



**Documentation of the Methodology on the  
„ELABORATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM  
DEVELOPMENT IN THE CARPATHIANS“**

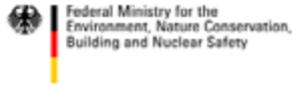
A Practical Case Study for application  
to other relevant multi-national regions



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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

BfN German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation

BMUB German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety

CADSES Central European, Adriatic, Danubian, South-Eastern, European Space

CBD Convention on Biological Diversity

CCIC Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee

CNPA Carpathian Network of Protected Areas

COP Conference of the Parties

CSD Commission on Sustainable Development

CSTC Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Centre

CSTP Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform

DCPO Danube-Carpathian Programme Office

DMO Destination Management Organisation

EC European Commission

ENVSEC Environment and Security Initiative

ETE Ecological Tourism in Europe

EU European Union

EWS European Wilderness Society

ICPDR International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River

ISCC Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention

NFP National Focal Point

NGO Non-governmental Organisation

NTO National Tourism Organisation

NTTF National Tourism Task Force

OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

REC Regional Environment Centre for Central and Eastern Europe

RTO Regional Tourism Organisation

SCC Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention

SCP Sustainable Consumption and Production

STWG Sustainable Tourism Working Group

SWOT Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

TOR Terms of Reference

UBA German Federal Environment Agency

UNEP United Nations Environment Programme

UNWTO United Nations World Tourism Organisation

WG TOURISM Carpathian Convention – Working Group on Sustainable Tourism

WSSD World Summit on Sustainable Development

WTTC World Travel and Tourism Council

WWF World Wide Fund for Nature

WWF-DCPO World Wide Fund for Nature - Danube-Carpathian Programme Office

YFP Year Framework Program

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2003, the seven countries of the Carpathian Mountains (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Ukraine) signed the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians. The Convention entered into force in January 2006. The overall goal of the Carpathian Convention is to pursue comprehensive policy and cooperation in order to guarantee environmental protection and sustainable development in the Carpathian region. Among the objectives of the Convention are the improvement of the quality of life, the strengthening of local economies and communities, and the conservation of natural values and cultural heritage. Article 9 of the Convention is dedicated to sustainable tourism. The Protocol on Sustainable Tourism was adopted by the Third Conference of the Parties (May 2011, Bratislava/Slovak Republic).

The first phase of the project for the development of the “Strategy for Sustainable Tourism development in the Carpathians” started in March 2013 and ended in April 2015. It was coordinated by Ecological Tourism in Europe and aimed to develop the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians. The core partners in the project were Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE) as the main implementing organisation, the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (UNEP – ISCC, later UNEP-SCC), CEEweb for Biodiversity (CEEweb) as the coordinating organisation for NGOs, and the World Wide Fund for Nature – Danube-Carpathian Programme Office (WWF-DCPO) as the coordinating organisation for the tourism business sector.

The goal of the project was the „Participatory elaboration of a Tourism Strategy for the Carpathians”, to be submitted as a draft for adoption at the 4th Conference of the Parties of the Carpathian Convention, supporting the implementation of the Tourism Protocol. The objective was to elaborate the strategy with active involvement of stakeholders, e.g. the governmental sector, the tourism sector, and the nature and environmental protection sector, supporting crossborder development processes and strategies in other regions through promotion and dissemination of the results. The content of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy consists of a vision, three objectives and two action plans (one country action plan and one joint action plan). Furthermore, the strategy provides a set of indicators to measure its implementation in the longterm, a chapter on institutional arrangements and recommendations on financial support.

The goal of the project was achieved at the 4th COP in September 2014 in Mikulov (Czech Republic), when the Parties adopted the Tourism Strategy, also acknowledging and appreciated the coordination and advisory support provided to the development of the Strategy. The mode of cooperation has brought considerable results in the implementation of the Carpathian Convention and its Protocol on Sustainable Tourism.

In order to continue with the development of sustainable tourism in this mountain region and not to lose the dynamic momentum, it is of great importance to monitor the implementation process and to strengthen and support ongoing consultations in each of the Carpathian countries. It is necessary to deal with the Strategy with concrete steps and actions and lead the Carpathians to sustainable tourism development.

The goal of a second project phase, which was coordinated by ETE between August, 2015 and December, 2017, was to strengthen structures and coordinate processes for a successful implementation of the Strategy in the seven Carpathian countries through regional cooperation, and to initiate a participatory process involving the stakeholders from natural and environmental protection, as well as from the tourism sector.

Measures to achieve the objectives of the second project phase were to (a) further detailing and proposing concrete tasks for the implementation of the country specific and the common Action Plan. Identification of measures (Indicators) for monitoring of the strategy's implementation, (b) assisting the actors involved in setting up a Carpathian Coordination Platform (Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform – CSTP) for the implementation of the Strategy, including the development of its job description and Terms of Reference, (c) assisting the Parties and stakeholders in setting up National Tourism Task Forces (NTTF) for the implementation of the Strategy within their countries, and (d) the creation of 3 databases on I) completed and ongoing projects on sustainable tourism in the Carpathians, II) financing instruments available for the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians, and III) a database of manuals and guidelines on the components of sustainable tourism applicable in the Carpathians.

Concerning lessons to be learned, throughout the strategy development process, the project partners faced a range of issues and obstacles that had to be overcome in order to move to the next step. As in phase 1 of the project certain “bottlenecks” became obvious again, which are the fluctuations of National Focal Points and the change of focal points on tourism in several countries. Hence, new official governmental representatives appeared at meetings and agenda topics needed to be explained in extensive details to bring them up to the same information level as those frequently participating in those meetings.

With regards to recommendations resulting from the implementation of both projects, the following suggestions are made: the initiative for developing a Sustainable Tourism Strategy, which covers a number of countries, should come from the countries and their stakeholders. In the ideal case, the financial support for the “system” to develop

a strategy should come from the countries involved in the process. The “system” for developing the strategy consists of a technical team experienced with the coordination and communication throughout the process.; An expert team might be formed, as in the case of this project, in order to provide the stakeholders with a first draft and assist them with the further formulation of the text. And the consultation process should allow for considerable time so that stakeholders can be informed throughout the phases and contribute to the drafting with their inputs.

Both project phases were financially supported by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz, Bau, und Reaktorsicherheit, BMUB) with means of the Advisory Assistance Programme for Environmental Protection in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. It was supervised by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (Bundesamt für Naturschutz, BfN) and the German Federal Environment Agency (Umweltbundesamt, UBA).



# 1. INTRODUCTION

This publication describes and analyses an approach on how to elaborate a strategy for the development and management of sustainable tourism in a large transboundary area. The core part of this approach is to design and implement a participatory process which involves stakeholders to a satisfactory degree leading to results that are acceptable to all and are achieved on a consensual basis. The elaboration of the strategy formed the first part of the process (phase 1), while the implementation of this strategy, after being approved by the governments of the countries involved, formed the second part (phase 2).

A challenge is posed by the fact that the abovementioned mountain area refers to the Carpathians, stretching across seven countries, all of which went through rapid socio-economic and environmental changes over the past two decades. However, except for these socio-economic and environmental changes, there are no major differences compared to other regions challenged with creating common strategic frameworks. The essence of a sound participatory approach remains the same everywhere: „Communication is the key“. A participatory approach is one in which everyone who has a stake in the intervention has a voice, either in person or by representation.

According to UNWTO, WTTC and OECD, tourism is one of the most important and influential economic sectors of the 21st century. It is estimated that tourism, in terms of its economic importance is similar to the car or oil industry. By quantitative measures, e.g. number of visits, total expenditure, employment, tourism is a significant industry, however, by its complex socio-cultural, natural and economic impacts, it can be rather ambiguous.

On one hand, tourism promises tremendous economic benefits: it is one of the world's most significant drivers of the global economy and providing major employment. Managed well, tourism can constitute a significant opportunity for many countries and communities in terms of socio-cultural, economic, environmental, and political development. On the other hand, tourism is a very complex industry involving numerous stakeholders (sometimes with conflicting interests) and requiring a significant amount of resources and coordination. Moreover, unsustainable and mass tourism can have destructive impacts for communities and the environment. Thus, tourism can have opposite effects depending on the way activities are managed.

The Carpathians are currently home to an estimated 18 Million people. The region is shared by seven Central and Eastern European countries (Czech Republic, Hungary,



Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Ukraine), five of them are members of the European Union (EU). This eventually increases the opportunities for sustainable development based on the rich natural, environmental and cultural resources of the region. Ties linking the Carpathian countries are noticeable in languages, music, similar tales, the characteristic small towns situated at the foothills of the mountain range, their architectural styles, etc.

## 2. STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 THE CARPATHIAN CONVENTION

For overview please find a chart on the Carpathian Convention in Annex 7.10.1.

In 2003, the seven countries of the Carpathian Mountains (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Ukraine) signed the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians. The Convention entered into force in January 2006.

The overall goal of the Carpathian Convention is to pursue comprehensive policy and cooperation in order to guarantee environmental protection and sustainable development in the Carpathian region. Among the objectives of the Convention are the improvement of the quality of life, the strengthening of local economies and communities, and the conservation of natural values and cultural heritage.

The Convention is a framework for cooperation and multi-sectoral policy coordination. It is a platform for developing and implementing joint strategies for sustainable development. The Convention also acts as a forum for dialogue between all stakeholders involved, also in the field of tourism.

While the Framework Convention contains general principles and provisions, specific substantive obligations are regulated with Protocols to the Convention. Article 9 of the Convention is dedicated to sustainable tourism. The Protocol on Sustainable Tourism was adopted by the Third Conference of the Parties (May 2011, Bratislava/ Slovak Republic).

Relevant bodies of the Convention:

- Conference of the Parties (COP)

The COP is the main decision-making body of the Convention. In the COP all Parties to the Convention are represented, the meetings are held every three years. The COP, among other topics, is responsible for the adoption of protocols, it decides on the Programme of Work as well as the budget of the Convention, and reviews and supports the implementation of the Convention as well as of its Protocols. The COP adopts and recommends measures to achieve the objectives laid down in the articles of the Convention. Therefore, the Tourism Strategy – as a measure for the implementation of Article 9 – has been approved by the 4th COP in 2014.



- The Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (CCIC)

CCIC consists of representatives of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention and meets twice between consecutive COPs. It is responsible for the preparation of political decisions of the COP. This includes recommendations for adoption of strategies relevant for the achievement of the objectives of the Convention. Also, the CCIC monitors the compliance of the contracting Parties with the provisions of the Convention and its Protocols.

- Secretariat of the Convention (SCC)

Among other actions, the secretariat supports the work of the different bodies of the Convention, coordinates the implementation of the Programme of Work of the Convention and assists in project development and implementation. United Nations Environment Programme, with its branch office in Vienna, is hosting the Secretariat of the Convention (UNEP – SCC). The SCC was operating as Interim Secretariat (ISCC) until 2014.

- National Focal Points (NFP)

Each Party to the Convention has nominated at least one person as a National Focal Point in charge of the Carpathian Convention. The Focal Points are affiliated to the national Ministries of the Parties, e.g. Ministries of Environment, rural development or natural resources.

- Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (WG TOURISM)

The Carpathian Convention has eight thematic and permanent Working Groups, one of them being the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (WG Tourism). The Working Groups function under the supervision of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee. They are composed of the National Focal Points for the Carpathian Convention and/or persons nominated by them, and are open to observers. The Terms of Reference of the WG Tourism, which are regularly updated, include the preparation and negotiation of the Tourism Protocol and the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians, and steering the implementation of both documents after their adoption by the Parties.

## 2.2 **TOURISM PROTOCOL**

In May 2011, the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism was adopted by COP3, which provides a legally binding framework for the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians. Since April 2014 this protocol is in force, which means that those Parties, which have signed the protocol, are obliged to implement it into their national legislation.

### 2.2.1 **CONTENT OF THE PROTOCOL**

The protocol aims to facilitate the cooperation of the Carpathian Countries in the development of sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism in the Carpathians shall be developed for the benefit of the current and future generations; the positive impacts of tourism shall be enhanced while the negative ones shall be minimized.

The protocol aims to harmonize sustainable tourism policies and activities among the countries; it also promotes transboundary cooperation measures in the border areas of the countries.

The protocol emphasises the preservation of cultural heritage and traditional knowledge of local people in the Carpathians via sustainable tourism, and includes measures to enhance the contribution of tourism to other sectors, such as sustainable forestry, agriculture, conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity, as well as local economies.

Full text of the protocol is provided as Annex 7.1.

### 2.2.2 **HOW THE TOURISM PROTOCOL WAS DEVELOPED**

The initial work of the Carpathian Convention (up to and including COP2) was co-financed by the EU CADSES Carpathian Project. CEEweb for Biodiversity, a network of NGOs in Central and East Europe, from Hungary and the German organisation Ecological Tourism in Europe (Ökologischer Tourismus in Europa (Ö.T.E.) e.V.) were responsible for tourism related tasks in the Carpathian Project and therefore were

coordinating the work towards the development of the Tourism Protocol in cooperation with the Interim Secretariat of the Convention.

In order to support the discussion among Parties on the necessity to develop a Tourism Protocol and a Tourism Strategy under the Carpathian Convention, CEEweb and ETE prepared a Background Document on Sustainable Tourism Opportunities in the Carpathians. The document contains 18 case studies from the Carpathian countries on positive and negative impacts of tourism in economic, ecological, and socio-cultural fields. It was presented at a side event of COP1. For the development of the background document, the “ad hoc CEEweb Carpathian Tourism Working Group” was established consisting of NGOs from the Carpathian countries who are dealing with tourism related issues. The group remained active during the development of the protocol and commented on drafts. Furthermore, representatives of this group participated at the official meetings for the development of the Tourism Protocol and at the COP meetings as observers.

The Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (WG TOURISM) under the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee was established according to the decision of COP1. At its establishment, the WG TOURISM received a mandate of the COP to develop the Tourism Protocol and its Strategy. The WG TOURISM was open to all relevant stakeholders, including official country representatives, international and non-governmental organisations and the private sector. CEEweb, ETE as well as the Secretariat of the Convention and National Focal Points put efforts to ensure wide involvement of the stakeholders into the development of the protocol.

The working group met three times before the adoption of the Protocol. The first two meetings were held in the framework of the EU CADSES cofinanced



Carpathian Project and were organized by CEEweb and ETE. The third meeting of WG TOURISM was hosted by Poland and UNWTO and financially supported by a project of the Norwegian Fund, which has been realized by UNEP/ Grid-Warsaw in partnership with Ekopsychology Society and ANPED.

According to the provisions of the Convention, the Protocol had to be submitted to the Parties at least 6 months prior to the meeting of COP at which it had to be considered. Therefore, while the WG TOURISM negotiated an advanced draft of the Tourism Protocol at its second meeting, to COP2 it delivered Recommendations on Sustainable Tourism only. A draft Tourism Protocol was finalized at the third meeting of the WG TOURISM and delivered to COP3 for adoption.

During the WG TOURISM meetings, a Tourism Strategy draft was discussed, parallel to the draft of the Tourism Protocol. However, the Protocol was at that time the highest priority, so that the text of the Strategy was not submitted to the COP3. In the current project the earlier draft of the Strategy was used as a background document and the core text of the Strategy was drafted from scratch.

## **2.3 RELATED DOCUMENTS AND INITIATIVES**

### **2.3.1 ALPINE CONVENTION**

While the Carpathian Convention is the second mountain-related regional agreement in the world, the Alpine Convention is the first. The Alpine Convention entered into force in 1995.

The overall goal of the Convention is the preservation and protection of the Alps. Eight countries are Parties to the Convention: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Slovenia and Switzerland. The European Union is also a Party to the Convention.

The Tourism Protocol is one out of eight thematic protocols annexed to this Convention. It is the tool for developing strategies on how to deal with the negative impacts of tourism and at the same time giving advice on how to use tourism to strengthen local economies in the Alps.

In 2013, a report on the state of the Alps with a focus on the sustainable development of tourism was released. The report evaluates the impacts of the Tourism Protocol and explores the remaining challenges for Alpine tourism and the room for a wider implementation of the Protocol. Its authors conclude that the Tourism Protocol is implemented through the existing national regulations and a number of good practices. They assume that “over the years, the Alpine Convention (<http://www.alpconv.org/pages/default.aspx>) has encouraged, or even directly promoted the drafting of some of the national regulations and good practices”.

## 2.3.2 THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is an international treaty adopted in 1992 on the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. The CBD came into force in December 1993. Over 190 countries have become a Party to the Convention. The Convention (<https://www.cbd.int/>) is legally binding; countries that join it are obliged to implement its provisions.

The CBD has three objectives: the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and a fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. The Convention aims at the development of strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity that ensure long-term prosperity of future generations.

### 2.3.2.1 CBD GUIDELINES ON BIODIVERSITY AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The International Guidelines for Biodiversity and Tourism Development (<https://www.cbd.int/tourism/guidelines.shtml>) of the Convention on Biological Diversity were adopted at the 7th Conference of the Parties in 2004.

These guidelines are voluntary and offer instruments for local, regional and national governments as well as for local stakeholders for the management of tourism activities in an ecological, economic and socially sustainable way. They serve as a detailed practical instrument for the planning and management of sustainable tourism projects. Management processes and tasks of the responsible institutions from decision making up to monitoring are defined in the guidelines. The guidelines emphasise the importance of participation of all stakeholders in integrated tourism and biodiversity management for the sake of achieving a balance between socio-economic benefits of tourism and biodiversity conservation.

In 2008, a User's Manual on the CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development was finalized and released (<https://www.cbd.int/doc/programmes/tourism/tourism-manual-en.pdf>).

## 2.3.3 MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP

The Mountain Partnership is an outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, 2002) acting as an umbrella alliance for promoting specific regional and thematic activities. The partnership aims to bring countries, groups and organisations together to work towards a common goal: to improve the lives of mountain people and protect mountain environments around the world ([http://www.un.org/events/wssd/#\\_blank](http://www.un.org/events/wssd/#_blank)).

The Mountain Partnership aims to function as a broker for joint activities, facilitating contacts between countries and institutions and creating conditions for technical cooperation and resource mobilization at the national, regional and global levels.

#### 2.3.4 **RIO+20**

In June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/rio20>) took place. It is called “Rio+20” as it was organized twenty years after the Rio Earth Summit (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development). At the Rio+20 Conference, world leaders, along with thousands of participants from other groups, such as NGOs and the private sector, came together to develop pathways towards a more sustainable 21st century.

The Conference adopted the Outcome Document entitled the “The Future We Want” and a 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10 YFP on SCP).

The Outcome Document contains two paragraphs on sustainable tourism. The document calls for:

Enhanced support for sustainable tourism activities and relevant capacity-building in developing countries in order to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and

The promotion of investment in sustainable tourism and an emphasis on the importance of establishing, where necessary, appropriate guidelines and regulations in accordance with national priorities and legislation for promoting and supporting sustainable tourism.

One of the five initial programmes included in the 10 YFP on SCP is sustainable tourism (including ecotourism). The programme will be developed with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders and aims to respond to national and regional needs. The programme will use a mix of policy instruments and will set clear objectives, activities and indicators of success. In 2013, the consultation process with tourism stakeholders was implemented and the Programme was launched during the last quarter 2014.

In 2015, the 2030 Agenda was adopted. It contained 17 Sustainable Development Goals which were established for the future of the world and which each nation has to integrate into their policies. Among them are also some contents with relation to sustainable tourism.



## 3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 3.1 HISTORY

Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE) was closely involved in the development of the International Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development under the Convention on Biological Diversity since 1999. These guidelines were adopted in 2004. ETE aims to support the implementation of these guidelines in other international agreements. Therefore, after the establishment of the Carpathian Convention in 2003, ETE collaborated with the Interim Secretariat and the Parties of the Convention to promote the CBD guidelines.

Article 9 of the Convention states that Parties are obliged to take measures towards sustainable tourism including cross-border cooperation. For this purpose, at the 1st Conference of Parties (COP) in 2006 a Working Group was established consisting of government representatives, international organisations and NGOs: „Carpathian Convention – Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (WG TOURISM)“.

The first meeting of the WG TOURISM took place in 2007 and was organized by CEEweb for Biodiversity and ETE. A draft structure of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy was prepared along with first visions and goals to be implemented. The agenda of the second WG TOURISM meeting in April 2008 covered discussions on the content of the strategy. All seven Parties and observers, e.g. NGOs, participated in these meetings and submitted suggestions to ETE who collected them and created the first draft of the strategy.

In addition to this draft strategy, the working group also developed a draft of the Tourism Protocol. The work on the Sustainable Tourism Strategy was momentarily stopped due to lack of financing and political commitment. The Tourism Protocol was high on the agenda and pushed forward at that time, as the most important document to be achieved by the Carpathian Convention.

The adoption of the Tourism Protocol at COP3 in May 2011 underlined that the future Tourism Strategy should reflect its content and should be considered as an instrument for its implementation. This required a complete review and revision of the draft content of the strategy. The importance of the development of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy was once again confirmed at the meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee – CCIC in December 2012.



Therefore, in 2013 ETE started with the implementation of a project dedicated to the development of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians, in cooperation with a number of other partners and with the financial support from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety.

## 3.2 **OUTLINE OF THE PROJECT**

In May 2011, the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism was adopted by COP3, which provides a legally binding framework for the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians. Since April 2014 this protocol is in force, which means that those Parties, which have signed the protocol, are obliged to implement it into their national legislation.

### 3.2.1 **DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOURISM STRATEGY (PROJECT PHASE 1)**

For an overview of phase 1 of the project, please find a chart in Annex 7.10.2.

The core partners in the project were Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE) as the main implementing organisation, the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (UNEP-ISCC, later UNEP-SCC), CEEweb for Biodiversity (CEEweb) as the coordinating organisation for NGOs, and the World Wide Fund for Nature – Danube-Carpathian Programme Office (WWF-DCPO) as the coordinating organisation for the tourism business sector.

The first phase of the project for the development of the “Strategy for Sustainable Tourism development in the Carpathians” started in March 2013 and ended in April 2015.

This project was financially supported by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz, Bau, und Reaktorsicherheit, BMUB) with means of the Advisory Assistance Programme for Environmental Protection in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. It was supervised by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (Bundesamt für Naturschutz, BfN) and the German Federal Environment Agency (Umweltbundesamt, UBA).

The goal of the project was the „Participatory elaboration of a Tourism Strategy for the Carpathians” to be submitted as a draft for adoption at the 4th Conference of the Parties of the Carpathian Convention, supporting the implementation of the Tourism Protocol. The objective is to achieve this through active involvement of stakeholders, e.g. the governmental sector, the tourism sector and nature and environmental protection sector in the development of the strategy, supporting cross-border development processes and strategies in other regions through promotion and dissemination of the results.

ETE together with two experts developed a first draft of the Tourism Strategy. For the country consultation processes, ETE engaged 7 experts, based on the list provided during the 1st meeting of the partners. The experts were provided with Terms of Reference (TORs) to ensure drafting experts have always up-to-date comments and also to assist in providing the 14 good practice examples on sustainable tourism in the Carpathians.

Finally, at the 4th COP in September 2014 in Mikulov (Czech Republic), the Parties adopted the Tourism Strategy and appreciated the coordination and advisory support provided to the development of the Strategy. This model of cooperation has brought considerable results in the implementation of the Carpathian Convention and its Protocol on Sustainable Tourism.

Without this support these important milestone leading to a common approach in sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians would have taken considerably longer to be reached.

The content of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy consists of a vision, three objectives, two action plans (one country action plan and one joint action plan). Furthermore, the strategy provides a set of indicators to measure its implementation in the long-term, a chapter on institutional arrangements and recommendations on financial support.

The text of the strategy is provided in Annex 7.2.

### **3.2.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOURISM STRATEGY (PROJECT PHASE 2)**

For an overview on phase 2 of the project, please find a chart in Annex 7.10.3.

In order to continue with the development of sustainable tourism in this mountain region and not to lose the dynamic momentum, it is of great importance to monitor the implementation process and to strengthen and support ongoing consultations in each of the Carpathian countries. It is necessary to tackle the Strategy with concrete

steps and actions and lead the Carpathians to the sustainable tourism development through a stable and irreversible process.

In this multilateral context, project based funding facilitating the coordination of Parties' efforts and bringing external expertise would certainly strengthen their efforts and contribute to concrete results on the ground.

For that reason and based on the wish of the Parties, ETE applied for a new project under the BMUB Advisory Assistance Programme. The Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (UNEP-SCC) and the NGO-network CEEweb for Biodiversity as the coordinating organisation for NGOs are again partner organisations.

High priority was given first to strengthen structural capacities and to further develop the conceptual framework set by the Strategy to secure the further process of sustainable tourism development in the Carpathian countries. Based on the Rules of Procedures of the Carpathian Convention with the Conference of the Parties (COP) being held every three years the aim was to finish all planned activities in this project before end of 2017, when the next COP in Hungary is foreseen.

Goal of the second project phase was strengthening structures and coordinating processes for the successful implementation of the Strategy in the seven Carpathian countries through regional cooperation and a participatory process by involving the stakeholders from natural and environmental protection, as well as from tourism sector.

The project phase 2 was implemented between August 17, 2015 and February 2018.

Measures to achieve the project's objectives and expected results:

- Further detailing and proposing concrete tasks for the implementation of the country specific and the common Action Plan. Identification of measures (Indicators) for monitoring the strategy's implementation,
- Assisting the actors involved in setting up a Carpathian Coordination Platform (Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform – CSTP) for the implementation of the Strategy, including development of its job description and Terms of Reference. The first work of the Carpathian Coordination Platform will be carried out by the end of the project in 2017,
- Assisting the Parties and stakeholders in setting up National Tourism Task Forces (NTTF) for the implementation of the Strategy within their countries. These NTTFs should consist of members from the national and regional (Carpathian related) government and members of the national and regional (Carpathian related) tourism stakeholder groups,
- Creation of a database on completed and ongoing projects on sustainable tourism in the Carpathians in order to share best practices.  
The first database was completed by end of 2016. Further consolidation of data will be done to the end of the project and made available on the common Carpathian online platform,
- Creation of a database of existing finance instruments available for the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians. This database will be kept

up to date throughout the project duration and presented on Carpathian online platform,

- Creation of a database of manuals and guidelines on the components of sustainable tourism applicable in the Carpathians. For this purpose, relevant and upto-date manuals will be collected throughout the project duration.

Selected results of the project (further detailed Action Plans and the Terms of Reference of the Carpathian Coordination Platform) were presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties in October 2017 in Lillafüred, Hungary.

### **3.3 PARTNERS AND OTHER CONTRIBUTORS (PROJECT PHASES 1 AND 2)**

#### **3.3.1 ECOLOGICAL TOURISM IN EUROPE (ETE)**

Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE) (German: Ökologischer Tourismus in Europa e.V.) founded in 1991 in Bonn, Germany, supports the development of sustainable tourism in Europe and Germany in particular. In cooperation with partner organisations, ETE plans and implements model projects, which focus on regional development through environmentally and socially friendly tourism - often in protected areas and mountainous regions. ETE has been active in Central and Eastern European Countries for many years, and thus has gathered a large variety of on-site experiences. Moreover, capacity building and education represent further key activities of ETE. Regarding tourism policy, ETE is supporting the implementation of international agreements and conventions related to tourism, in particular those of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) with its Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development, the UN-Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and the Framework Convention for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention). The essence from these multi-lateral agreements is incorporated into all project activities of ETE.

