foster cooperation, to support harmonization, to strengthen integration, and to place the Carpathians within the holistic development perspective. The project is open for all relevant stakeholders in the Carpathian region.

The project created its own **structure** embedded in several COP decisions and is itself a sustaining structure, currently serviced by the UNEP led Interim Secretariat. The created structure consisting of the Conference of Parties, the Implementation Committee, Working Committees, Secretariat and other Group' Initiatives seems to be a very robust and hardly financed in a sustainable way. But for implementing legal, policy and strategic decisions and for the maintenance of results and the progress towards intended impact is such a robust structure is probably inevitable. The work of all bodies of the CC project is based on regular meetings which enable to find common style, language and direction of common efforts. Three years' period for the top authority – the Conference of Parties has proved that it is right pace to ensure the progress in the project. Sustainability of the governance structure is laid down in the Convention itself as a sustaining strategic approach, which would sustain beyond the life of the project.

In order to assess the progress in the respective areas of the CC project the next table shows what was done so far.

Tab 11: The progress of the Carpathian Convention project

Area	ToR signed	Action Plan / Road map / Strategy elaborated	Protocol signed
Biodiversity	YES	Strategic action plan for the implementation of the BD protocol	YES
Spatial development	YES	Strategic action plan	NO
Water and river basin	YES	NO	NO
Agriculture and rural development	YES	NO	NO
Forests	YES	Strategic action plan for the implementation of the protocol	YES
Tourism	YES	Strategy for sustainable tourism development	YES
Industry, energy, transport and infrastructure	YES	Action plan for promotion of renewable energy	YES – Protocol on sustainable transport
Cultural Heritage and Traditional knowledge	YES	Road map to achieve the objectives of the Art. 11 of the CC	NO
Climate change	YES	Strategic agenda on adaptation on climate change	NO

Source: own elaboration from www.carpathianconvention.org

It can be seen that a lot of work was done in respective areas within the scope of the Convention since the beginning. The most active areas are: conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity, spatial planning and tourism. The least active areas are industry and energy and cultural heritage and traditional knowledge.

Since the beginning, the project tried to find financial resources to implement its own approved strategies and finance the suggested projects. The idea to create its own independent financial EU source arose in 2006 and supported mainly by the Polish side was not successful. Instead of that the Secretariat has been seeking other options to promote financial sustainability of the CC project.

The last initiative preparing the synergy paper and Memorandum of understanding between the EU and the Carpathian convention "European Union Strategy for Danube Region and Carpathian Convention" looks very promising. The paper analyzes synergies between the CC project and EUSDR. The draft memorandum defines mechanisms of Collaboration between the CC project and EUSDR. (EU, 2015)

12. The Opportunities for CESCI-Carpathia

The CC project is implemented under the principles of the good governance, what means that it is based on key principles of governance like transparency, participation, effectiveness and efficiency. The meetings of the working groups are open for all stakeholders, who want to be involved. This is a starting point for next suggestions.

CESCI-Carpathia has the following opportunities:

A. To help with **information sharing, awareness raising and promotion of the Carpathian project objectives**, project activities, project outputs and outcomes. These activities should address both the public and the local and regional governments in the Convention´s member countries. This proposal builds on our experience that in spite of the excellent web page of the project and not neglected promotional activities there is still a lack of information mainly among representatives of the local and regional governments, who are responsible for policies in their scope and territories and should have information created within the framework of the CC project including outputs of the key implemented projects. Some projects like BIOREGIO reached the same conclusion: in BIOREGIO Carpathians Final Publication we can read: "All these led to the conclusion that there is a clear need to assist locals in finding ways to use the opportunities for sustainable businesses in their region. There are three main groups who can drive such changes; one is policy makers, the other is non-governmental organizations and the third being the locals." (UNEP, 2014) Also the EU strategy on adaptation to climate change calls for better informed decision making and to fill knowledge gaps.

B. To help with **harmonizing policies** among the CC adopted strategies and local and regional policies in the territory of the Carpathians. According to our experience local and regional policy makers in preparing local and regional policies in areas which correspond to those covered by the CC project are not informed about the strategies and conventions produced by the Parties within the CC project. This can vary from country to country, but more information resources in preparing local and regional policies in order to reach stronger compatibility among policies on different levels is in line with the Article 13 of the convention, which obliged the Parties to pursue policies aiming at increasing environmental awareness and improving access to information on the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians.

C. **To take part in the work of thematic working groups** of the project by participating at the working group meetings and/or being involved in preparing, commenting materials prepared within the following working groups. The suggested five working groups are the following ones: 1. WG on Sustainable Tourism, 2. WG on Energy, transport and infrastructure, 3. WG on Spatial development, 4. WG on Adaptation to Climate Change and possibly 5. WG on Cultural heritage and traditional knowledge. In the next table, there is the draft working programme for the period 2015-2017.

