



Science for Carpathians: Updates and Recommendations

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**6th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties
to the Carpathian Convention (COP6)
25 November 2020**

Outline

- Update
 - Forum Carpathicum 2021
 - Research Agenda
 - MOU with the Caucasus Research Network
 - Summer School
- Strengthened Cooperation with the Convention
- Recommendations
- Main challenges

6th FORUM CARPATICUM

Linking the Environmental, Political and Societal Aspects for Carpathian Sustainability

Date: 21 June - 25 June, 2021

Place: Mendel University, Brno, Czech Republic

Format: Hybrid, to be adapted

Deadlines:

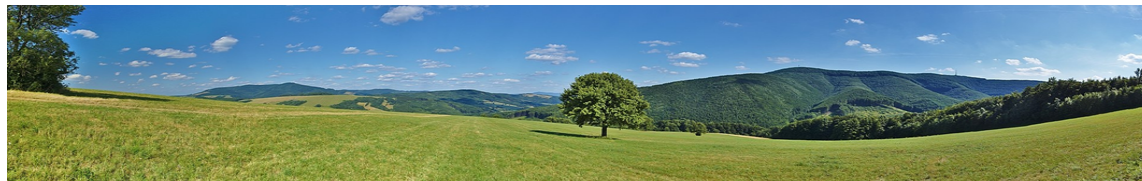
Session proposals: 6 December 2020

Abstract Submission: 7 March 2021

Preliminary Program:

- 21 June - seminars with stakeholders
- 22-23 June - Conference
- 24 June - Excursion, Gala dinner
- 25 June - Conference

<http://forumcarpaticum.czechglobe.cz/>



Further Developments: Research Agenda, MOU with SNC-mt, Summer School

- **Research Agenda**
- **MOU with the Caucasus Scientific Network (SNC-mt)**
 - developed, with support of the Convention Secretariat
 - aimed at supporting exchange of information and joint research activities
 - to be signed at the Forum Carpaticum 2021
- **Summer School**
 - Supported by the Visegrad Fund
 - Implementation in September 2021 depends on the COVID-19 situation



Strengthened Cooperation with the Carpathian Convention

Welcome to support of the Secretariat to S4C coordination

Welcome to Decision COP 6/8

- Strengthening science-policy-practice interface and cooperation with scientific networks

Call for: Further collaboration on co-production of knowledge and solutions for the Carpathian region

- Using participatory discussion formats during Convention activities (ex. special session during WG Biodiversity in 2019)

Call for: Jointly addressing donors to support research relevant for the implementation of the Convention

- Regional, transboundary and transdisciplinary research

Welcome to collaboration on priority topics via Forum Carpaticum, joint events and projects

- i.e. Biodiversity, Education, Climate Change

Recommendations: **Climate change**

- Protect ecological corridors to mitigate climate change vulnerabilities of species
- Adapt forest management to the predicted effects of climate change and anticipated future changes
 - in forest composition, species distributions, and provision of ecosystem services
- Develop projects focused on climate change mitigation and adaptation offered by Carpathian ecosystems, using climate-dedicated funding options.



Recommendations: Governance

- Take concrete steps to involve new actors into the Convention activities
- Maintain and build connections between different sectors (ex. through shared working group meetings and integrated projects)
- Use the Carpathian Convention as the framework to address and implement the obligations under other conventions
 - create a network of national institutions – providers of up-to-date, quality thematic data for reporting
- Enhance the implementation of the Convention's protocols and action plans - by supporting existing agents or via creating a specialized non-profit
- Enhance networking and partnerships among the various Convention partners:
 - communities and regional authorities, public-private partnerships, transboundary cooperation

Recommendations: Strengthening science-policy-practice interface

- Inform stakeholders about relevant research findings, and facilitate application of research findings in policy and practice.
- Facilitate transboundary and regional research
- Develop and participate in transdisciplinary partnerships, facilitated by universities
- Support networks of scientists engaged in multidisciplinary research in improving communication and cooperation



Recommendations: Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity

- Support measures to prevent landscape fragmentation
 - Develop common approaches to identify barriers to ecological connectivity
 - Involve civil society in decision making for the safeguarding of ecological corridors
- Support measures to prevent loss of natural and semi-natural habitats
- Support connectivity of urban greenness with the peripheral vegetation zones
 - This will lead to increase in biodiversity and ecosystem services provision
- Develop common wildlife monitoring approaches
- Support measures for eradication of invasive alien species



Recommendations: Spatial development

Integrated Open Space Planning

- Address processes observed in the past and challenges of the future: ensuring habitat connectivity, avoiding Human-Wildlife Conflicts
- Include ecological networks and green infrastructure building as an obligatory part of spatial planning documents development
- Support assessment of historical data in spatial planning for identification of high-value habitats and restoration initiatives planning



Integrated territorial spatial planning:

- Use territorial and inter-regional planning features to cope with the rural urban divide – and spatial justice in the Carpathians for:
 - local population leading an independent, self-determined life
 - equal access to civil and political rights and to political and social participation
 - availability, accessibility and affordability of services of general interest;
 - sustaining the current natural resources to leave behind even more stable, diverse or improved ecological condition for the next generation.

