



NATIONAL REPORT
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE PROTOCOL ON CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF
BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY TO THE
FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE CARPATHIANS

National Report to be submitted to the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention

[România – 30 June 2017]

Introduction & background

This National Report has been drafted in accordance with the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians¹, its Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity² done in Bucharest on 19 June 2009 which entered into force on 28 April 2010, and its Strategic Action Plan adopted at the Third Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (COP3)³.

According to Article 28.1 of the Protocol, *“The Parties shall regularly report to the Conference of the Parties on measures related to this Protocol and the results of the measures taken”*.

According to Article 29.1 of the same Protocol, *“The Parties shall regularly examine and evaluate the effectiveness of the provisions of this Protocol”*.

¹ Hereinafter named “the Convention”

² Hereinafter named “the Protocol”

³ Hereinafter named “the SAP”

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION – REPORTING PARTY

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A. GENERAL INFORMATION OF NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

A.1 Which are the legal, policy and institutional achievements on national and regional levels since the adoption of the Protocol in your country, aiming at its implementation and the realisation of its objectives?

The establishment of the scope of application of the Carpathian Convention on the territory of Romania took into consideration the geologic and petrographic characteristics, the relative and absolute altitude, the degree of fragmentation, the landscape's energy, the feature and the distribution of the climate phenomena, the type of the soils, the type and the distribution of the vegetable layers.

The Carpathians are distinguished by their biodiversity, but also by their mountain streams, and rivers which carry water into the Danube River. The biodiversity is the main feature of the Carpathians and this is expressed by the wilderness areas with large areas undisturbed by human activity. The climate of this area is adequate for the forest, but also for alpine pastures. All the Romanian virgin forest are located in this area, including one of the largest virgin forest in Europe. A great number of endemic plant and emblematic animal species such as bears, wolfs or lynxes are very important in preservation of healthy ecosystems. The most valuable samples of the biodiversity can be found in 22 natural and national parks, but also in other forms of natural protected areas.

B. ACHIEVEMENTS AND FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION INFORMATION

B.1 Please provide information on measures to implement the Protocol and the results of the measures taken.

<p>Objective 1 – Measures for harmonization of policies and strategies and integration into other sectoral policies:</p>

<p><i>Pursuant to Articles 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the Protocol</i></p>
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<p>In order to harmonize the national legislation with global and European objectives regarding biodiversity, changes have been made to all major laws and regulations, including the Environmental Protection Act, Biological Diversity Act, Protected Areas Act, Medical Plants Act, Genetically Modified Organisms Act, Forestry Act, Law on Hunting and Game Protection, Law on Fisheries and Aquaculture, Law on the Protection of New Plant Varieties and Animal Breeds and others.</p>

Although there have not been fundamental changes in biodiversity policy in Romania since 2009, some changes or improvements have occurred in order to strengthen implementation. This has been mainly achieved by way of implementing legislation of the major acts mentioned above (by-laws). Key achievements or changes relating to policy and legislation in the last five years include:

- A new list sites of community interest (SCIs) was approved in 2015 by Ministerial Order no. 46.
- In 2016 a new list of special protection areas was approved by Governmental Decision no. 663.
- In 2016 the Management Plans for all the River Basins in Romania 2016–2021 have been finalized and approved by Governmental Decision no. 859.
- Also in 2016, in order to support the management activities of natural protected areas the National Agency for Nature Protected Areas was established by Governmental Decision no. 95.
- As result of amendments done to the framework act on biodiversity, in 2011 the Commission for Speleological's Patrimony (Ministerial Order 2227/2016) was established for the regulation of activities in caves and karst areas.
- In 2016 the ministerial order for approving the catalogue of virgin forests was adopted (Ministerial Order 2525/2016)

Their objectives are directly related to the conservation of biological diversity and biological water resources: water and water bodies are protected from depletion, pollution and damage in order to maintain the necessary quantity and quality of water and a healthy environment, conservation of ecosystems, preservation of landscape and prevention of economic damage.

