

CIC-statement at the occasion of the 6th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (COP6)

Dear Parties of the Carpathian Convention,
Dear Observers, dear Guests, Friends in Conservation,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the worldwide community for the conservation of wildlife through sustainable use, the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) I would like to greet you at the 6th Conference of Parties to the Carpathian Convention. We all are used to personal meetings, but these are strange times, which need special measures and we can be grateful for these online meeting opportunities to still have the possibility for exchange of experiences and ideas. Life is all about development and adaptation to new circumstances ...

I would like to especially greet the staff of the Convention Secretariat and in particular Harald Egerer, the Head of the Secretariat for their tremendous work in the past.

We are glad to have the opportunity to address this Conference as an Intergovernmental Observer to the Convention. In order to strengthen our cooperation the Carpathian Convention and the CIC signed a Memorandum of Cooperation in 2016. Our shared interests are the conservation of nature and wildlife and the sustainable management of wildlife resources including tackling human-wildlife conflicts, as well as sustainable development and the improvement of livelihoods and food security. We also share our interest in preserving the cultural heritage of the region.

The Carpathians are for me as a Hungarian especially important, and also the Headquarters of the CIC is located in the hills around Budapest – not as high as the Carpathians, though.

We very much welcome the possibility to be an observer of the Convention, but through the initiative of Prof. Klaus Hackländer, President of our Applied Science Division, the CIC is actively contributing to the work of the Convention. With two other colleagues he is currently coordinating a report on the population status and monitoring of large carnivores in the Carpathians, which is based on 7 national reports and will compare the different monitoring methods in order to be able to build transboundary monitoring schemes. The end product will be a joint publication by the Carpathian Convention and the CIC.

And this is a field where you can count on the community of hunters – monitoring of wildlife in cooperation with other friends in conservation and science. We can also be instrumental in making sure that monitoring results influence decision-making of politics, while we all must voice also the needs of local communities, who live with and around nature. We are out in the field and can deliver data on the distribution of the different species, their population trends, even emerging diseases originating from wildlife can be detected with our assistance. Hunters are the sentinels in the forests, pastures, and wetlands with boots and eyes on the ground. At the end of the day, the majority of all natural and semi-natural areas in the Carpathian region are

hunting grounds of someone. The hunting community is ready to substantially contribute to the conservation and restoration of wildlife habitats. We already create a wealth of wetlands, plant hedges, and sow wild flower stripes, creating habitat not only for small game like hares, pheasants, and partridges, but to all kinds of animal species from insects through small mammals to all kinds of birds. Hunters do care for nature and you can count on us also in the future that it will be always our aim to conserve nature and wildlife species for future generations. Without nature there is no wildlife and without wildlife there is no hunting. Therefore, hunters must care for nature and you can count on us that it will be always our aim to conserve nature and wildlife species for future generations in cooperation with other friends of conservation, importantly also taking into account the livelihoods of local communities. Friends, use us hunters to our full potential! We need a unified, transboundary monitoring system for wildlife. I look forward to our joint work on large carnivores.

May I conclude by conveying the invitation of the Hungarian Government to all of you to attend the “One with Nature” World Exhibition next year in Budapest (25. September – 14. October 2021). See you in Budapest then the latest!