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## Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention) (25 November 2020, online meeting)

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### 1. Opening of the COP6 meeting

The 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (COP6) was held on 25 November 2020 in an online format due to the COVID – 19 pandemic. The meeting was opened by Mr. Harald Egerer, the Head of the UNEP Vienna Office - Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, who welcomed the participants and invited Mr. Péter Király, Head of the Department for International Relations of the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture, in the capacity of the Hungarian Presidency, to give the opening remarks. Mr. Király emphasized the challenge of holding the COP online for the first time, expressed appreciation to the Parties and partners for their contribution to the preparatory process in these special a circumstances, thanked for the high interest (over 120 participants, including governmental officials, representative of international organizations, Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), civile society organization, local and regional authorities, research institutes) to the conference and expressed the hope that the COP6 will be successfully conducted and take all the decisions needed for the smooth continuation of the work under the Carpathian Convention. He also highly appreciated the presence of Ms. Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director in these difficult times when UNEP makes a lot of efforts to contribute to coping with the pandemic’s situation.

### 2. Welcoming speech by the UNEP Executive Director, Ms. Inger Andersen

Mr. Péter Király invited Ms. Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director, to deliver the welcoming speech. In her speech, Ms. Andersen, acknowledging the Carpathian Convention as a vital tool for protecting the precious Carpathian ecosystems, suggested several actions, that in UNEP’s perspective can strengthen the impact of the Convention’s work, including accelerating the implementation of the already existing plans on conservation and sustainable use, strengthening the rule of law and further increasing transboundary cooperation to protect one of the Europe’s largest, and most beautiful, mountain ranges. Furthermore, Ms. Andersen, encouraged the Carpathian Convention and its Parties, to take the lead in the UN Decade on Ecosystems Restoration, and urged States to make strong commitments in support of the Decade.

The full speech of Ms. Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director, is available [here](#).

### 3. Virtual handover of Presidency - High-level speeches by the outgoing and incoming Presidency

Mr. Péter Király invited Mr. Sándor Farkas, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary to deliver the high-level speech on behalf of the outgoing Presidency – Hungary.

Deputy Minister Farkas called the attention of the Parties to the history and the mission of the Carpathian Convention a means to further develop the region, emphasising that the Carpathians connect the people of the region physically and spiritually. Highly appreciating the presence of the UNEP's Executive Director, Mr. Farkas also highlighted UNEP's role as a supporter of the Convention and the region. He highly appreciated the work of the Secretariat in Vienna under the leadership of Mr. Egerer as the Head of the Secretariat. Recalling the priorities of the Hungarian Presidency, Mr. Farkas reported on the progress achieved, stressing such strategic issues like the facilitation of the EU's accession to the Convention, the increasing visibility and recognition of the Convention in the international arena, and the further development of cooperation mechanisms. Finally, he virtually handed over the “shepherd's crook” - the symbol of the Presidency of the Carpathian Convention - to the Polish Deputy Minister for Climate and Environment Mr. Adam Guibourgé- Czetwertyński. The full speech by Mr. Farkas is available [here](#).

Then Mr. Péter Király invited Mr. Adam Guibourgé – Czetwertyński to deliver the speech on behalf of the incoming Presidency – Poland.

Mr. Guibourgé – Czetwertyński expressed his gratitude to the Government of Hungary for its efforts and devotion that it has invested in the Presidency of the Carpathian Convention in the last 3 years, ensuring that Poland can build on Hungary achievements and will continue this work during the next Presidency's period. The Deputy Minister announced that the Polish Presidency of the Carpathian Convention, while striving for ensuring a balanced implementation of the Convention, will focus on two horizontal priorities. First, the accession of the European Union to the Carpathian Convention. Second, closer cooperation with the local and regional levels. Furthermore, Mr. Guibourgé - Czetwertyński invited the COP6 participants to the ministerial conference of the Carpathian Convention in Rzeszow, Poland in 2021, to be organized by the Polish Presidency. The speech by the Deputy Minister, Mr. Guibourgé – Czetwertyński is available [here](#).

Mr. Władysław Ortyl, Marshal of the Podkarpackie Region of Poland, also delivered a short statement as a representative of regional authorities. The statement by Mr. Władysław Ortyl is available [here](#).