Recommendations: Water/river basin management

- Replace conventional approach to flood risk management by a comprehensive approach
 - involving prevention, defence, mitigation and preparedness and emphasizing the need to restore natural retention of floodwaters;
- Raise public awareness of the natural features and the need for conservation of Carpathian streams and rivers;
- Facilitate river restoration activities in the Carpathian region,
 - using innovative, cost-effective methods;
- Consider linkages between forest management and water quality in Carpathian streams and rivers
 - Strengthen protections for stream-side buffers and riparian vegetation
 - Implement restoration of watercourses together with their bank habitats to restore their mutual interaction

Recommendations: Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development

- Continue promoting the importance of ratifying the SARD Protocol, adopted at COP5
- Promote social innovation for sustainable development of rural communities.
- Facilitate marketing of typical agricultural and rural products and services
- Promote extensive farming and organic production;
- Conserve traditional knowledge and farming practices;
 - Protect and guarantee the management of traditional cultural landscapes;
- Foster agri-tourism and other diversification options
- Support environmental measures, green infrastructure development on agricultural land and participation of farmers

Recommendations: Sustainable forest management

- Halt the continued loss of primeval/primary forests in the Carpathians
 - to stem the associated negative effects on biodiversity, carbon storage, and other ecosystem services
- Continue to invest in protected areas and ecologically sustainable forest management in production forests
- Revise our understanding of forest dynamics in the Carpathian region:
 - In production forests, increase the use of close-to-nature forestry systems
 - Promote restoration of old-growth forest characteristics
- For conservation planning, develop conservation goals for the mid to long term
 - in some cases, this may require changes in land use (i.e. preservation, reforestation, etc.)
 - in other cases conservation - oriented management may be more effective in achieving conservation goals



Photo credits: W.S. Keeton, May 2019

Recommendations: Sustainable tourism

- Facilitate a participatory exchange and learning on how to enhance the resilience of sustainable and community-based tourism in the Carpathians in this new context of the pandemic;
- Support consensus - building among the stakeholders on how to achieve sustainable tourism in the Carpathian region.
- Develop ideas for pro-biodiversity businesses
- Create and disseminate sustainable tourism strategies and implement sustainable tourism products



Conference excursion,
Bükk Mts. HU, FC2018

Recommendations: Cultural heritage and traditional knowledge

- Consider material and immaterial cultural heritage
- Promote the identification and increase use of traditional ecological knowledge in nature conservation and sustainable land management.
- Adapt agri-environmental support schemes to consider local-regional cultural environments
 - help adapt traditional practices to the recent socio-ecological changes
 - include empowerment of local communities in these developments
- Designate **bio-cultural refugia** in the richest cultural landscapes of the region
- Help local, marketable product production
- Develop local-regional school curricula, with increasing respect towards heritage and traditional knowledge.

Recommendations: Environmental assessment / information system, monitoring and early warning

- Use long-term environmental monitoring for biodiversity conservation.
- Support the use of periodic satellite images in the evaluation of ecosystem services in the cultural landscape
- Harmonize datasets across countries, for instance national-scale primary forest inventories
- Enhance cooperation in environmental assessment, reporting and data sharing on the Carpathians between the Carpathian Convention and UNEP data platforms

Recommendations: Awareness raising, education and public participation

- Ensure prioritization of education-related activities within the Convention
 - Cross-sectional topic in many areas (ex. biodiversity, SARD, forestry, cultural heritage and traditional knowledge, etc.)
- Identify synergies between the Convention education activities and the the SDGs, education activities under the CBD and UNFCCC
- Establish a Convention working group / network of experts on ESD
 - to coordinate ESD-related activities
 - link education and awareness raising with other Convention activities
 - support intersectoral and transdisciplinary co-operation on the national level and among the Carpathian countries.
- Use educational channels to promote the Carpathian Convention, such as Summer Schools, school and university courses, educational programs and thesis topics

Main Challenges

- Ensuring active membership in the S4C network
 - Involving young scientists and supporting their research focus on the topics relevant to the Carpathian Convention
- Updating the Research Agenda of the Carpathians
 - Including new interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research fields
- Establishing and accessing Funding for research relevant to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention
- Strengthening collaboration with the Convention Focal Points and Working Groups
- Strengthening intersectoral connections
 - Reaching local mountain communities
- Enhancing access to the Carpathian databases through the S4C website

Thank You!



<http://carpathianscience.org>