In addition, during the reporting period the legislation concerning different related sectors: agriculture, waters, forestry, fishery, hunting etc, was updated.

Objective 2 – Measures for conservation, maintenance, restoration and sustainable use of natural and semi-natural habitats:

Pursuant to Articles 8, 10, 16 and 18 of the Protocol

In 2013 the management plans for the Iron Gates Natural Park and in 2016 for the Muntii Maramuresului Natural Park were approved. Both natural parks are situated on the borders of Romania. Before the development of the management plans, one of the activities done had as objective to establish common standards for the integrated management of natural assets and protected areas (common integrated management measures, in particular of transboundary natural areas. The study conducted promotes the harmonized management of the natural resources and of the protected areas (including Natura2000 sites) form the Carpathians.

Objective 3 – Measures for conservation and sustainable use of species of flora and fauna, conservation of endangered species including endemic species and large carnivores of the Carpathians:

Pursuant to Articles 11, 12, 16 and 18 of the Protocol

Please provide your inputs

- a) Sustainable use of species of flora and fauna: Ministerial Order 410/2008 contains rules regarding the import and export of flora and fauna. While not specific for the Carpathian products, parts of mountain flora and fauna, most of them come from Carpathians.
- b) The reference lists for species and habitats was updated at the end of 2015 and beginning of 2016. At the national level, the Red Lists are not approved and in this moment there is no legal basis for approving them.
- c) Habitats: Since 2016 an ongoing a project has been conducted to map the degraded ecosystems. This project aims to implement the EU Biodiversity Strategy whose purpose is to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU and help stop global biodiversity loss by 2020. Moreover, the project aims to set up investment programs for the restoration of 10% of degraded ecosystems outside natural protected areas.
- d) Large carnivores: in 2014/2015, according to national law, hunting was prohibited for *Lynx lynx* but allowed for bear and wolf. Starting with 2015/2016, the hunting prohibition was extended to cover bears and wolves.

Objective 4 – Measures for continuity and connectivity of natural and semi-natural habitats; ecological network in the Carpathians; enhancing conservation and sustainable management inside and outside the Protected Areas

Pursuant to Articles 9, 14, 15 and 16 of the Protocol

In 2015, the Natura 2000 network was enlarged by declaration of new sites of community importance. 9 of them fall under the scope of application of Carpathian Convention.

In 2016 Natura 2000 network was further expanded by declaration of new special areas of protection, 5 of them from the Carpathians. Also, Romania is currently planning to enlarge some of the protected special areas.

Currently, inside of the scope of application of Carpathian Convention are 759 natural protected areas (without the new special protected areas) and they cover almost 73,81% of the surface of the Romanian Carpathians.

During 2015-2016, 3 projects financed through the EEA grants 2009-2014 were finalized inside the Carpathians - with the main objective to provide effective mechanisms for identifying, evaluating, monitoring and management of the connecting elements (corridors, areas of passage etc.), and enabling to improve the development of a coherent network of protected areas.

A LIFE project - LIFE for BEAR-(LIFE13 NAT/RO/001154) is currently in progress and will

be finalised next year, with the preparation of an action plan for bears.

Administrators and custodians are developing new projects for implementing the existing management plans.

Over the last years, Romania drafted 2 species action plans: Conservation of Bats and Conservation of *Aquila pomarina*.

Objective 5 – Measures for prevention of introduction of invasive alien species and/or genetically modified organisms threatening ecosystems, habitats or species, their control or eradication:

Pursuant to Article 13 of the Protocol

Specific national legislation was developed concerning genetically modified organisms, including the assessment of current and potential future threats to the biological diversity, ecosystems, habitats and species.

No information can be provided regarding the assessment of current and potential future threats to the biological diversity, ecosystems, habitats and species of the invasive alien species. The Ministry of environment is preparing a project regarding invasive alien species, which will be funded through European funds.

