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

CC/COP7/DOC/18

Terms of Reference for the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism

FINAL

Background and mandate

The Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism was **established by the decision COP1/10 para 2 of the First Conference of the Parties¹ (COP1)** to the Carpathian Convention (Kyiv, 2006). Furthermore, the COP1 invited governments at all levels, international and non-governmental organisations and initiatives, as well as indigenous peoples, local communities, the private sector and other stakeholders to contribute to and cooperate on sustainable tourism development under the Carpathian Convention.

While the Second Conference of the Parties² (COP2) to the Carpathian Convention (Bucharest, 2008) encouraged further cooperation on sustainable tourism activities and the development of relevant strategic documents, the **Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Carpathian Convention** was adopted at the **Third Conference of the Parties³ (COP3)** to the Carpathian Convention (Bratislava, 2011) by its decision COP3/6 para 4.

Furthermore, in decision COP4/6 para 3, the Fourth Conference of the Parties⁴ (COP4, Mikulov, 2014) adopted the **Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians**, taking note that the Strategy aims at supporting implementation of relevant paragraphs of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism.

The Fifth Conference of the Parties⁵ (COP5 Lillafüred, 2017) welcomed the progress made in establishing the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform (CSTP) and requested the Secretariat to elaborate collaborative agreements with the CSTP Centers involved in the process.

The last Conference of the Parties⁶ (COP6, 2020) invited the relevant CSTP actors to proceed with signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Secretariat if all formal requirements are met.

Furthermore, the COP6 thanked the CSTP Center Romania for coordinating the activities of the CSTP in 2017 – 2020 and invited the CSTP Center Poland to take the coordinating role for the next implementation period 2021 – 2023 during the Polish Presidency of the Carpathian Convention.

Moreover, the COP6 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, Poland took the leading role of the WG Tourism. Furthermore, the COP6 requested to update Terms of Reference for the relevant WGs.

¹ [COP1 Decisions](#)

² [COP2 Decisions](#)

³ [COP3 Decisions](#)

⁴ [COP4 Decisions](#)

⁵ [COP5 Decisions](#)

⁶ [COP6 Decisions](#)

Importantly, noting the limited progress in the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism, the COP6 invited the Parties, the WG Tourism, the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform (CSTP) and the Secretariat to consider and propose next steps allowing for revitalization of the WG Tourism activities.

Strategic objectives

The Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (WG Tourism) shall aim at supporting the Parties to the Carpathian Convention towards their cooperation for the implementation of Article 9 on Sustainable Tourism and other related Articles of the Carpathian Convention. The WG Tourism will steer and guide activities of the Carpathian Convention towards the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and related the Strategy for sustainable tourism development, relevant COP Decisions and related Carpathian Convention Programme of Work.

Composition and organization of work

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

The Chair will be appointed the Party taking the leading role of the WG Tourism 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 Tourism 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 three weeks prior to the meeting. The Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention is responsible - in cooperation with the WG Tourism Chair - to prepare and organize the meetings and provide minutes of the outcomes.

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

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

Responsibilities

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

- to share relevant information, knowledge and experience in relation to sustainable tourism in their countries with a particular focus on mountain areas;
- to actively contribute to agreed activities and gather information from colleagues, if needed;
- to consult the activities of the WG Tourism with their national, regional and local stakeholders (public administration, NGOs, private sector, etc.), transit the stakeholders' view to the WG Tourism when necessary and to ensure the stakeholders involvement in the implementation;
- to undertake tasks as requested by the WG Tourism respecting agreed timelines;
- to contribute to the Agenda for WG Tourism meetings with proposals on topics to be discussed.
- to report to the Conference of the Parties through the CCIC.

Activities

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

- Cooperating with the CSTP and its Centres on the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and its Strategy,
- Supporting identification and involvement of key actors (including national, regional and local stakeholders) for exchange and collaboration regarding sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians,
- Supporting project development and cooperate on resource mobilization with relevant stakeholders and donors,
- Sharing best practice and expertise supporting activities on sustainable tourism development in the Carpathian region and beyond for exchange of knowledge with other mountain regions,
- Promoting activities of the Carpathian Convention on sustainable tourism at various fora;
- Collaborating on developing ideas to raise the attention to the Carpathians as a sustainable tourism destination,
- Enhancing transnational and cross-border cooperation on sustainable tourism in the region,
- Considering cooperation with and exchange with relevant working groups on cross-cutting issues and activities of common interest, including the WG on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge, WG Climate Change.
- Providing recommendations to the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (CCIC) on further implementation of the Tourism Protocol and the related Strategy,
- Providing inputs for CCIC, COP of the Carpathian Convention and other WGs, if requested.

Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform

The CSTP shall be considered as a cooperation framework of interested Parties represented by officially designated national entities (CSTP Centres) that are created to assist the seven Carpathian Parties, WG Tourism and its stakeholders in implementing the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism, and its Strategy for the Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians.

CSTP and its Centres will conduct its business in close cooperation with the WG Tourism Chair and the Secretariat. Regarding the official set up of the CSTP Centers:

CSTP Centre Poland, operated by the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion Poland with support of the Ministry of Economic Development Labour and Technology of Poland, signed the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention on 27 February 2021.

CSTP Centre Romania, operated by the Brasov County Council with support of the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Environment of Romania, is about to finalize the procedures for signing the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Secretariat.

CSTP Centre Ukraine is pending further elaboration of formal arrangements.

CSTP remains open for other partners to join.

Coordination and cooperation with other WGs and stakeholders

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 Tourism 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, especially from mountain and neighbouring regions, for knowledge exchange and learning.

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.