
**Seventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the
Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable
Development of the Carpathians**

CC/COP7/DOC17

**Terms of Reference for the Carpathian Convention Working Group
on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity**

FINAL

Background and mandate

The Carpathian Convention Working Group on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity (WG Biodiversity) was **established by the decision COP1/4 para 1** of the First Conference of the Parties¹ (COP1) to the Carpathian Convention (Kyiv, 2006).

The Second Conference of the Parties² (COP2) to the Carpathian Convention (Bucharest, 2008) adopted the **Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity** (Protocol on Biodiversity) by its decision COP2/1 para 3, while the related **Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the Protocol on Biodiversity** was adopted by the decision COP3/1 para 1 of the Third Conference of the Parties³ (Bratislava, 2011), that should be implemented within 12 years from its adoption.

The Fifth Conference of the Parties⁴ (COP5 Lillafüred, 2017) mandated the WG Biodiversity to prioritize its work on large carnivores' topic for the next implementation period and welcomed support by relevant partners in this respect. Further to this, the last Conference of the Parties⁵ (COP6, 2020) in its decision COP6/9 para 1 adopted the **International Action Plan on Conservation of Large Carnivores and Ensuring Ecological Connectivity** and encouraged the Parties, the WG Biodiversity and other stakeholders, with support of the Secretariat, to ensure smooth implementation of the Action Plan.

Furthermore, the COP6 welcomed the contributions of the WG Biodiversity and of the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) to the development of the Report on population status of large carnivores and monitoring methods in the Carpathians that shall support harmonization of monitoring of large carnivores in the Carpathians, in accordance with the Action Plan on Conservation of Large Carnivores and Ensuring Ecological Connectivity, and in this respect, requested the WG Biodiversity and relevant partners to support this process (COP6/9 para 2).

In addition, the COP6 encouraged the Parties and WG Biodiversity to further explore topics for collaboration with WG Climate Change and WG Forest, inter alia, and if possible, an idea of an assessment of climate change effects on large carnivores and their habitats, that could be linked to the assessment of the impacts of climate change on the Carpathian forests and their ecosystem services (COP6/9 para 3).

¹ [COP1 Decisions](#)

² [COP2 Decisions](#)

³ [COP3 Decisions](#)

⁴ [COP5 Decisions](#)

⁵ [COP6 Decisions](#)

Moreover, the COP6 in its decision COP6/1 para 6 and 7 established a role of the Chairperson of each existing Working Group (WGs), in order to enhance the implementation of the Convention and support cooperation and exchange of information among WGs and other relevant actors. In this respect, the Czech Republic took the leading role of the WG Biodiversity for the implementation period 2021 – 2023. Furthermore, the COP6 requested to update Terms of Reference for the relevant WGs.

Strategic objectives

WG Biodiversity shall aim at supporting the Parties to the Carpathian Convention towards their cooperation for the implementation of Article 4 on *Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity* and other related Articles of the Carpathian Convention. The WG Biodiversity will steer and guide activities of the Carpathian Convention towards the implementation of the Protocol on Biodiversity related the Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the Protocol, the International Action Plan on Conservation of Large Carnivores and Ensuring Ecological Connectivity, relevant COP Decisions and related Carpathian Convention Programme, including the WG Biodiversity Work Plan. Finally, the WG Biodiversity shall cooperate with other working groups of the Carpathian Convention in order to encourage the consideration of biodiversity, enhance synergies and ensure exchange of information.

Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Pursuant to the Decisions COP6/5, the Carpathian Convention shall be considered as a regional mechanism for the implementation of the upcoming Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in the Carpathians, translating the Global 2050 Goals and 2030 Action Targets to the regional level. In this respect, the COP6 requested further contribution to the process by the Parties, relevant bodies and the Secretariat, especially in respect to:

- development of the Carpathian Commitments for the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework,
- revision of the trilateral Memorandum of Cooperation between the CBD, the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention in the light of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework,
- further consultation with UNEP and other biodiversity related conventions regarding possible synergies for the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

WG Biodiversity shall contribute to the above-mentioned processes.

Global and European policies and processes

While conducting its activities, the WG Biodiversity will take into account and support implementation of relevant global and EU policies and processes, particularly the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030⁶ and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, contributing to achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Responsibilities

Members of the WG Biodiversity will have the following general responsibilities:

- to share relevant information, knowledge and experience in relation to biodiversity topics in their countries with a particular focus on mountain areas;

⁶ The EU Biodiversity Strategy being a European Commission's Communication, is not legally binding and does not impose legal obligations on EU Member States.