ETE was responsible for the coordination of and cooperation among project partners, also during the times between meetings. All partners were involved in the development and the support to the implementation of the Tourism Strategy. Results from the meetings were incorporated in the Strategy and prepared to be revised in the official meetings. The Government representatives of the seven Carpathian States, consisting of environment and tourism ministries, were involved in the meetings of the WG TOURISM and the national consultations.

#### **3.3.2 UNEP - SCC**

The Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (SCC), hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) coordinates all regular meetings of the Convention: the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (CCIC), the Conference of

the Parties (COP) and the topic related Working Groups. Therefore, the SCC had a central role in this project concerning the support of the process of development and completion of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy on the political platform.

The UNEP Vienna Office is also UNEP's liaison office with the Secretariats of the Alpine Convention and the ICPDR and assists UNEP in the collaboration with the Regional Environment Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) and with UN organisations and institutions based in Vienna. UNEP - SCC also promotes cooperation on the protection and sustainable development among countries in South-Eastern Europe and Caucasus, including UNEP activities in the ENVSEC initiative. UNEP - SCC is the Environmental Reference Centre of the Mountain Partnership.

During the two project phases the SCC was responsible for updating and integrating emerging official meetings of the Carpathian Convention and other relevant meetings into the work plan of the project. The Secretariat in its function as the coordinating body for the Convention has communicated the project interim progress and results to the national Focal Points of the Convention and the other members of regular meetings on a continuous basis. According to the work plan further specific tasks of UNEP-SCC were: communicating with partners on the regular meetings of the Carpathian Convention (CCIC, COP, WG TOURISM, the timely delivery of documents relevant for tourism, and the upload of project documents to the website of the Carpathian Convention.

### 3.3.3 **WWF-DCPO**

The WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme Office is led from its head office in Vienna and is responsible for leading, and to a significant extent implementing, WWF's efforts to preserve, restore and sustainably manage the natural values of the Danube-Carpathian eco-region.

They work across political borders through an eco-regional approach based on project management, policy, networking, capacity building, communication and crisis response. Their mission is to find solutions to the challenges that the region faces in order to achieve its vision of prosperity, sustainability and biodiversity conservation.

During the project, the WWF - DCPO was involved in the first project phase and responsible for the communication with the tourism business sector in the Carpathians and consulting with the tourism sector on the drafts of the Tourism Strategy, gathering their comments and improving the Tourism Strategy. As a continuous member of the official meetings to the Carpathian Convention, the DCPO contributed to the lobbying activities targeting on government representatives. Also they were responsible for organizing two meetings for the business sector with the support of partners. For this purpose, two seminars were held: Poiana, Brasov / Romania in October 2013 and ITB Berlin in March 2014.

### 3.3.4 **CEEWEB FOR BIODIVERSITY**

CEEweb for Biodiversity was founded in 1994 (under the name of Central and East European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity), with the support of the European Union and two Hungarian NGOs: the National Society of Conservationists and Green Action.

CEEweb represents the network of several dozens of nature conservation organisations from Central and East European countries, working together to protect the natural heritage of the region. The mission of CEEweb is the conservation of biodiversity through the promotion of sustainable development. CEEweb works through advocacy, influencing decision making, common projects, capacity building, networking and awareness raising. It targets its members, and local, national and international decision makers, NGOs and NGO networks, companies and the scientific community.

The main tasks of CEEweb in both phases of the project were coordination, implementation and technical support of the working meetings. CEEweb also coordinated the preparation of the 14 case studies on sustainable tourism and was responsible for communicating and consulting the drafts of the Tourism Strategy and all other results to wider community of NGOs in the Carpathians. CEEweb also contributed to the documentation of the process of developing the Tourism Strategy and the elaboration and the host of the data bases.

Four meetings of the Sustainable Tourism Working Group of CEEweb were organized during the two phases of project to discuss and gather comments on the strategy and its implementation.

### 3.3.5 **COUNTRY EXPERTS**

For the country consultation processes in the first project phase, which started on June 13, 2013, ETE contracted seven country experts:

- Czech Republic - Eliska Balharova, Centrum Veronica Hostetin,
- Hungary - Imola Fuzi, Ecological Institute for Sustainable Development,
- Poland - Monika Kotulak, Naturalists Club,
- Romania - Andrei Blumer, The Association of Ecotourism in Romania,
- Serbia - Ivan Svetozarevic, Vavel - tourism business company,
- Slovakia - Zuzana Okanikova, OZ Pronatur,
- Ukraine - Andrej Taras-Bashta, Association FAUNA.

At the beginning of the project, the following tasks were assigned to the experts concerning country consultations:

- Compiling a list of stakeholders including the tourism, governmental, NGO, and science sector,
- Communicating with the stakeholders by a variety of means on the project, the consultation process and the elaboration of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy,
- Submitting a questionnaire to the stakeholders giving them the opportunity to contribute to the content of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy,
- Organizing meetings with stakeholders to discuss current challenges in the development of sustainable tourism.

In April 2014, an extension of the assignment for the project for the elaboration of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy was approved by the funding institution. The purpose of the extension was to organize consultation meetings with the tourism sector in each country of the Carpathians separately in order to inform tourism stakeholders about the strategy and gain their commitments for its implementation. Country experts were in charge of organizing the meetings.

During phase 2 of the project, implemented between August 17, 2015 and December 15, 2017, the composition of partners and contributors changed slightly.

While UNEP-SCC and CEEweb remained as regular partners to maintain the network communication to Parties and observers, as well as other stakeholders in CEE countries, other partners were sub-contracted for contributing to the specific activities in this project phase.

In order to feed the three data bases, ETE contracted one expert in each of the seven Carpathian countries, as previously in phase 1 of the project, but with different tasks:

- Czech Republic – Igor Kyselka, Institute for Spatial Development, Brno,
- Hungary – Agnes Zolyomi, CEEweb fo Biodiversity, Budapest,
- Poland – Katarzyna Śliwa-Martinez, Łańcut and Małgorzata Fedas, Krakow,
- Romania - Andrei Blumer, The Association of Ecotourism in Romania, Brasov,
- Serbia – Ivan Svetozarevic, Vavel – tourism business company, Knjaževac,
- Slovakia – Zuzana Okanikova, Civic Association Pronatur, Banská Bystricá,
- Ukraine – Iryna Shchoka, European Wilderness Society, Uzhhorod.

### 3.3.6 INDICATOR EXPERTS

For elaboration of the common set of indicators measuring the positive and negative impacts caused by tourism in the Carpathians, which started in August 2015, ETE contracted 7 experts, incl. their teams:

- Ms. Cinzia de Marzo (former ETIS at DG Enterprise) (Belgium),
- Dr. Edward W (Ted) Manning, President of Tourisk Inc. (Canada),
- Mr. László Puczkó and his team at Xellum Ltd. (Hungary),
- Dr. Dirk Glaesser and his team at the Sustainable Development of Tourism Department of World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (Spain),
- Mr. Carlos Romero and his team (Ms. Lourdes Maria de Pedro, Ms. Susana Garcia, Mr. Luis Javier Gadea Lucas) at Segittur (Spain),
- Ms. Silvia Giulietti and her team at the European Environment Agency (EEA) Natural Systems and Sustainability Programme (Denmark),
- Mr. Krzysztof Borkowski and his team (Mr. Marek Łabaj, Mr. Tomasz Pasierbek, Mr. Sandor Nemethy) at the University of Tourism and Ecology (Poland).



## 4. REQUIREMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION

### 4.1 PROJECT PHASE 1: DRAFTING AND APPROVAL OF THE STRATEGY

The goal of the project was to elaborate the Strategy participatory by involving relevant stakeholders in the region into the sustainable tourism topic. This goal was reached successfully as the project brought together stakeholders from all the seven Carpathian countries and beyond. It provided an opportunity for the governmental, non-governmental and business sectors to work together, share their views, ideas and good practices. The Parties received direct feedback from the stakeholders working in their states and vice versa. This helped the discussion, and the Strategy reflects the consensus reached within the stakeholder groups.

#### **Project Work Plan Development of the Tourism Strategy:**

According to the project application submitted to the donor, the project work was divided into three different work packages:

#### **Work Package 1: Drafting the Carpathian Tourism Strategy**

This work was carried out by the expert team which consisted of the project partners – UNEP-ISCC, WWF – DCPO, ETE and CEEweb for Biodiversity. In addition, two tourism experts were hired to assist ETE experts in drafting the Strategy. Furthermore, the content was based on material and research provided by the seven country experts.

The work was planned as follows:

1. Draft until May 2013,
2. Draft until September 2013,
3. Draft until November 2013,
4. Draft until March 2014,
5. Draft until June 2014,

Final Draft ready for adoption for the 4th Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention on September 26, 2014.



## **Work Package 2: Decision making process to finalize the Carpathian Tourism Strategy**

In order to complete the work on the drafts and prepare a Final Draft for the adoption, meetings with various stakeholders took place throughout the project time – meetings with NGOs, tourism business stakeholders, etc. In addition, to the decision-making part, meetings of the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism to the Carpathian Convention (WG TOURISM) took place. The aim of these meetings was to keep the stakeholders involved throughout the whole process of drafting the Carpathian Tourism Strategy.

The meetings were scheduled as follows:

- Meeting of project partners to prepare the work plan (March 2013, Vienna, AT),
- 1st NGO meeting – CEEweb STWG (June 2013, Banska Stiavnica, SK),
- 4th WG TOURISM meeting (September 2013, Brasov, RO),
- Meeting of Tourism Agencies of the Carpathian countries – National Tourism Agencies and tour operators (September 2013, Brasov, RO),
- Expert meeting – project partners and seven country experts (October 2013, Vienna, AT),
- 5th meeting of CCIC (December 2013, Vienna, AT),
- Meeting of Tourism Agencies at ITB 2014 (March 2014, Berlin, DE),
- 2nd NGO meeting (March 2014, Ceske Budejovice, CZ),
- 5th WG TOURISM meeting (June 2014, Lviv, UA),
- Final Conference during COP4 (October 2014, Bile Karpaty, CZ).

## **Work Package 3: Awareness-raising among stakeholders**

The seven country experts hired for the project along with the government representatives created a network of relevant stakeholders and kept them informed

about the process of drafting the Strategy. The stakeholders submitted their comments and proposals to be taken into account when preparing the next draft. The network served as a platform for exchanges of good practices among stakeholders.

For this purpose, various activities were planned:

- Consultation with stakeholders in each Carpathian country on the content of the Strategy – measure worksheet, SWOT Analysis,
- Assessing the National Tourism Development Strategies of Carpathian countries based on methodology created by experts. This was to measure how well the strategies fulfil the sustainability criteria for tourism development. Results were to be disseminated to relevant governmental bodies, tourism stakeholders and institutions,
- Developing 14 Good Practices on Sustainable Tourism – 2 per each country,
- Publishing press releases on websites of project partners and Facebook pages.

#### 4.1.1 **DEFINING THE STRUCTURE OF THE STRATEGY**

The first important activity in the participatory process was that stakeholders in the Carpathians agree on a structure of the future Strategy. A very first draft structure was discussed and agreed upon at the 2nd Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (WG TOURISM) in 2007. This first draft structure of the Strategy went through another stakeholder consultation process in parallel to drafting the content of the Strategy almost during the entire process from May 2013 until March 2014.

The reason for this rather lengthy and challenging process of defining the structure (table of content) was the intense discussion of the stakeholders within the WG TOURISM on the content of the different chapters. By the end of the discussion process it was agreed upon by stakeholders to develop a short and concise strategy which is easily understandable and measurable. In consequence thereof, all chapters with more descriptive content were collected in a document called “Background Paper”, which aims to give an overview of the current situation on tourism in the Carpathians and reflects the discussion among stakeholders on the strengths and weaknesses of the tourism sector as well as the future challenges to overcome.

[http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl\\_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/03%20Meetings%20and%20Events/COP/2014\\_COP4\\_Mikulov/WORKING%20DOCUMENTS/BD4\\_BACKGROUND\\_Carpathian%20Tourism%20Strategy.pdf](http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/03%20Meetings%20and%20Events/COP/2014_COP4_Mikulov/WORKING%20DOCUMENTS/BD4_BACKGROUND_Carpathian%20Tourism%20Strategy.pdf)

At the end of the consultation process the concluded structure of the strategy was well received by all stakeholders and the representatives of the seven Parties to the Convention.



#### 4.1.2 **ASSESSING NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGIES AND MASTER PLANS**

The NGO network CEEweb for Biodiversity undertook – together with Ecological Tourism in Europe – an assessment of the national tourism strategies of the seven countries belonging to the Carpathians. The assessment was conducted in the years 2012 and 2013 with the objective to identify the integration of biodiversity-related topics in these strategies, master plans, and development plans. The undertaking has been co-financed by the Core Fund of the European Commission.

The results of the assessments showed that biodiversity is not adequately integrated in national tourism plans. However, the quality of these plans differs to a great extent, if a comparison is even possible. The results of this assessment were taken into consideration during the drafting process of the strategy, especially while identifying the specific measures of the two action plans (Country Action Plan and Carpathian Joint Action Plan).

The assessments are available at <http://www.ceeweb.org/work-areas/working-groups/sustainable-tourism/activities/>

### 4.1.3 **SETTING OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE STRATEGY**

The formulation of goals and objectives of the Tourism Strategy went through a smooth process, since stakeholders shared visions on the accomplishment of the Strategy.

However, similar to the structure of the strategy, a first set of objectives was previously formulated in 2007 at the 2nd meeting of the WG TOURISM and further on reformulated and agreed to during the consultation process starting in May 2013.