### 4. Organizational matters:

#### 4.1 Election of the Officers

In accordance with the Rules of Procedures for the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention, the meeting elected the following Officers:

**Poland** – Mr. Łukasz Rejt, Director of the Department of Nature Conservation of the Minister for Climate and Environment of Poland – *President*

**Czech Republic** – Ms. Eliška Rolfova, Department of Species Protection and Implementation of International Commitments, Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic – *temporary Vice-President*

**Hungary** - Mr. Péter Király, Head of the Department for International Relations of the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture – *Rapporteur*

**Romania** – Ms. Liliana Virtopeanu, Counsellor, Biodiversity Department, Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests of Romania

**Serbia** – Aleksandra Došlic, Head of Department of Protected Areas and Ecological Network, Ministry of Environmental Protection of Serbia (in absence)

**Slovakia** – Ms. Zlatica Csontos Šimoňakova, National Focal Point, Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic

**Ukraine** – Mr. Eduard Arustamian, Director of the Department of Nature Reserve Fund of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine

Mr. Łukasz Rejt, elected as the COP6 President, chaired the COP6 meeting on behalf of the Polish Presidency.

#### 4.2 Adoption of the Agenda

The COP6 Agenda was adopted without any changes. The Final COP6 Agenda is available [here](#).

#### 4.3 Review of the credentials

The Head of the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, Mr. Harald Egerer reported on the submission of the credentials for the Parties' official delegations, allowing for the decision-making at the COP6.

### 5. Status of ratifications and contributions: by the Depository and the Secretariat:

The President invited Mr. Grygorii Parchuk, the Carpathian Convention National Focal Point of Ukraine to present, on behalf of the Depository of the Carpathian Convention – the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of

Ukraine – the report on the ratification status of the Protocols to the Carpathian Convention and the amendment to the Convention, the Art. 12bis on Climate Change.

Mr. Parchuk gave a comprehensive overview of the status of all protocols and the Article 12bis of the Carpathian Convention, as summarized in the table available [here](#).

Since the COP5, two Protocols have entered into force: the Protocol on Sustainable Transport on 14 January 2019 and the Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural on 1 January 2020. Furthermore, Hungary and Poland have ratified the amendment to the Convention, the Article 12bis.

The draft laws on the accession to SARD Protocol and on the ratification of the amendment concerning the new Article 12bis "Climate Change" are under consideration in the Ukrainian Parliament.

No further updates or information were provided by the Parties or the Observers.

Next, the President invited the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention to report on the status of contributions to the Carpathians Convention Trust Fund. Mr. Egerer reported that all the Parties have regularly provided the required contributions and thanked the Parties for their timely payments.

## **6. Report on the progress in the implementation of the Carpathian Convention by the Secretariat**

The President asked the Secretariat to deliver a presentation on the implementation of the Carpathian Convention since COP5, that took place in Lillafüred, Hungary in 2017. In its presentation, the Secretariat provided an overview of the main COP6 Decisions, that reflect on the achievements of the Convention within the last 3 year and at the same time provide directions for the activities to be undertaken until 2023. The Report by the Secretariat is available [here](#).

## **7. Updates and recommendations for the COP6 from the Science for the Carpathians Network (S4C)**

The President, acknowledging the important role of science in decision-making process, welcomed the great support to the Carpathian Convention given by the Science for the Carpathians Network, established in 2008, that connects scientists across disciplines and national boundaries, promotes research focused on the needs of the Carpathian region and fosters dialogue between research, policy, and practice.

In this context, the President invited Ms. Katalin Mázsa, Research Manager from the Centre for Ecological Research, Member of the S4C Steering Committee, to present updates and recommendations for CC COP6 from the Science for the Carpathians Network based on highlights from Forum Carpaticum 2018 and the updates by the S4C community. Please see the links to access the

[presentation](#) by Ms. Mázsa and the [recommendations for the COP6 from the Science for the Carpathian Network](#).

## 8. Statements by the Parties

The President invited the Parties in alphabetic order to deliver the statements.