Objective 6 – Measures to support cooperation under the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas:

Pursuant to Articles 7 and 14 of the Protocol

All administrators of nature protected areas designed before 2016 are members of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas.

Objective 7 – Development and implementation of management plans or conservation measures:

Pursuant to Article 17 of the Protocol

At the level of application area of Carpathian Convention, at this moment, 80 management plans for 384 nature protected areas are approved and into force. These plans cover 50,59% of all Carpathian protected areas.

The procedure of approving of management plans includes several levels of stakeholder consultations: beginning at local level, but also reaching the ministerial level. After adoption, the measures included in planes are mandatory for all actors involved. Also, after approving the management plans, all documents regarding spatial planning, other management plans for forests as well as hunting management plans need to be harmonized with the new management plans of protected areas.

Objective 8 – Consultation, harmonization and coordination of measures in border areas:

Pursuant to Articles 7, 16, and 20 of the Protocol

A Memorandum was signed between the Iron Gates Nature Park and the Djerdap National Park, in 2014, at the close of BioREGIO.

Objective 9 – Measures in support of the development of compatible monitoring systems and a joint information system:

Pursuant to Articles 18, and 19 of the Protocol

During the reported period, no such measures were taken.

Objective 10 – Measures of coordination of scientific research:

Pursuant to Articles 19 and 20 of the Protocol

During the reported period, no such measures were taken.

Objective 13 – Other measures of international cooperation:

Pursuant to Article 7 of the Protocol

During the reported period, no such measures were taken.

Objective 15 – Measures on education, information and public awareness:

Pursuant to Article 24 of the Protocol

During the reported period, no special meeting were organised in order to raise public awareness regarding the provisions of the Protocol.

B.2 Have you taken complementary measures to those planned by the present Protocol? If yes, please, list them.

No.

B.3 What have been the most successful aspects of implementation of the Protocol?

The approval of management plans and the designation of the new protected sites.

B.4 What have been the greatest difficulties in this implementation? Please tick your answers in the following list.

Lack of political will and support	
Limited public participation and stakeholder involvement	
Lack of integration of the objectives of the Protocol into other sectors	
Inadequate capacity to act, caused by institutional weakness	✓
Lack of transfer of technology and/or expertise	
Lack of adequate scientific research capacities to support all the objectives	✓
Lack of public education and awareness at all levels	
Loss of biodiversity and its related goods and services not properly understood/documentated	
Lack of financial, human, technical resources	✓
Lack of economic incentive measures	✓
Lack of synergies at national and international levels	
Lack of cooperation between involved stakeholders at local and national levels	
Lack of effective partnerships	
Lack of appropriate policies and laws	
Lack of precise definitions of potential misunderstanding notions	
Population/local communities pressure	
Lack of knowledge and practice ecosystem-based approaches to management	

Others (please specify)	
<i>Possible comments and details</i>	

B.5 Which institutions in your country are the driving forces to implement the objectives of the Protocol? Are they in contact with similar institutions in your neighbouring countries? The Ministry of Environment is the main institution responsible for the implementation of the Protocol and their objectives. By bilateral or tripartite Ministerial Commissions our ministry is in contact with similar institutions in neighbouring countries.

B.6 Are the local authorities or other stakeholders (NGOs, private sector ...) encouraged to contribute to the implementation of the Protocol in their objectives and activities? Have they undertaken activities or actions aiming at implement better and further the Protocol? If yes, in which particular field (degraded habitats, endangered species, water and river basins management, industry and energy, spatial planning, tourism, protected areas, communication, research, cooperation, information ...)? In the field of protected areas.

B.7 Is there a special unit/committee responsible for the consultation and mediation between all the stakeholders at national level? No, there is not. The consultation is made through the internet and, where specifically demanded, by public meeting.

B.8 Do you have any other general comments or recommendations on the implementation of the Protocol? No.