As the objectives have to reflect the overall understanding of the stakeholders on the achievements of the strategy in the mid-term (10 years), the agreement on its content and composition formed a milestone in the consultation process, because it paved the way for drafting the two action plans (one joint action plan for all seven Carpathian countries and one action plan for each national level).

### 4.1.4 **DRAFTING THE STRATEGY**

Before describing the process of drafting the strategy, it is necessary to present the theoretical background of strategic planning in order to understand its complexity: "Strategic planning is a process and thus has inputs, activities, and outputs. It may be formal or informal and is typically iterative, with feedback loops throughout the process. Some elements of the process may be continuous and others may be executed as discrete projects with a definitive start and end during a period. Strategic planning provides inputs for strategic thinking, which guides the actual strategy formation. The end result is the organisation's strategy, including a diagnosis of the environment and competitive situation, a guiding policy on what the organisation intends to accomplish, and key initiatives or action plans for achieving the guiding policy"<sup>1</sup>

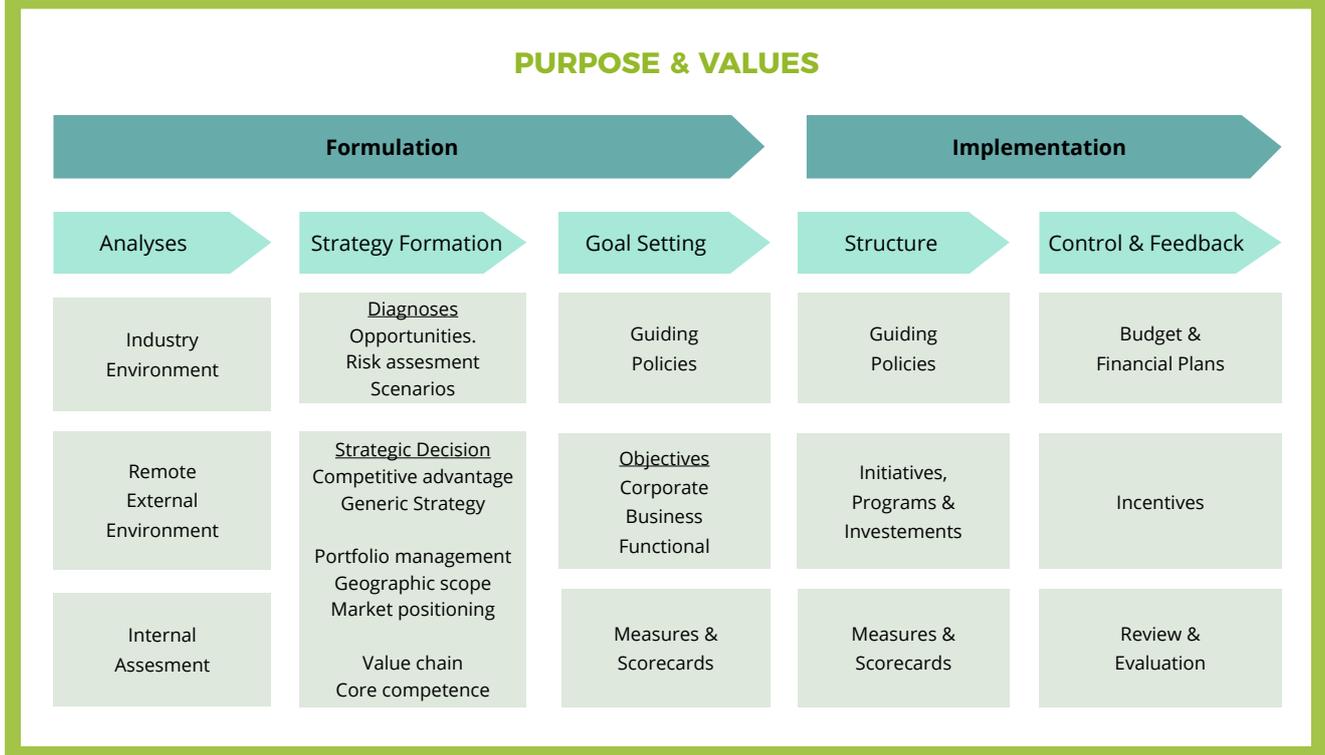
The experts involved in the initial first drafting phase of the project built the Strategy as a process-oriented approach – as outlined in the theoretical framework – which was agreed by the partners of the project and the bodies of the Convention, foremost the Carpathian Convention WG TOURISM.

Throughout the whole process, stakeholders had time to submit their comments on subsequent drafts. The input to the drafting stages were received either during the scheduled meetings or facilitated via electronic consultations in order to ensure that all comments from the stakeholders are documented and processed in the updated versions of the strategy. The different consultation steps are listed below:

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<sup>1</sup> Rumelt, Richard P. (2011): Good Strategy / Bad Strategy. Crown Business. ISBN 978-0-307-88623-1

## STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK



- 1st Strategy draft (September 24, 2013),
- Discussion and revision of the draft at the 4th WG TOURISM (October 21 - 22, 2013, Poiana/Brasov, RO),
- 2nd Strategy draft (December 16, 2013),
- 3rd Strategy draft (February 9, 2014),
- Discussion and revision of the draft at the 5th CCIC meeting (February 20, 2014, Prague, CZ). Mandate for finalizing the Strategy given to the WG TOURISM,
- 4th Strategy draft (April 11, 2014),
- Discussion and revision of the draft at 5th WG TOURISM meeting (May 12 - 14, 2014, Bratislava, SK),
- 5th Strategy draft (May 15, 2014),
- 6th Strategy draft (August 5, 2014),
- Discussion, revision and approval of the final Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians at COP4 (September 23 - 26, 2014, Mikulov, CZ).

Further details about the results of the different meetings can be found in Annex 7.8

The project phase 1 was very successful in fulfilling its goals. As the main outcome, the Strategy itself was adopted at COP4, which contributes to the implementation of the Tourism Protocol and to sustainable tourism development in the Carpathian region.

Source: "Strategic Management Framework" by Farcaster - Created diagram from a variety of sources. Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikipedia - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Strategic\\_Management\\_Framework.png#mediaviewer/File:Strategic\\_Management\\_Framework.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Strategic_Management_Framework.png#mediaviewer/File:Strategic_Management_Framework.png)

The stakeholders have the opportunity to propose projects based on both Action Plans. The Strategy, as international document developed among seven countries, shall help them to get the proposals approved and receive necessary funding.

The full text of the strategy is available in Annex 7.2.

The Background Document to the Strategy was welcomed by the Parties as well, as it provides information on why the Strategy is necessary and on the status quo of sustainable tourism in the region.

Thanks to many meetings organized throughout the project, the stakeholders got a better overview on projects and activities happening inside the countries and also at the Carpathian and international level. Especially when the Action Plans were discussed, the participants often discovered existing initiatives and possible new project partners.

Due to the work with stakeholders from seven different countries having a broad range of expertise from different fields, exchange of experiences represents a high value of the project. The countries face very similar issues and often a different country has already overcome it in the past. Although each country tried to pursue mainly its own interest, this project was very successful in reaching a high level of cooperation.

## **4.2 PROJECT PHASE 2: PREPARING THE STRUCTURE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY**

### **4.2.1 WORK PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOURISM STRATEGY**

The project work was divided into three different work packages:

#### **Work Package I: Action Plans and Establishment of Carpathian Coordination Centre**

- 1.** Elaboration of a draft for a nationwide Action Plan (August 2015 - May 2016),
  - 1a.** Consultations nationwide Action Plan (June 2016 - September 2017),
- 2.** Draft of joint and nationwide Action Plan (August 2015 - May 2016),



- 2a.** Consultations nationwide Action Plan (June 2016 – September 2017),
- 3.** Elaboration of a Coordination Platform for the implementation of the sustainable tourism strategy,
  - 3a.** Development of work and terms of reference for the Platform (Aug.-Nov. 2015),
  - 3b.** Consultations about the establishment (December 2015 – April 2016),
- 4.** Facility of the platform and ongoing support of the work (May 2016-November 2017),

#### **Work Package II: Development of Indicators**

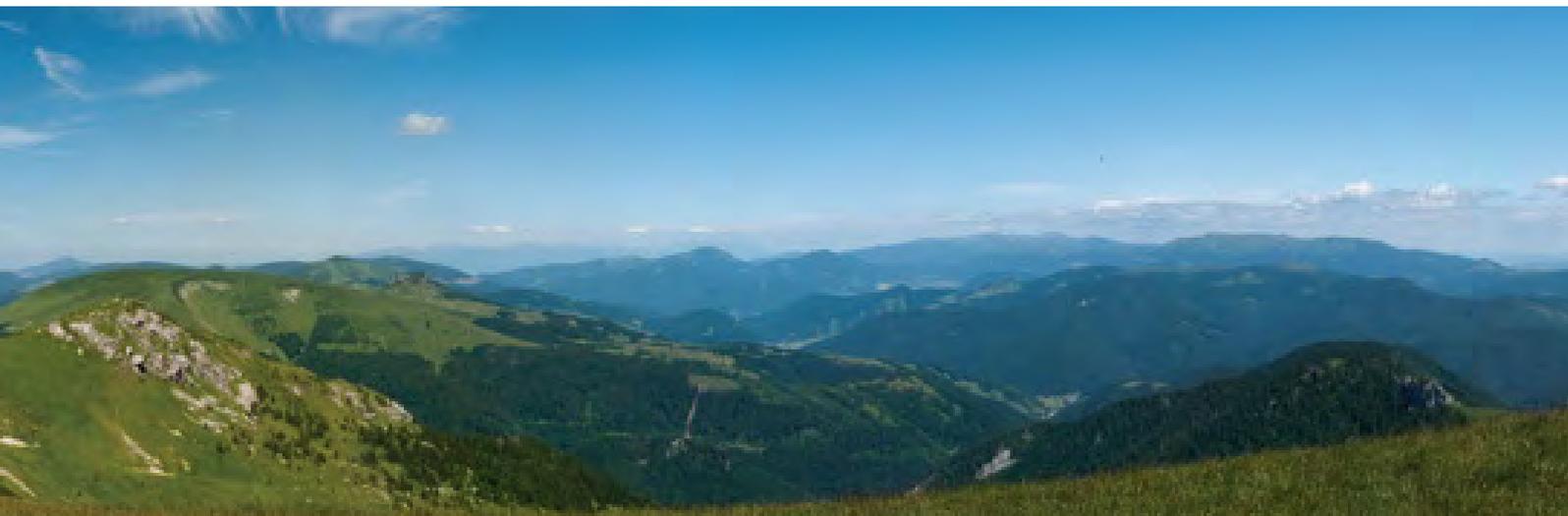
- 1.** Compilation of suitable measuring instruments (indicators) (November 2015 – March 2016),
- 2.** Consultations and agreement with delegates of the Parties, tourism industry, nature and environment protection organizations (April – July 2016),
- 3.** Revision and completion of the template (August 2016 – February 2017).

#### **Work Package III: Elaboration of databases and planning basics for financial instruments, actual tourism projects, handbooks and manuals**

- 1.** Creation of the database of financial instruments (August 2015 – March 2016),
  - 1a.** Presentation of database (March 2016),
  - 1b.** Continuous updates (April 2016 – November 2017),
- 2.** Creation of the data base of tourism projects (August 2015 – February 2017),
  - 2a.** Presentation of data base (March 2017),
  - 2b.** Continuous update (April – November 2017),
- 3.** Analysis and provision of suitable handbooks and manuals (August 2015 – November 2017).

Further details about the results of the different meetings can be found in Annex 7.9

The prepared drafts of the elaborated documents were presented to and discussed with country experts and NGO delegates and then finally discussed and adopted during meetings of official bodies of the Carpathian Convention.



## 4.2.2 **COUNTRY SPECIFIC AND JOINT ACTION PLAN TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY**

The Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians consists of two action plans: one country action plan, which is targeting on each of the Carpathian countries and one joint action plan, which is supposed to be implemented between two or more countries.

In the text of the strategy, which was approved by COP4 in 2014, each action was not described in detail, but appears as single lines, e.g. **Art.15 Develop a methodology for monitoring the impacts of existing and planned tourism development on biodiversity and landscapes, including the social, economic and cultural impact.** This might cause misunderstandings between those responsible for its implementation.

In order to reach a common understanding about the meaning of each action, ETE has formulated a descriptive chapter on each of them. This common understanding becomes necessary as soon as Parties and other stakeholders start implementing an action in their country or jointly with involvement of a number of countries.

The more descriptive action plans were submitted to the WG TOURISM at its 8th Meeting in 2016 and approved after electronic consultation.

## 4.2.3 **CARPATHIAN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PLATFORM (CSTP)**

According to its Terms of Reference, the WG TOURISM is responsible to guide and oversee the implementation of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy. However, the WG TOURISM is not a permanent operating body of the Carpathian Convention, it meets once a year and has therefore its limitations for implementing this strategy.

For this reason, the Parties to the Convention emphasise in chapter 4.1 (institutional arrangements) of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy the setting up of a common international mechanism to support the implementation of the Tourism Protocol and the Carpathian Tourism Strategy. The Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee was planned to be in charge of overseeing the arrangements of the common international mechanism.

The 6th and 7th meeting of WG TOURISM focussed intensively on the preparation for the establishment of the common international mechanism, which was then called "Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform (CSTP)". ETE has developed, based on the request of WG TOURISM, Terms of Reference for the CSTP, which was approved by the WG TOURISM prior to its 8th meeting.

Between the 7th and the 8th meeting of the WG TOURISM, three offers were presented for the establishment of the CSTP: One in Poland, one in Ukraine and one in Romania. Since there was no consensus on the selection of the offer, WG TOURISM decided

at its 8th meeting (March 2016) to agree to a “joint proposal” of three Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Centres (CSTC), which should jointly operate the CSTP. The joint proposal, incl. the ToR were submitted to and approved by the 6th CCIC, which took place in November 2015 before the 8th WG TOURISM meeting.