**Czech Republic** – Ms. Eliška Rolfová, Department of Species Protection and Implementation of International Commitments, Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic - [link to the statement](#)

**Hungary** - Mr. Péter Király, Head of the Department for International Relations of the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture – [link to the statement](#)

**Poland** – Ms. Bożena Haczek - Head of Unit Department of Nature Conservation, Ministry of Climate and Environment of Poland - [link to the statement](#)

**Romania** - Ms. Doina Cioacă, Director for Biodiversity Department, Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests - [link to the statement](#)

**Serbia** (*Secretariat note*: due to unforeseen circumstances the Serbian Delegation was not able to attend the COP6 meeting, however the Serbian National Focal Point, Ms. Aleksandra Došlic, conveyed a message through the Secretariat, that Serbia kindly offers to host the COP7 in 2023.

**Slovakia** – Ms. Zlatica Csontos Šimoňakova, National Focal Point, Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic - [link to the statement](#)

**Ukraine** - Ms. Olesya Petrovych, on behalf of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine - [link to the statement](#)

## 9. Statements by the Observers

The President invited the key observers and partners to deliver their statements (the list of the Observers delivering the statement is available below, providing the links to the statements). The President noted with regret that due to the time constraints and the limited online format of the COP6 meeting, not all the relevant observers and stakeholder could present their statements during the COP6, however, all observers were given the opportunity to provide relevant information to be circulated and published on the website. All the efforts and contributions by all the international organizations, MEAs, CSOs local and regional authorities, research institutes and many more, are very much appreciated by the Convention and its Parties. The President invited the observers and stakeholders to continue and further enhance the cooperation in the future.

List of Observers delivering the statements at the COP6:

- **UNEP** - Mr. Bruno M. Pozzi, the Regional Director of UNEP - [link to the statement](#)
- **Danube Strategy Point** – Mr. Robert Lichtner, Coordinator, Danube Strategy Point, EU Strategy for the Danube Region - [link to the statement](#)
- **CBD Secretariat** – Video message by Ms. Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity - [link to the statement](#)
- **Ramsar Convention** – Mr. Tobias Salathé, Senior Advisor, Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention - [link to the statement](#)
- **Alpine Convention** – Ms. Alenka Smerkolj, Secretary General of the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention on behalf of the Alpine Convention - [link to the statement](#)
- **ICPDR** – Mr. Ivan Zavadsky, Executive Secretary of the Permanent Secretariat of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River - [link to the statement](#)
- **International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC)** – Mr. Tamas Marghescu, Director General at CIC - [link to the statement](#)
- **European Environment Agency** – Ms. Annemarie Bastrup-Birk, Forest Expert – Forest Information and Assessments, on behalf of EEA - [link to the statement](#)
- **Euromontana** – Mr. Adrian Radu Rey, the Vice-Chair of Euromontana - [link to the statement](#)
- **Eurac Research** – Mr. Roland Psenner, the President of Eurac Research - [link to the statement](#)
- **WWF** – Andreas Beckmann, Regional CEO at WWF Central Eastern Europe (WWF CEE) - [link to the statement](#)

## 10. Adoption of the COP6 Decisions

The President reminded the Parties, that they have the whole set of relevant decisions and accompanying documents available, which will be adopted as a package. The President stressed that adopting the COP6 decisions would be crucial for the sustainable future of the Carpathian region.

The President asked the Parties in an alphabetical order to agree to a consensus for adoption of the COP6 Decisions. The Parties were requested to confirm orally and write “YES” in the chat box, when they agree to the consensus.

The Secretariat reported that all Parties present agreed with adoption of the COP6 Decisions by consensus. Then, the President announced, that the COP6 Decisions are officially adopted by consensus. The final COP6 Decisions and relevant outcome documents are available [here](#).

The President and the Secretariat thanked the Parties for great cooperation and congratulated them to the adoption of the COP6 Decisions.

## 11. Any Other Business

There were no items announced under this agenda point.



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6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the  
Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable  
Development of the Carpathians



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## 12. Closure of the COP6 Meeting

The President warmly thanked the Parties, the Observers and all the other participants for attending the meeting and officially declared the meeting closed.