



**Memorandum of Cooperation between  
the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative (CERI)**

**and**

**the United Nations Environment Programme Vienna – Interim Secretariat  
of the Carpathian Convention (UNEP Vienna – ISCC)**

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Carpathians are a unique natural treasure of great beauty and ecological value, an important reservoir of biodiversity, the headwaters of major rivers, an essential habitat and refuge for many endangered species of plants and animals and Europe's largest area of virgin forests, and AWARE that the Carpathians constitute a major ecological, economic, cultural, recreational and living environment in the heart of Europe, shared by numerous peoples and countries;

REALIZING the importance and ecological, cultural and socio-economic value of mountain regions, ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of sub-regional cooperation for the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians;

NOTING the complementary nature of the goals and basic principles of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians and the 'ecoregion approach': visionary and large-scale, science-based, participatory (Article 2(3) of the CERI statutes), and the existence of specialized technical and scientific competence within CERI platforms and programs relating to the goals of the Carpathian Convention;

NOTING the Carpathian Convention's Article 4 on "Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity, and acknowledging the expertise of CERI members in specialized areas of biodiversity assessment and research in the Carpathians;

RECALLING the Declaration on Environment and Sustainable Development in the Carpathian and Danube Region (Bucharest, 2001); ACKNOWLEDGING the strong historic partnership of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative, such as in the Bucharest summit and the Kyiv Conference; TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the participation of and contribution by CERI as an invited guest in the work of the 3 Bolzano Ad Hoc Expert meetings, and ACKNOWLEDGING UNEP's participation in and contribution to the 1<sup>st</sup> CERI General Assembly since its independence;

RECOGNIZING that the Carpathians constitute the living environment for the local people, and ACKNOWLEDGING the contribution of the local people to sustainable social, cultural

and economic development, and to preserving traditional knowledge in the Carpathians; and recognizing the ability of CERI to work on issues of local sustainable development;

**The Secretariat of the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative (CERI) and UNEP Vienna – ISCC agree to establish the following cooperation:**

With the purpose of strengthening the cooperation between the UNEP Vienna ISCC and CERI in support of the implementation of the Carpathian Convention, this Memorandum of Cooperation is aimed at providing a durable basis for the collaboration between the Secretariats in the field of information and experience exchange.

Regular meetings between the Secretariats shall be held at least once a year. Collaboration can include all the issues covered by the Carpathian Convention, and more specifically, the development of joint, coordinated and/or complementary activities in the following areas:

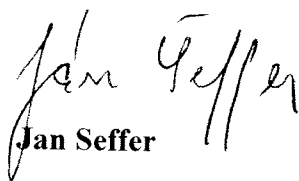
- Support to the further development of the Protocol on Biological and Landscape Diversity, in particular by generating the required background information;
- The preparation of programmatic documents for developing the Carpathian ecological network, i.p. through preparations of maps;
- Support to the activities of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA), e.g. by providing background information to the CNPA Steering Committee or Working Group meetings.

The present memorandum of cooperation is concluded for an unlimited period and can be periodically amended, as required.

Nothing in this Memorandum shall create or imply a financial obligation by either party to this Memorandum. Either party can withdraw from this Memorandum of Cooperation by notifying the other party in writing at least six months in advance.

**Signed:**

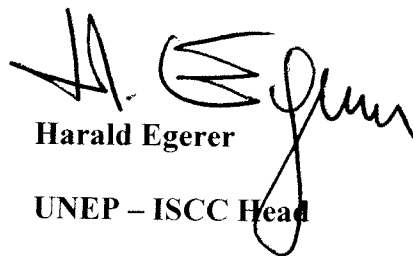
*For the CERI Secretariat*



**Jan Seffer**

**CERI Chair**

*For UNEP Vienna ISCC*



**Harald Egerer**

**UNEP – ISCC Head**