The next 7th CCIC, in November 2016 asked UNEP-SCC to elaborate an agreement for the establishment of the CSTP to be signed by the 3 CSTCs (PL, RO, UA) based on the joint proposal and ToR. However, such agreement was under discussion since the 8th meeting of WG TOURISM in March 2016, but no consensus could be achieved with the contracting Parties and UNEP. ETE delivered a draft “Memorandum for Cooperation” to UNEP-SCC in May 2016. Finally, Romania submitted a compromise as Letter of Exchange, which was signed with Ukraine in May 2017.



Also in May 2017 Romania announced the official establishment of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Centre (CSTC) in Brasov. This gave opportunity to ETE for an intensive coaching of the staff at the CSTC, which finally resulted in the first work programme incl. indicators and a reporting format (see Annex 7.6). The example of the CSTC in Brasov serves now as the light house for the establishment of other CSTCs in the Carpathians.

In August 2017 Ukraine announced the establishment of the Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) for Zakarpattia oblast in Ushhorod. This RTO will be responsible for the establishment of the CSTC for Ukraine jointly with the office of the European Wilderness Society, which has done the pioneer work for the CSTC in Ukraine since early 2016 ([www.cstp.center](http://www.cstp.center)).

#### 4.2.4 **COMMON CARPATHIAN ONLINE PLATFORM ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

During the 7th meeting of the WG TOURISM, the participants wished to establish a joint online platform for the promotion of tourism products all over the Carpathians. The phase 2 of the project has taken on board this wish. However, since the criteria for the selection of sustainable tourism products have not been further elaborated, it was decided at the 8th meeting of WG TOURISM to establish the online platform as soon as the 7 National Tourism Boards have identified suitable sustainable products.

#### 4.2.5 **ESTABLISHING OF NATIONAL TOURISM TASK FORCES (NTTF)**

The Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians outlines in chapter 4.1 (institutional arrangements) that each Party to the Convention should establish a National Tourism Task Force in order to coordinate the implementation of the strategy in their country and to foster crossborder cooperation with their neighbouring countries.

For this purpose ETE has developed in September 2016 a Terms of Reference for the establishment and functioning of NTTFs, which has been so far used by Romania and Ukraine.



It has to be considered that each government in the Carpathians already runs its institutional mechanism for the coordination of tourism, which involves partially stakeholders from the country for the exchange of information on ongoing initiatives.

Czech Republic, Poland and Serbia have their own systems of e.g. National Tourism Committees, Inter-governmental Working Groups, so that the establishment of a separate NTTF targeting on the Carpathian part of the country was not required or deemed necessary. In the Slovak Republic the governmental bodies are facing a constant structural change, so that the establishment of a NTTF was so far not possible. In Hungary, ETE took part in the first meeting of NTTF, however, since then, due to governmental changes, no further meetings could be organised. Ukraine established the NTTF at its first meeting on 22nd August 2017, based on the ToR provided by ETE.

Romania has the longest trackrecord with establishing the NTTF in 2015 and organising since then 4 meetings. The benefits of such meetings in Romania in terms of transparent communication with stakeholders and exchange of information on initiatives for sustainable tourism are evident and will certainly substantially support the operation of the CSTC in Romania.

#### **4.2.6 ELABORATION OF A SET OF INDICATORS ON MEASURING THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF TOURISM IN THE CARPATHIANS**

The main goal of this task was the development of a set of core indicators (and possible supplementary indicators), for the specific objectives of the commonly agreed Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathian Convention. These indicators need to be tailored to the needs of the Carpathian mountain ecosystems and of the local community, in order to allow for the tracking of the progress towards sustainability within the region, and also the international and the interregional comparability with other destinations. In addition, the establishment of Sustainable Tourism Observatories, under the umbrella of INSTO, and with the endorsement of the UNWTO, can be considered as a desired milestone in the next years.

In this regard, several tools, methodologies and legal frameworks have been provided by international organizations such as UNWTO, UNEP, OECD, WWF, UNESCO, WTTC, etc., as well as by EU institutions such as the European Commission, EUROSTAT, EEA and other transnational private stakeholders including GSTC, ECOTRANS, GRI, EUROPARC, ENAT, NECSTOUR, INSTO, TRAVEL LIFE, among others.

The gathered expert team then was challenged to identify a limited number of 20 indicators and a number of voluntary indicators as a draft set, which is delivered to the stakeholders in the Carpathians for further use. The task of the experts, led by ETE, was successfully accomplished. The set of indicators is available in this publication as Annex 7.7.

#### **4.2.7 CREATION OF DATABASES FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE CARPATHIANS**

Together with CEEweb, ETE has established successfully three data bases:

- Project and initiatives on sustainable tourism in the Carpathians,

- Financing schemes applicable for sustainable tourism in the Carpathians,
- Handbooks and guidelines on components of sustainable tourism.

ETE formed an expert team, which first agreed on the methodology for the collection of data, which then tested how such information can be integrated in an online data base. This online data base was developed by CEEweb.

By the end of phase 2 of the project, the three data bases consists of more than 100 single sets of information, which then will be handed over to the CSTC in Romania for the further updating.



## 5. LESSONS LEARNED

### 5.1 PROJECT PHASE 1: LIMITATIONS DURING THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Throughout the Strategy development process, the project partners faced a range of issues and obstacles that had to be overcome in order to move to the next step.

Each new draft of the Strategy required direct feedback from the Parties as well as feedback from other involved stakeholders. The biggest challenge faced during this process was a lengthy response time from relevant departments from the Ministries. This was mostly caused by the fact that none of the countries (with the exception of Poland) has a Ministry for Tourism and therefore the responsibilities for tourism are split between several Ministries. In addition, due to parliamentary elections in Serbia and Romania and the conflict in Ukraine, these countries went through institutional changes and had no governmental person assigned throughout the drafting process. In some countries, the focal points had not even been assigned by the end of the project time.

Concerning the cooperation of Parties, another considerable challenge was the lack of funding for attending necessary meetings as well as internal issues, such as nominating a person to join the Working Groups. Moreover, representatives often lacked a full mandate for decision-making at the meetings and therefore online consultation had to be launched after each meeting to discuss the proposed changes. This caused an extensive email ping-pong and the frequent postponement of deadlines, which made it difficult to integrate all changes into the draft Strategies in due time.

From the project management point of view, it often happened that ETE relied on their partners and involved stakeholders to provide information or to arrange meetings. Many partners were overloaded at times and therefore it caused some delays in the process. Moreover, a lesson learned is that it was necessary to be in more active contact with the involved stakeholders and that they had to be reminded to meet deadlines and fulfil their tasks. This however is a challenge of most projects as the experts hired are usually simultaneously engaged with other projects or full-time job.

In general, another problem the project faced quite often was related to a language barrier and the resulting misunderstandings. Fortunately, this could always be solved with positive, active communication and cultural sensibility.



## 5.2 PROJECT PHASE 2: LIMITATIONS DURING THE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

During the consultation process on the establishment of National Tourism Task Forces (NTTF), one governmental representative emphasised that there was an expectation by all Parties to the Convention that the Convention would have soon an own financial instrument (funding source). This expectation was actually justified, due to the fact that for instance the Alpine Convention, their Parties and other stakeholders can apply for funding at the Alpine Space Programme of the European Commission. It is one of the macro-regional funding schemes in the European Union. However, a unique funding scheme was never established for the Carpathians. This might be one reason why there is a decrease of interest for the implementation of the Carpathian Convention.

As in phase 1 of the project certain “bottlenecks” became obvious again which are the fluctuations of National Focal Points and the change of focal points on tourism in several countries. Hence, new official governmental representatives appeared at meetings (e.g. WG TOURISM, CCIC) and agenda topics needed to be explained in extensive details to bring them up to the same information level as those frequently participating in those meetings.

Some focal points were caught in the restructuring process of their governmental bodies so that no further communication on the implementation of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy was possible. This caused not only a delay in the establishment of bodies relevant to the implementation (e.g. NTTF, CSTP), but actually hindered a full implementation as outlined in the strategy.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The description of the project phases in the previous chapters shows the step-by-step approach in elaborating the strategy and developing the structure for its implementation.

In a nutshell, the following factors are required in order to undertake such a challenging and multi-faceted process:

- The initiative for developing a Sustainable Tourism Strategy, which covers a number of countries, should come from the countries and their stakeholders,
- In the ideal case, the financial support for the “system” to develop this strategy should come from the countries involved in the process,
- The “system” for developing the strategy consists of a technical team experienced with the coordination and communication throughout the process,
- An expert team might be formed, as in the case of this project, in order to provide the stakeholders with a first draft of the strategy and assist them with the further formulation of the Strategy ,
- The consultation process should allow for considerable time so that stakeholders can be informed throughout the phases and contribute to the drafting with their inputs,
- Any institution involved in the process, may it be governmental or non-governmental, should ensure that all information is handed over from person to person, so that new staff has not to start from scratch.

At the end of the day, such a strategy is about people and people create the personal contact and communication, which make such an initiative alive and running. Therefore, it is of crucial importance to motivate all stakeholders to become the owners of such a strategy. This is the largest part of the success.



## 7. ANNEXES

## **7 ANNEXES**

### **7.1 Protocol on Sustainable Tourism**

#### **Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians**

## THE PARTIES TO THIS PROTOCOL

IN ACCORDANCE with their tasks, arising from the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians done in Kyiv on 22 May 2003, hereinafter referred to as the "Carpathian Convention", of pursuing a comprehensive policy and cooperating for the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians;

IN COMPLIANCE with their obligations under Article 9 of the Carpathian Convention;

IN COMPLIANCE with their obligations under the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity to the Carpathian Convention;

NOTING that all Parties to the Protocol are Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) hereinafter referred to as the "CBD", and RECALLING the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention signed on 29 May 2008 in Bonn, and Decision 11 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP2) to the Carpathian Convention which recommends to make enhanced efforts for the implementation of the CBD Programme of Work on Mountain Biological Diversity;

RECALLING Decision VII/14 of the CBD COP7 which adopted the Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development and invited Governments to integrate these Guidelines in the development or review of their strategies and plans for tourism development;

NOTING other relevant conventions and agreements, in particular the European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2000), the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (Paris, 1972), the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo, 1991) and the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Århus, 1998);

RECOGNIZING the importance of mountain areas, as enshrined in Chapter 13 (Sustainable Mountain Development) of the Declaration on Environment and Development ("Agenda 21", Rio de Janeiro, 1992);

RECALLING the Programme for the further implementation of the Declaration on Environment and Development ("Agenda 21", Rio de Janeiro, 1992), the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and ACKNOWLEDGING the endeavors and achievements of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in cooperation with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) aiming to promote sustainable tourism;

CONSIDERING that the unique biological and cultural diversity and the common heritage of the Carpathians constitute important assets for the development of sustainable tourism;

RECOGNIZING the increasing importance of tourism for social and economic development at local, national and regional levels, and that the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians may constitute an opportunity for the economic development of less developed areas as well as for the diversification of local economies, and present a significant potential for realizing benefits in terms of the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components.

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;

CONVINCED that efforts to protect, maintain and sustainably manage the natural and cultural resources of the Carpathians cannot be achieved by one country alone and require regional cooperation, and RESOLVED to cooperate on the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians with the objective to ensure that tourism in the Carpathians is developed in harmony with environmental considerations and integrates socio-economic benefits with the conservation of biological and cultural diversity;

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

## **CHAPTER I OBJECTIVES, GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS**

### **Article 1**

#### *General objectives and principles*

1. In accordance with Article 9 of the Carpathian Convention the objective of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism (hereinafter referred to as “the Protocol”) is to enhance and facilitate cooperation of the Parties for the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians for the benefit to present and future generations, with the objective to maximize the positive benefits of tourism to biodiversity, ecosystems, and economic and social development, and of biodiversity to tourism, while mitigating negative ecological, environmental and socio-economic impacts from tourism.
2. To achieve the above objectives, the Parties shall:
  - (a) harmonize and coordinate their efforts on promoting sustainable tourism in the Carpathians, providing benefits to the local people, based on the exceptional nature, landscapes and cultural heritage of the Carpathians, and increase cooperation to this effect;
  - (b) pursue policies aiming at promoting transboundary cooperation in order to facilitate sustainable tourism development, such as coordinated or joint management plans for transboundary or bordering protected areas, and other sites of touristic interest.
3. The Parties shall therefore cooperate especially on:
  - (a) promoting the Carpathian region as the destination for sustainable tourism;

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- (b) developing, promoting and marketing the Carpathian regional sustainable tourism services, products and packages;
  - (c) ensuring the common high quality standards for sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians;
  - (d) enhancing the contribution of tourism to the sustainable development of local economies in the Carpathians;
  - (e) managing tourist traffic and tourist destinations in the Carpathians for the benefit of the environment and sustainable local economic development in less developed areas;
  - (f) enhancing the contribution of tourism to the conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians in accordance with the objectives of the European Landscape Convention;
  - (g) enhancing the contribution of tourism to sustainable agriculture in the Carpathians;
  - (h) enhancing the contribution of tourism to sustainable forest management in the Carpathians;
  - (i) planning sustainable development of tourist transport and infrastructure in the Carpathians;
  - (j) enhancing the contribution of tourism to the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage and of traditional knowledge of the local people in the Carpathians;
  - (k) enhancing the contribution of tourism to public education and awareness on sustainability issues;
  - (l) promoting transboundary cooperation on sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians;
  - (m) managing the impacts of tourism on the biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians;
  - (n) managing environmental impacts of tourism in the Carpathians;
  - (o) managing socio-economic and cultural impacts of tourism in the Carpathians;
  - (p) monitoring the effectiveness of policies and strategies for the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians.

**Article 2**  
***Geographical scope***

1. This Protocol applies to the Carpathian region (hereinafter referred to as “the Carpathians”), as defined by the Conference of the Parties.
2. Each Party may extend the application of this Protocol to additional parts of its national territory by making a declaration to the Depositary.

**Article 3**  
***Definitions***

For the purposes of this Protocol:

- (a) “Biodiversity Protocol” means the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity to the Carpathian Convention, done in Bucharest on 19 June 2008;

- (b) "Biological diversity" means the variability among living organisms which includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems;
- (c) "Border area" means an area remaining under the jurisdiction of the respective Party in the proximity of the state border with another Party, where activities undertaken on one side of the state border are, depending on the nature of the particular activity, likely to have direct or indirect and adverse or positive environmental impact on the other side of the state border;
- (d) "Conservation" means a series of measures required to maintain the natural habitats and the populations of species of wild fauna and flora at a favorable conservation status;
- (e) "Conference of the Parties" means the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention;
- (f) "Carpathian Convention" means the Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, done in Kyiv on 22 May 2003;
- (g) "Endangered species" means species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant proportion of their range;
- (h) "Invasive alien species" means non-native species introduced deliberately or unintentionally outside their natural habitats, where they become established, proliferate and spread in ways that cause damage to their receiving environment;
- (i) "Landscape" means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors;
- (j) "Landscape diversity" means the variability among landscapes;
- (k) "Native species" means indigenous species to a given region or ecosystem;
- (l) "Natural habitat" means the terrestrial or aquatic area distinguished by geographic, abiotic and biotic features where an organism or population naturally occurs;
- (m) "Observer" means observer defined under the Article 14 paragraph 5 of the Carpathian Convention;
- (n) "Party" means a Party to this Protocol;
- (o) "Public concerned" means the public affected or likely to be affected by, or having an interest in tourism development and related decision making; the definition includes indigenous peoples and local people; for the purposes of this definition, non-governmental organizations promoting any aspect of sustainable development and meeting any requirements under national law shall be deemed to have an interest;
- (p) "Protected area" means a geographically defined area which is designated and managed to achieve specific conservation objectives;
- (q) "Restoration" means the return of an ecosystem or habitat to its original structure, natural composition of species, and natural functions;
- (r) "Subsidiary body" means a subsidiary body established in accordance with Article 14 paragraph 2(e) of the Convention that may include thematic working groups or committees;
- (s) "Sustainable development" means the development which meets the needs and aspirations of the current generations without compromising the ability to meet those of future generations;

- (t) "Sustainable tourism" means tourism which provides for sustainable use of environmental resources, prevents threats to the biological and landscape diversity on which it is intrinsically dependent and minimizes adverse environmental, ecological, cultural and social impacts; provides educational opportunity increasing knowledge of and respect for natural ecosystems and biological resources; respects the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities conserving their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, contributes to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance, contributes to ensuring viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation;
- (u) "Sustainable use" means the use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations;
- (v) "Transboundary protected area" means an area composed of two or more protected areas located within the territories of two or more Parties, adjacent to the state border, each remaining under jurisdiction of the respective Party.

## **CHAPTER II GENERAL OBLIGATIONS**

### **Article 4**

#### *Harmonization of policies aiming at sustainable tourism planning, development and management in the Carpathians*

1. Each Party shall develop and implement policies and strategies in its national territory aiming at the development of sustainable tourism and its management and monitoring in the Carpathians while taking into consideration policies and strategies developed and implemented by other Parties.
2. Parties shall consider and utilize internationally applied tools and methodologies for planning, development and management of tourism, especially in vulnerable areas limited to economic use, and to harmonize existing national planning tools and frameworks.
3. Parties shall exchange information between governmental institutions at all levels and all stakeholders, on best practice for sustainable tourism development and management, including information on planning, standards, legislation and enforcement, and of experience gained in implementation of these principles.

### **Article 5**

#### *Integration of the objectives of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians into sectoral policies*

1. The Parties shall take into consideration the objectives of this Protocol in their other policies, in particular but not limited to spatial planning and land resources management, conservation of biological and landscape diversity, water and river basin management, agriculture and forestry, transport and infrastructure, industry and energy.

2. The Parties shall cooperate on integrating the principles of sustainable tourism into other sectoral policies developed at regional or global level which could benefit and have influence on the conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity in the Carpathians.

#### **Article 6**

##### ***Participation of regional and local authorities, and other stakeholders***

1. Each Party shall take measures, within its existing institutional framework, to involve relevant institutions, regional and local authorities, and other stakeholders concerned in preparing and implementing policies and the resulting measures for the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians.
2. Each Party shall take measures, within its existing institutional framework, to facilitate coordination and cooperation between institutions, authorities and other stakeholders mentioned under paragraph 1, with the objective to encourage shared responsibility and enhance synergies.

#### **Article 7**

##### ***International cooperation***

1. The Parties shall encourage active cooperation among competent institutions and organizations at the international level with regard to sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians.
2. The Parties shall facilitate the cooperation on sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians between regional and local authorities at the international level, and seek solutions to shared problems at the most suitable level.

### **CHAPTER III SPECIFIC MEASURES**

#### **Article 8**

##### ***Promotion of the Carpathian region as the destination for sustainable tourism***

1. Each Party shall take measures with the objective to promote the Carpathian region as the destination for sustainable tourism based on the unique common natural, cultural, traditional and historical heritage of the Carpathians.
2. The Parties shall cooperate on marketing and promoting the Carpathian region as the destination for sustainable tourism in particular by encouraging, jointly implementing and supporting common projects and initiatives towards sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians which build on and promote the above mentioned values.

#### **Article 9**

##### ***Development, promotion and marketing the Carpathian regional sustainable tourism products, services and packages***

1. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to develop and promote Carpathian regional sustainable tourism products, services and packages, in particular those building on the common Carpathian natural, cultural, traditional and

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- historical heritage of the Carpathians, and enhance their marketing on both the domestic and foreign markets.
  2. The Parties shall cooperate on the identification of the specific Carpathian competitive advantages for sustainable tourism development over the other European mountain regions, which could provide for the unique selling proposition of the Carpathian regional sustainable tourism products, services and packages in the European and global tourist markets.
  3. The Parties shall cooperate on the development of the common Carpathian regional sustainable tourism services, products and packages, and facilitate cooperation of relevant stakeholders active in the Carpathian region in this respect, including tourism operators and other members of the tourism sector.
  4. The Parties shall cooperate on the development and implementation of the common Carpathian regional tourist brands.
  5. The Parties shall cooperate on the development and implementation of joint promotional strategies and marketing schemes for the common Carpathian regional sustainable tourism products, services and packages.

#### **Article 10**

#### ***Ensuring the common high quality standards of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians***

1. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to promote the quality standards for sustainable tourism in the Carpathians.
2. The Parties shall cooperate on developing, promoting and implementing the common Carpathian tourism quality standards concerning accommodation, facilities, services and customer care, considering international and European standards.
3. The Parties shall cooperate on developing, promoting and implementing the common Carpathian tourism quality certification system in considering international and regional quality labels and award schemes or adopting existing certification schemes as appropriate.
4. The Parties shall cooperate on developing, adopting and implementing the common Carpathian policy of permanent and systematic research on the quality of tourism products and services across the whole Carpathian region, monitoring the quality of visitor satisfaction and experience gained at tourist destinations, including raising their awareness on sustainability issues and increasing knowledge of and respect for natural and cultural heritage of the Carpathians.
5. The Parties shall encourage and support the exchange of experiences and good practice examples in introducing and maintaining quality standards in tourist services.
6. The Parties shall encourage and support the development and implementation of joint action plans pursuing qualitative improvements in sustainable tourism services sector in the Carpathians.

**Article 11**  
***Enhancing the contribution of tourism to the sustainable development  
of the local economy in the Carpathians***

1. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to explore, promote and support the synergies between sustainable tourism development and local economic development in the Carpathians.
2. The Parties shall cooperate on developing, adopting and implementing the common Carpathian policy for the promotion, labeling and certification of local products and local producers' networks, in particular of traditional arts and handicrafts, and local goods including agricultural products utilizing local breeds of domestic animals and cultivated plant varieties.
3. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to support and promote initiatives and projects towards sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians which foster the development of local economy and base on the local potential by enhancing the use of local products and skills as well as employment opportunities for the local labour force. Priority should be given to initiatives and projects which:
  - (a) contribute to ensuring long-term sustainability of tourism economic operations;
  - (b) strengthen the existing unique selling proposition of a particular tourism destination;
  - (c) promote innovation and diversity in tourism, and bring the added value to the current local tourist offer of a particular tourist destination, also by creating new local and regional tourist products;
  - (d) contribute to the diversification of tourism offers with the objective to reduce the adverse effects of the tourism seasonality by generating sufficient demand for tourist services and local employment also in the off-seasons;
  - (e) contribute to the diversification of the local economic activities beyond tourism with the objective to reduce dependency of the local economy on tourism as appropriate;
  - (f) enrich and supplement the current local tourism offers of a particular tourism destination rather than compete with already existing businesses.
4. Each Party shall take measures with the objective to promote and support the development of sustainable tourism in less sensitive and less developed areas, with the objective to foster the sustainable economic development of less developed local people, mitigate negative migration and rural depopulation trends, contribute to poverty alleviation and allow for more equal sharing of benefits and revenues from the tourist services sector by all municipalities of the Carpathian region.
5. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to build the capacities of local people towards the preparation of sustainable tourism development project proposals and their ability to raise funds for their implementation.

**Article 12**  
***Managing tourist traffic in the Carpathians  
for the benefit of the environment and sustainable local economic development***

1. The Parties, in accordance with Article 12 of the Carpathian Convention, shall cooperate on developing, adopting and implementing the common Carpathian policy of permanent and systematic monitoring of tourist traffic in the Carpathian region.

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2. With the objective to mitigate the impacts of tourism on fragile mountain ecosystems of the Carpathians and to provide for a more equal distribution of the tourist traffic in the Carpathian region, each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to disperse, redirect and channel part of the tourist traffic out of the current main tourist destinations and sensitive sites such as protected areas, to the areas being less ecologically sensitive, less developed and less explored by tourism, but having sufficient potential to absorb and accommodate part of the tourist traffic.

#### **Article 13**

##### ***Enhancing the contribution of tourism to the conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians***

1. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to explore channeling part of the tourism revenues towards supporting the conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians, in particular towards the establishment, management and maintenance of protected areas.
2. The Parties shall cooperate on the exchange of information and promotion of good practice examples concerning the contribution of and benefits from sustainable tourism development to the conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians.

#### **Article 14**

##### ***Enhancing the contribution of tourism to sustainable agriculture in the Carpathians***

1. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to explore, promote and support the synergies between sustainable tourism development and sustainable agriculture in the Carpathians, and facilitate cooperation in this respect between relevant authorities, institutions, and relevant stakeholders including tourism operators and other members of the tourism sector.
2. Each Party, in accordance with Article 7 and Article 11 of the Carpathian Convention, shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to support and promote initiatives and projects towards sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians which provide sound economic incentives for the maintenance of the management of agricultural land traditionally cultivated in the Carpathians in a sustainable manner and for producing, labeling and certification of local goods utilising the local agricultural products, local breeds of domestic animals and cultivated plant varieties.
3. The Parties shall cooperate on the exchange of information and promotion of good practice examples concerning the contribution of and benefits from sustainable tourism development to the sustainable agriculture in the Carpathians.

#### **Article 15**

##### ***Enhancing the contribution of tourism to sustainable forest management in the Carpathians***

1. Each Party, taking into account the multiple functions of forests, shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to explore, promote and support the synergies between sustainable tourism development and sustainable forest management in the Carpathians, and facilitate cooperation in this respect between relevant authorities, institutions, forest

administrations and relevant stakeholders including tourism operators and other members of the tourism sector.

2. The Parties shall cooperate on the exchange of information and promotion of good practice examples concerning the contribution of and benefits from sustainable tourism development to the sustainable forest management in the Carpathians.

#### **Article 16**

##### ***Planning the sustainable development of tourist transport and infrastructure in the Carpathians***

1. Each Party, in accordance with Article 8 paragraph 1 of the Carpathian Convention as well as Article 5, Article 8, Article 9 and Article 12 of the Biodiversity Protocol, shall pursue policies of sustainable tourism transport planning in the Carpathians, which take into account the specificities of the mountain environment.
2. The Parties, in accordance with Article 8 paragraph 2 of the Carpathian Convention, shall cooperate towards developing sustainable transport schemes in their border areas in the Carpathians with the objective to provide the benefits of mobility and access to the local inhabitants and tourists, facilitate sustainable tourism development in border areas and enhance interactions and cooperation between the local people inhabiting the border areas.
3. The Parties, in accordance with Article 8 paragraph 3 of the Carpathian Convention, shall cooperate towards developing models of environmentally friendly tourist transportation in environmentally sensitive areas of the Carpathians.
4. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to promote and support sustainable transport network development projects improving the access to tourist destinations and resorts in the Carpathians by public transport, and shall encourage tourists to use these services.
5. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to reduce dependence on motorized vehicles in and in the vicinity of tourist destinations and resorts in the Carpathians.
6. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to promote revitalisation and upgrading of existing tourist, recreational and sport infrastructure objects rather than the construction of new ones in the Carpathians.
7. The Parties shall cooperate on the exchange of information and promotion of good practice examples concerning the sustainable development of tourist transport and infrastructure in the Carpathians.

#### **Article 17**

##### ***Enhancing the contribution of tourism to the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage and of traditional knowledge of the local people in the Carpathians***

1. The Parties, in accordance with Article 11 of the Carpathian Convention, shall cooperate on developing, adopting and implementing the common principles of sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians, fostering preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage and traditional knowledge of the local people, enhancing and respecting their socio-cultural authenticity in the Carpathians, and conserving their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values.

2. Each Party shall take measures with the objective to promote and support the development of sustainable tourism activities fostering preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage and traditional knowledge of the local people in the Carpathians, in particular initiatives and projects towards sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians which provide sound economic incentives for the preservation of the traditional architecture objects, local breeds of domestic animals and cultivated plant varieties, as well as the continuation of traditional land-use patterns and practices, crafting and marketing of local goods, arts and handicrafts.
3. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to encourage channeling part of the tourism revenues towards supporting the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage and traditional knowledge of the local people in the Carpathians, in particular for the preservation and revitalization of traditional architecture objects, traditional handicraft, land-use patterns, local breeds of domestic animals and cultivated plant varieties.

#### **Article 18**

##### ***Enhancing the contribution of tourism to public education and awareness on sustainability issues***

1. Each Party shall take measures with the objective to promote and support initiatives and projects aiming at raising awareness on sustainability issues related to sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians.
2. The Parties shall cooperate on developing the common Carpathian environmental education, nature and cultural heritage interpretation and other awareness raising programmes, associated to sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians, with the objectives to:
  - (a) raise the awareness of the local people, tour operators and tourist service providers, tourists and general public on sustainability issues in the Carpathians;
  - (b) increase knowledge of and respect for natural ecosystems and biological resources of the Carpathians;
  - (c) raise the profile of biological and landscape diversity conservation at national and local levels;
  - (d) increase knowledge of and respect for the cultural heritage and the traditional knowledge of the local people in the Carpathians,
  - (e) promote sustainable tourism practices and appropriate behavior by tourists so as to minimize their adverse impacts, e.g. by developing the common "Carpathian code of good practice in sustainable tourism";
  - (f) promote positive effects of sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians.

#### **Article 19**

##### ***Information and experience exchange, capacity building for development and management of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians***

1. The Parties shall cooperate on the exchange of information and experience, and promotion of good practice examples concerning the development and management of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians.

2. The Parties shall facilitate international cooperation among scientific institutions with regard to sustainable tourism development and management in the Carpathians, in particular on the harmonization of monitoring systems, the provision and harmonization of databases, and undertaking common research programs and projects in the Carpathians.
3. The Parties shall ensure that the national results of the research and monitoring which are conducive to achieving the objectives of this Protocol are included in a common permanent observation and information system, and that they are made accessible to the public under the existing institutional framework.
4. The Parties shall facilitate the transfer and assimilation of environmentally-sound, socially acceptable and appropriate technologies and know-how for the planning, development and management of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians.
5. The Parties shall cooperate on developing common education and training schemes in areas related to the development and management of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians, and encourage and support the development of expert networks for the exchange of related expertise, skills and information.
6. The Parties shall cooperate on the development and strengthening of human resources and institutional capacities perceived as conducive to achieving the objectives of this Protocol.

#### **Article 20**

##### ***Promoting transboundary cooperation on sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians***

1. The Parties, in accordance with Article 9 paragraph 2 of the Carpathian Convention, shall pursue policies aiming at promoting transboundary cooperation in order to facilitate sustainable tourism development in the border areas of the Carpathians.
2. Each Party shall develop and implement management plans with the objective to enhance sustainable tourism development in the border areas of the Carpathians.
3. The Parties, in accordance with Article 9 paragraph 2 of the Carpathian Convention, shall take measures with the objective to coordinate management planning related to sustainable tourism development or develop joint management plans for its border areas in the Carpathians with the neighboring Party or Parties, in particular for transboundary or bordering protected areas, and other sites of touristic interest.

#### **Article 21**

##### ***Managing impacts of tourism on the biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians***

1. The Parties shall apply the precaution and prevention principles by assessing and taking into consideration possible direct or indirect, short- or long-term influence, including cumulative effects of tourism, recreational and sport infrastructure development projects, as well as tourist, recreational and sport activities, which are likely to have adverse impacts on the biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians. In this regard, Parties shall proceed with appropriate assessment of potential adverse impact of projects, plans and activities related to tourism development in the Carpathians, including transboundary impacts.
2. The Parties, in accordance with Article 12 of the Carpathian Convention, shall cooperate on developing, adopting and implementing the common Carpathian policy of permanent and systematic monitoring of impacts of both existing and planned tourism developments on the

biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians, to be applied at regional, national and local levels; in particular concerning:

- (a) conservation, maintenance, restoration and sustainable use of endangered natural and semi-natural habitats native to the Carpathians included in the Carpathian Red List of Habitats, pursuant to Article 8 paragraph 1 of the Biodiversity Protocol;
  - (b) integrity, continuity, connectivity and maintenance of protected areas and other areas significant for biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians and for the coherence of the ecological network in the Carpathians, pursuant to Article 9 of the Biodiversity Protocol;
  - (c) conservation of endangered flora and fauna species native to the Carpathians included in the Carpathian Red List of Species, pursuant to Article 12 paragraph 1 of the Biodiversity Protocol;
  - (d) prevention of introduction or release of invasive alien species and/or genetically modified organisms which are likely to have adverse environmental impacts that could affect the biological diversity, ecosystems, habitats or species of the Carpathians, pursuant to Article 13 paragraph 1 of the Biodiversity Protocol.
3. Each Party shall establish conditions and criteria, including relevant remedial and compensatory measures, under which policies, projects and activities related to tourism development with potential harmful impacts on the biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians may be authorized.
  4. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to prevent, mitigate and if necessary compensate possible adverse impacts of tourism on the biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians.

#### **Article 22**

##### ***Managing environmental impacts of tourism in the Carpathians***

1. The Parties shall apply the precaution and prevention principles by assessing and taking into consideration possible direct or indirect, short- or long-term influence, including cumulative effect of tourism, recreational and sport infrastructure development projects, as well as tourist, recreational and sport activities, which are likely to have adverse impacts on the environment of the Carpathians. In this regard, Parties shall proceed with appropriate assessment of potential adverse impact of projects, plans and activities related to tourism development in the Carpathians, including transboundary impacts.
2. The Parties, in accordance with Article 12 of the Carpathian Convention, shall cooperate on developing, adopting and implementing the common Carpathian policy of permanent and systematic monitoring of environmental impacts of both existing and planned new tourism developments in the Carpathians, to be applied at regional, national and local levels; in particular concerning the use of natural resources such as land, soil, water, forests, energy; as well as sewage, waste and air pollution management issues.
3. Each Party shall establish conditions and criteria, including relevant remedial and compensatory measures, under which policies, projects and activities related to tourism development with potential harmful impacts on the environment of the Carpathians may be authorized.

4. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to prevent, mitigate and if necessary compensate possible adverse environmental impacts of tourism in the Carpathians.

#### **Article 23**

##### ***Managing socio-economic and cultural impacts of tourism in the Carpathians***

1. The Parties shall apply the precaution and prevention principles by assessing and taking into consideration possible direct or indirect, short- or long-term influence, including cumulative effect of the tourist, recreational and sport infrastructure development projects, as well as tourist, recreational and sport activities, which are likely to have adverse socio-economic and cultural impacts in the Carpathians. In this regard, Parties shall proceed with appropriate assessment of potential adverse impact of projects, plans and activities related to tourism development in the Carpathians, including transboundary impacts.
2. The Parties, in accordance with Article 12 of the Carpathian Convention, shall cooperate on developing, adopting and implementing the common Carpathian policy of permanent and systematic monitoring and assessment of the socio-economic and cultural impacts of tourism in the Carpathians, to be applied at regional, national and local levels.
3. Each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to prevent, mitigate and if necessary compensate possible adverse socio-economic and cultural impacts of tourism in the Carpathians.

#### **Article 24**

##### ***Monitoring the effectiveness of policies and strategies for the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians***

1. Each Party shall monitor the effectiveness of policies and strategies towards the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians implemented at the national, regional and local levels.
2. The Parties, in accordance with Article 12 of the Carpathian Convention, shall cooperate in developing, adopting and implementing the common Carpathian policy of permanent and systematic monitoring; to be applied at regional, national and local levels; of the effects of policies and strategies implemented towards the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians, by defining and applying the commonly agreed set of indicators, in particular taking into account, assessing and measuring:
  - (a) the contribution of policies and strategies towards the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians to the conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians, in accordance with Article 4 of the Carpathian Convention and with the Biodiversity Protocol;
  - (b) the contribution of policies and strategies towards the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians to the protection and sustainable use of water resources of the Carpathians, in accordance with Article 6 of the Carpathian Convention;
  - (c) the contribution of policies and strategies towards the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians to the sustainable agriculture, in particular the maintenance of the management of agricultural land traditionally cultivated in the Carpathians in a sustainable manner, in accordance with Article 7 of the Carpathian Convention;

- (d) the contribution of policies and strategies towards the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians to the sustainable forest management in the Carpathians, in accordance with Article 7 of the Carpathian Convention;
- (e) the contribution of policies and strategies towards the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians to the development of sustainable transport and infrastructure, in accordance with Article 8 of the Carpathian Convention;
- (f) the contribution of policies and strategies towards the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians to the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage and of traditional knowledge of the local people in the Carpathians, in accordance with Article 11 of the Carpathian Convention;
- (g) the effectiveness of policies and strategies towards the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians in enhancing environmental impact management in the Carpathians;
- (h) the effectiveness of policies and strategies towards the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians in enhancing social and cultural impact management in the Carpathians;
- (i) the effectiveness of policies and strategies in enhancing quality standards in the tourism sector in the Carpathians;
- (j) the effectiveness of policies and strategies towards the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians for the generation of income and employment from tourism in the Carpathians, in short-term and long-term;
- (k) the proportion of tourist income retained in the local people, and the overall contribution of tourism to the sustainable development of the local economy and well-being of the local populations in the Carpathians.

#### **Article 25**

##### ***Common programs and projects***

Each Party shall participate, according to its needs and possibilities, in common programs and projects on activities listed under Article 1 paragraphs 2 and 3 jointly undertaken in the Carpathians by the Parties.

### **CHAPTER IV IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

#### **Article 26**

##### ***CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development***

1. With the objective to plan, develop and manage tourism activities in the Carpathians in an ecological, economic and socially sustainable manner, the Parties shall promote the integration of the CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development in the development or review of their strategies and plans for tourism development in the Carpathians and other related sectoral strategies, at appropriate levels in consultation with interested stakeholders including tourism operators and all other members of the tourism sector.

2. The Parties shall consider establishing monitoring and reporting systems based on indicators mentioned in the CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development and in the UNWTO Set of Indicators, in order to assess the applicability and status of implementation of these Guidelines in the Carpathian region.
3. Parties to the Carpathian Convention shall strive for synergies in the implementation of other bilateral and multilateral agreements relevant to the CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development and the implementation of this Protocol in the Carpathians, inter alia the Aarhus Convention, the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on Migratory Species, the World Heritage Convention, the United Nations Framework Convention to Combat Climate Change, the European Landscape Convention and others.

**Article 27**  
***Implementation***

1. Each Party shall undertake appropriate legal and administrative measures for ensuring implementation of the provisions of this Protocol, and monitor the effectiveness of these measures.
2. Each Party shall explore the possibilities of supporting, through financial measures, the implementation of the provisions of this Protocol.
3. The Conference of the Parties shall develop and adopt the Strategy on Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians, which will accompany the implementation of this Protocol.

**Article 28**  
***Education, information and public awareness***

1. The Parties shall promote the education, information and awareness rising of the public regarding the objectives, measures and implementation of this Protocol.
2. The Parties shall ensure access of the public to the information related to the implementation of this Protocol.

**Article 29**  
***Meeting of the Parties***

1. The Conference of the Parties of the Carpathian Convention shall serve as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol.
2. The Parties to the Carpathian Convention that are not Parties to this Protocol may participate as observers in the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol. When the Conference of the Parties serves as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol, decisions under this Protocol shall be taken only by those that are Parties to it.
3. When the Conference of the Parties serves as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol, any member of the bureau of the Conference of the Parties representing a Party to the Convention but, at that time, not a Party to this Protocol, shall be substituted by a member to be elected by and from among the Parties to this Protocol.
4. The Rules of Procedure for the Conference of the Parties shall apply mutatis mutandis to the meeting of the Parties, except as may be otherwise decided by consensus by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol.

5. The first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol shall be convened by the Secretariat in conjunction with the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties that is scheduled after the date of the entry into force of this Protocol. Subsequent ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol shall be held in conjunction with ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties, unless otherwise decided by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol.
6. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol shall make, within its mandate, the decisions necessary to promote its effective implementation. It shall perform the functions assigned to it by this Protocol and shall:
  - (a) Make recommendations on any matters necessary for the implementation of this Protocol;
  - (b) Establish such subsidiary bodies as are deemed necessary for the implementation of this Protocol;
  - (c) Consider and adopt, as required, amendments to this Protocol that are deemed necessary for the implementation of this Protocol; and
  - (d) Exercise such other functions as may be required for the implementation of this Protocol.

**Article 30**  
**Secretariat**

1. The Secretariat established by Article 15 of the Carpathian Convention shall serve as the Secretariat of this Protocol.
2. Article 15, paragraph 2, of the Carpathian Convention on the functions of the Secretariat shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to this Protocol.