Tab 12: Working programme of selected working groups within 2015-2017

	Working groups	Activities	Expected outputs
1	On Sustainable Tourism	3 - 4 WG meetings and continuous online consultations. Guidance and coordination of the Implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and its Strategy. Possible joint meeting(s) with other WGs.	• inputs for proposals for follow-up activities and projects with the view of implementing the provisions of the Sustainable Tourism Protocol and its Strategy; possible development of a report format on the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and its Strategy; • common online Carpathian platform on sustainable tourism developed, maintained and kept up to date
2	On Energy, transport and infrastructure	1-3 Working Group meetings and continuous online consultations. Background documentation for development of the Strategic Action Plan to the Protocol on Sustainable Transport as well as of the application of "Guiding principles on sustainable hydropower development in the Danube Basin". Elaboration of guidelines for sustainable use of biomass WG meetings on specific topics covered by the WG. Possible joint meeting(s) with other WGs. Connection with green infrastructure, landscapes and ecological connectivity	• Strategic Action Plan to the Protocol on Sustainable Transport; application of ICPDR "Guiding principles on sustainable hydropower development in the Danube Basin"; for sustainable use of biomass; inputs for proposals for follow-up activities and projects

	Working groups	Activities	Expected outputs
3	On Spatial development	1-2 meetings. Working Group meetings and continuous online consultations. Information sharing and coordination of projects developed for application to European programmes. Promotion of the Carpathian Convention as strategic tool complementary to the already existing EU macro-regional strategies. Possible joint meeting(s) with other WGs. Connection with landscapes and ecological connectivity.	• support in the development and implementation of transnational projects aiming at implementing the Carpathian Convention
4	On adaptation to climate change	1-2 meetings. Working Group meetings. Possible activities with ICPDR. Coordination of the implementation of the Strategic Agenda on adaptation to climate change in the Carpathian Region, Possible joint meeting(s) with other WGs.	• inputs for proposals for follow-up activities and projects, in particular with ICPDR; joint activities with the Alpine Convention regarding adaptation at the local level
5	On cultural heritage and traditional knowledge	1-3 meetings. Working Group meetings and continuous online consultations. Coordination and guidance for implementation of the Road Map to achieve the Article 11 of the Carpathian Convention Elaboration of the Protocol on the Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge, the Strategic Action Plan to the Protocol; Cooperation with Alpine Convention Possible joint meeting(s) with other WGs.	• proposal for the Protocol on the Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge and its Strategic Action Plan; List of project ideas, List of Institution dealing with the cultural issues; Common criteria for definition of items to be included into a possible Carpathian Cultural Heritage Inventory defined; The Road Map implemented.

Source: Decision COP4/14

D. **To enter into the related groups and initiatives** and be involved in their work. The suggestion is to enter in or be involved in the work of the Science for Carpathians. The S4C is working on its research agenda for 2015-2020 and it regularly organizes the Forum Carpaticum. Further, to take part in activities organized by the Alpine-Carpathian Cooperation Forum and the Europe of the Carpathians.

E. **To submit projects** within the scope of the CC project addressed INTERREG sources mainly INTERREG A and INTERREG B – Central Europe, Danube, which are based on "the EU Strategy for the Danube region and the Carpathians" and/or based on "the Priority actions for the Carpathian space" adopted by the COP3. The DTP has direct link with the Convention in their priorities 2.2, 2.3 and 3.1 and the second call was launched in autumn 2016. The second call of INTERREG – Central Europe programme was launched in April 2016.

13. References, abbreviations, list of tables

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Abbreviations

AEBR	Association of European Border Regions
AER	Assembly of European Regions
ANPED	Northern Alliance for Sustainability
CBC	Cross-Border Cooperation
CC	Carpathian Convention
CECICN	Conference of European Cross-border and Interregional City Networks
CEI	Central European Initiative
CEMR	Council of European Municipalities and Regions
CERI	Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative
CESCI	Central-European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives
CIBIS	Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System
CNPA	Carpathian Network of Protected Areas
COP	Conference of the Parties
CWI	Carpathian Wetlands Initiative
DTP	Danube Transnational Programme
EGTC	European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation
ENPI	European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument
EURAC	European Academy
EUSBSR	European Strategy for Baltic Sea Region
EUSDR	European Strategy for Danube Region
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HUF	Hungarian Forint
ICPDR	International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River
INTERREG	Inter Regional
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IRC	Inter-Regional Cooperation
KEO	Carpathian Environment Outlook
LSG	Local Self-Government
MEP	Member of European Parliament
MRS	Macro Regional Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SC	Steering Committee
S4C	Science for Carpathians
TEN	Trans-European Networks
TOR	Term of Reference
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
VASICA	The Carpathian Spatial Development Vision
WG	Working Group
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

List of tables