- to actively contribute to agreed activities and gather information from colleagues, if needed;
- to consult the activities of the WG Biodiversity with their national, regional and local stakeholders (public administration, NGOs, private sector, etc.), transit the stakeholders' view to the WG Biodiversity when necessary and to ensure the stakeholders involvement in the implementation;
- to undertake tasks as requested by the WG Biodiversity respecting agreed timelines;
- to contribute to the Agenda for WG Biodiversity meetings with proposals on topics to be included and to provide related background information as appropriate in close cooperation with the Secretariat;
- to report to the Conference of the Parties through the CCIC.

Activities

Further to the strategic objectives of the WG Biodiversity, the following activities and tasks shall be undertaken and supported by the WG Biodiversity:

- Cooperating and coordinating the relevant activities with the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) and the Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI),
- Contributing to the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in the Carpathians,
- Considering and supporting implementation of relevant global and European policies and processes, i.a., the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030⁷, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, while undertaking its activities,
- Supporting identification and involvement of key actors (including national, regional and local stakeholders) for exchange and collaboration regarding biodiversity related activities in the Carpathians,
- Supporting project development and cooperate on resource mobilization with relevant stakeholders and donors,
- Sharing best practices and expertise supporting biodiversity related activities in the Carpathian region and beyond for exchange of knowledge with other mountain regions,
- Promoting activities of the Carpathian Convention on conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity at various fora,
- Collaborating on developing ideas to raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity for the benefit of people and nature in the Carpathians,
- Enhancing transnational and cross-border cooperation on biodiversity related activities in the region,
- Considering cooperation and exchange with relevant Working Groups on cross-cutting issues and activities of common interest, including the WG Forest and the WG Climate Change,
- Providing recommendations to the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (CCIC) on further implementation of the Biodiversity Protocol and the related Strategic Action Plans,
- Providing inputs for CCIC, COP of the Carpathian Convention and other WGs, if requested.

⁷ The EU Biodiversity Strategy being a European Commission's Communication, is not legally binding and does not impose legal obligations on EU Member States.

Coordination and cooperation and synergies with other WGs and partners

The Working Group shall exchange information and foster communication with other relevant WGs of the Carpathian Convention and might seek cooperation with other interested institutions and stakeholders within or beyond the Carpathian Convention. Special emphasis shall be given to development of cross-border partnerships and cooperation. In this respect the WG Biodiversity shall:

- Establish close cooperation and exchange with the other thematic Working Groups of the Carpathian Convention (e.g. through regular meetings of the Chairs of the WGs to be possibly organized back to back with the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee and COP meetings) in order to:
 - ensure regular communication and exchange of strategic information between WGs, which will allow for enhancing synergies, consideration of common activities, providing relevant inputs and avoiding isolated approaches while implementing the activities of the Carpathian Convention;
 - support organization of joint meetings of interested WGs, if relevant;
 - discuss and agree on a timeframe for proposing and implementing activities.
- Collaborate with other regional frameworks/platforms/initiatives and related institutions and organizations (i.a. Alpine Climate Board), especially from mountain and neighbouring regions, for knowledge exchange and learning.
- Collaborate with relevant global biodiversity-related conventions and frameworks for enhancing synergies (i.a. CBD), as well as identification and implementation of common activities, especially related to mountain biodiversity.

Composition and organization of work

The WG Biodiversity is composed of the National Focal Points for the Carpathian Convention and national representatives/experts nominated by them. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties, the meetings of the WG Biodiversity are open for observers. In conducting its business, the WG Biodiversity will base itself on the applicable Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties.

The Chair will be appointed by the Party taking the leading role of the WG Biodiversity in line with the DECISION COP6/1 para 7 and will be responsible for calling and chairing all meetings. The Chair will also seek interaction with Chairs from other Working Groups established by the Conference of the Parties to foster exchange of information and explore possible cooperation.

The WG Biodiversity meets on a regular basis as determined by the Working Group to discharge its duties in an agreed format (physical or online meetings).

Meeting agendas and relevant documents will be provided at least two weeks prior to the meeting. The Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention is responsible - in cooperation with the WG Biodiversity Chair - to prepare and organize the meetings and provide minutes of the outcomes.

Parties hosting WG Biodiversity meetings bears the costs of meeting rooms and equipment related to organization of a meeting, unless otherwise decided

The WG Biodiversity meeting participant cover their respective travel and accommodation expenses, unless otherwise decided.

Term

This Terms of Reference is effective upon approval of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee and continues until further revision.

Amendment, Modification or Variation

This Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (CCIC) together with the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention.