

Statement of Romania to the COP 6 of the Carpathian Convention

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Mister/Miss Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Distinguished Delegates,

First of all, allow me to express my appreciation to the distinguished representatives of Hungary for all the effort undertaken as presidency in the past three years and to wish good luck to Poland as incoming presidency.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address the Conference of Parties of the Carpathian Convention, especially in these challenging times of Covid 19. My delegation would like to express its sincere gratitude to the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention for all the hard work they have done in preparing this very special meeting, to the representatives to all State Parties to the Carpathian Convention and all the participants to this event.

We are all united by a common goal, namely preserving the biodiversity in the Carpathian area. All the numerous stakeholders attending this event are indisputable proof of the interest and importance of this Convention to all of us.

Even if the odds were not so favourable and this past year has been very unusual, the work undertaken by the Convention was great. Every COP represents a moment for tacking stock of the progress towards our objectives and the steps ahead. Overall, the activity carried out under the Carpathian Convention is very intense and the development of its activities is incomparable to any other environmental protection treaty. Since the entry into force of the Convention, five protocols have been adopted under the Convention and were ratified by most of the State Parties.

Carpathians are a hot spot for biodiversity as a reference topic, also when it comes to ecological connectivity and green infrastructure. The Carpathian network of protected areas and the ecological connectivity between them is one of the successful topics of the Convention. New steps have been undertaken in the direction of strengthening the transboundary connectivity, also by the approving the *Joint strategic action plan for the implementation of the Protocol on sustainable transport* as well as the *International Action Plan on Conservation of Large Carnivores and Ensuring Ecological Connectivity in the Carpathians*.

Other sectors also are subject to ongoing development – as it is the case of the new article regarding the climate change or the activities regarding the education.

We believe that all these initiatives will support the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the implementation of other agreements, such as the Paris Agreement.

Nevertheless, the Carpathian Convention offers the opportunity to mainstream biodiversity and environment in other sectors. We need to put a stop to the assault of fire, drought, pests and diseases, including invasive species to our forests and to better protect them, because we depend on them every single day, starting with the air we breathe and all the way to the pencil we use.

We need to communicate better and to bring the Convention closer to the people in order to preserve our natural treasure as a good base for living. The sanitary crisis we are currently facing will probably be followed shortly by an economic one. In this context, agriculture could be an opportunity for radical social and economic changes. Agriculture is at the same time the source for food supplies, but also for traditional practices, knowledge and species, to safeguard cultural landscapes and to improve and promote sustainable economic development. Progress has been done and it should be recognized accordingly. Together we can overcome the challenges we are currently facing only by an effective collaboration between the public and private sectors.

We believe that the exchange of good practices and information regarding good governance in the Carpathian area has an important role to play in supporting success stories.

Finally, I would like to thank all State Parties for their cooperation as well as to the Secretariat for its continuous support in moving ahead the works of the Convention.