**Article 31**  
**Subsidiary bodies**

1. Any subsidiary body established by or under the Carpathian Convention may, upon a decision by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol, serve the Protocol, in which case the meeting of the Parties shall specify which functions that body shall exercise.
2. Parties to the Carpathian Convention that are not Parties to this Protocol may participate as observers in the meetings of any such subsidiary bodies. When a subsidiary body of the Carpathian Convention serves as a subsidiary body to this Protocol, decisions under the Protocol shall be taken only by the Parties to the Protocol.
3. When a subsidiary body of the Carpathian Convention exercises its functions with regard to matters concerning this Protocol, any member of the bureau of that subsidiary body representing a Party to the Carpathian Convention but, at that time, not a Party to the Protocol, shall be substituted by a member to be elected by and from among the Parties to the Protocol.
4. Rules of Procedure for the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the participation of observers in the work of subsidiary bodies serving this Protocol.

#### **Article 32**

##### ***Monitoring of compliance with obligations***

1. The Parties shall regularly report to the Conference of the Parties on measures related to this Protocol and the results of the measures taken. The Conference of the Parties shall determine the intervals and format at which the reports must be submitted.
2. Observers may present any information or report on implementation of and compliance with the provisions of this Protocol to the Conference of the Parties and/or to the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (hereinafter referred to as the "Implementation Committee").
3. The Implementation Committee shall collect, assess and analyze information relevant to the implementation of this Protocol and monitor the compliance by the Parties with the provisions of this Protocol.
4. The Implementation Committee shall present to the Conference of the Parties recommendations for implementation and the necessary measures for compliance with the Protocol.
5. The Conference of the Parties shall adopt or recommend necessary measures.

#### **Article 33**

##### ***Evaluation of the effectiveness of the provisions***

1. The Parties shall regularly examine and evaluate the effectiveness of the provisions of this Protocol.
2. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol may consider the adoption of appropriate amendments to this Protocol where necessary in order to achieve its objectives.
3. The Parties shall facilitate the involvement of the regional and local authorities, and other stakeholders in the process under paragraph 1.

### **CHAPTER V FINAL PROVISIONS**

#### **Article 34**

##### ***Links between the Carpathian Convention and the Protocol***

This Protocol constitutes a Protocol to the Carpathian Convention within the meaning of Article 2 paragraph 3 thereof, and any other relevant articles of the Carpathian Convention.

#### **Article 35**

##### ***Entry into force, amendment of, withdrawal from the Protocol, and settlement of disputes***

1. The provisions of Articles 19, 20, 21 paragraphs 2 to 4 and Article 22 of the Carpathian Convention on entry into force, amendment of and withdrawal from this Protocol and on settlement of disputes shall apply mutatis mutandis to this Protocol.
2. Only a Party to the Carpathian Convention may become Party to this Protocol.

**Article 36**  
***Reservations***

No reservations may be made to this Protocol.

**Article 37**  
***Depositary***

The Depositary of this Protocol is the Government of Ukraine.

**Article 38**  
***Notifications***

The Depositary shall, in respect of this Protocol, notify each Contracting Party of

- (a) any signature,
- (b) the deposit of any instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval,
- (c) any date of entry into force,
- (d) any declaration made by a Contracting Party or signatory,
- (e) any denunciation notified by a Contracting Party, including the date on which it becomes effective.

**Article 39**  
***Signature***

This Protocol shall be open for signature at the Depositary from 27 May 2011 to 27 May 2012.

Done at Bratislava on the 27 May 2011 in one original in English language.

The original of the Protocol shall be deposited with the Depositary, which shall distribute certified copies to all Parties.

In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto, have signed this Protocol

For the Government of the Czech Republic



For the Government of the Republic of Hungary

For the Government of the Republic of Poland

For the Government of Romania



For the Government of the Republic of Serbia



For the Government of the Slovak Republic



For the Government of Ukraine

## 7.2 Strategy for the Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians



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

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## STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OF THE CARPATHIANS

24 September 2014

*This document contains 13 pages*

## 1 INTRODUCTION and RATIONALE

The basis for comprehensive international cooperation in the Carpathians was laid down by “**The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians**” (Carpathian Convention), which was adopted and signed by the seven Parties (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Ukraine) in May 2003 in Kyiv, Ukraine, and entered into force in January 2006.

The purpose of the Strategy for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians is to determine common actions and measures in order to value and sustainably use the outstanding natural and cultural assets for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians. This mountain range covers a large part of Central and Eastern Europe and it will become an attractive and sustainable tourism destination that contributes to the quality of life of the local population and to the protection of local cultural and natural heritage.

Seven countries share the Carpathians, each of them having a different approach to tourism development. They follow different strategies and use different methods, which can limit the expected positive contributions from tourism and may allow tourism to have a negative impact on local communities and the mountainous landscape they are living in.

This strategy aims at harmonizing and coordinating country-specific approaches by providing a common understanding and umbrella platform for planning and management. The strategy is not a stand-alone activity; it is part of the comprehensive effort of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention to coordinate the responsible use, protection and promotion of the Carpathians as a tourism destination.

In line with the objectives of the Carpathian Convention, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties adopted in May 2011 the **Protocol on Sustainable Tourism** to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians. In this Protocol, which is in force since 29 April 2013, the Parties decided the following in Article 27 (Implementation), Paragraph 3:

**The Conference of the Parties shall develop and adopt the Strategy on Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians, which will accompany the implementation of this protocol.**

The Strategy for the Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians is therefore directly interlinked with the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism in order to contribute to its implementation. The most relevant chapters in the Protocol set out the fundamentals of the Strategy and are translated into a common action plan, e.g. Article 6 concerning Participation of stakeholders, Article 7 concerning International cooperation, Article 8 concerning promotion of the Carpathian region, Article 9 concerning development of regional sustainable tourism products, Article 10 concerning ensuring common high quality standards, Article 11 concerning enhancing the contribution of tourism to local economies, etc.

The Strategy for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians is to be implemented within the administrative units indicated by each Party. Annex 1 to the Strategy contains an indicative map of those administrative units.

## 2 VISION and OBJECTIVES

While being aware of the challenges ahead, the Carpathian stakeholders strive to make tourism more sustainable. The vision encompasses three dimensions – competitiveness, conservation and cooperation, which are fundamental to adding value to tourism, agreed by the Parties of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians:

**The Carpathians are a top competitive sustainable tourism destination in Europe, based on its unique natural and cultural heritage preserved and maintained on large integral areas**

The people in the Carpathians are successful in, and proud of, maintaining their local authentic traditions, cultures, and landscapes, which contribute to unique experiences

Good cooperation, local management and partnerships contribute to the high quality of responsible tourism and ecosystem services, which ensures continuous benefits for local

In order to become a top sustainable tourism destination the Parties agree that the following three objectives form the targets to accomplish the vision by 2024:

### Objective 1

***Establish supportive conditions for sustainable tourism products and services, including development of a marketing scheme for the promotion of the Carpathians as a unique sustainable tourism destination***

The unique offerings of the Carpathians when it comes to visitor experiences are the cultural and natural assets. Surviving authentic features make this mountain range very different to other destinations in Europe. However, this unique authenticity needs to be reflected in products and services, which can compete on the international market. The first objective will ensure that sustainability guidelines and standards are developed and implemented and that products and services are put on the market effectively.

## Objective 2

*Develop innovative tourism management, fully integrating the needs of local people and economies and other supporting sectors, and respecting the preservation of natural and cultural heritage*

Balancing the needs of local people with the goals of conservation through careful management at local, national and Carpathian level is one of the main pillars in sustainable tourism development. The second objective establishes a system of management tools respecting the objectives of the Carpathian Convention while up scaling communication on sustainable tourism throughout the Carpathians. This innovative management approach sets new standards of sustainable tourism in destinations and protected areas and also contributes to enhancing the performance of other economic sectors.

## Objective 3

*Establish a continuous process of awareness raising, capacity building, education and training on sustainable tourism development and management at all levels*

Creating an enabling environment for the implementation of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians is crucial for success. Enhancing the knowledge of tourism stakeholders with regards to developing and managing tourism in a responsible way creates the fundamentals for reaching our vision of the Carpathians becoming a top sustainable tourism destination by the year 2024. Institutions involved in training and education should work together to create efficient methods ensuring mainstreaming of sustainable practices throughout the Carpathians.

The objectives form the path for the implementation of the two action plans in Chapter 3. The first is to be implemented by each Party of the Carpathian Convention and the second one is to be coordinated by the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism of the Carpathian Convention. If so decided at a later stage, a Carpathian Coordination Platform might be established, depending on available resources.

### 3 ACTION PLAN

#### 3.1 Country Action Plan

**Objective 1: ESTABLISHING OF SUPPORTIVE CONDITIONS FOR THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, INCLUDING DEVELOPMENT OF A MARKETING SCHEME FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE CARPATHIANS AS A UNIQUE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DESTINATION**

Activities	Proposed start <sup>1</sup>
Initiate destination and/or country specific tourism product development (e.g. rural tourism, slow tourism, heritage tourism, ecotourism in protected areas, spa tourism, dark sky parks, social tourism and handicapped tourism), focusing on all seasons	Year 1
Identify and support the establishment of Carpathian wide authentic clusters of sustainable tourism products, e.g. thematic tours (e.g. architecture, cuisine, land use, mixed cultural/technical heritage etc), agritourism, hiking, cycling, ski touring	Year 1
Identify, assess, and where applicable, remove conditions unfavorable for the development of sustainable tourism	Year 1
Set principles and develop guidelines on sustainable tourism infrastructure and activities	Year 1
Support rural tourism which is maintaining traditional land use (e.g. beekeeping, food production)	Year 2
Support the establishment of regional Carpathian touristic (destination) brands contributing to the preservation of landscape character and tangible/intangible cultural heritage, possibly connected to a Carpathian brand	Year 2
Support the development of cross - border tourism cooperation, favorable visa regime where applicable, and linking of trails - implementation to joint cross - border tourism products	Year 4
Establish incentive measures for local tourism businesses developing and implementing sustainable tourism products, incl. measures for removing barriers to effective sustainable business operations	Year 4
Ensure participatory involvement (e.g. workshops, online consultations) of local communities in regional product development	Year 5
Develop programs for promoting and funding the preservation of local cultural and natural heritage through tourism	Year 6

**Objective 2: DEVELOP INNOVATIVE TOURISM MANAGEMENT, FULLY INTEGRATING THE NEEDS OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND ECONOMIES AND OTHER SUPPORTING SECTORS, AND RESPECTING THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Activities	Proposed start <sup>1</sup>
Establish the Sustainable Tourism Task Force as part of the Sustainable Tourism Working Group of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians	Year 1
Enhance the national coordination structure and encourage establishment of management centers on sustainable tourism, if applicable, in the Carpathians	Year 1

<sup>1</sup> Proposed start of the activities is after the adoption of this strategy at COP 4, e.g. Year 1 is 2014.

Activities	Proposed start <sup>1</sup>
<b>Support the integration</b> of the Carpathian dimension into the national and regional coordination of sustainable tourism	Year 2
<b>Zone the key touristic areas</b> with a focus on carrying capacity issues, and implement assessment measures based on EIA process principles	Year 3
<b>Contribute to a common set of indicators</b> on the effects of implemented policies and strategies to develop sustainable tourism in the Carpathians	Year 3
Develop programs for <b>promotion of local cultural heritage tourism</b> in the Carpathian countries taking into account the specificity and diversity of all the regions and sub - Carpathian areas	Year 3
<b>Enhance and support transboundary cooperation</b> by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organizing „both - sides“ events (fairs, exhibitions, workshops, etc.)</li> <li>design trail network from „both - sides“ perspective</li> <li>introducing non - Schengen border crossings solutions for tourist movement (if applicable)</li> <li>new tourist border crossings, new bridges and footbridges over border rivers</li> <li>tourist business initiatives</li> </ul>	Year 4
<b>Establish a working group for assessing tourism impact on natural and cultural heritage</b> (including Protected Areas), also using the results of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) processes and other tools	Year 4
<b>Support the establishment of destination management organizations (DMO) in key touristic areas</b> (if applicable) to implement sustainable tourism management schemes with local stakeholders	Year 5
<b>Develop a system of incentives to support the improvement and use of local supply chains to and from tourism</b>	Year 6
<b>Establish and support a Carpathian Coordination Platform</b> , if applicable and based on available funding	Year tbd
<b>Revise National Tourism Development Strategies</b> by incorporating the principles of sustainable tourism and the Carpathian dimension	As appropriate

**Objective 3: ESTABLISH A CONTINUOUS PROCESS OF AWARENESS RAISING, CAPACITY BUILDING, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT AT ALL LEVELS**

Activities	Proposed start
<b>Establish a system of continuous education and training for relevant target groups</b> on sustainable tourism development, e.g. education programs at schools, raising awareness of the public in regards to natural and cultural heritage	Year 2
<b>Enhance international cooperation</b> of entities responsible for sustainable tourism development in individual Parties	Year 3
<b>Implement campaigns</b> , especially in the Carpathian part of the country, to <b>raise the awareness among local population of sustainable tourism</b> and the Carpathian Convention	Year 3
<b>Contribute to a common Carpathian education, interpretation and awareness raising program</b>	Year 6
<b>Create a platform for cooperation of farmers</b> linked with tourism entrepreneurship (to be integrated into the common online Carpathian platform on sustainable tourism)	Year 1

### 3.2 Joint Action Plan

**Objective 1: ESTABLISH SUPPORTIVE CONDITIONS FOR THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, INCLUDING DEVELOPMENT OF A MARKETING SCHEME FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE CARPATHIANS AS A UNIQUE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DESTINATION**

Activities	Proposed start
<b>Create a Carpathian identity</b> and make use of a logo/slogan compulsory for all those service suppliers who joined and were labelled under the Carpathian productline	Year 2
<b>Initiate and possibly create a certification and/or labelling system for sustainable tourism</b> for the Carpathian Brand, supported by a Carpathianwide marketing strategy	Year 3
<b>Develop a Carpathian - wide quality standard system for local products and local services</b> (e.g. “Local food”, “Local accommodation”, “Local experience – how to guide tourists”, “Code of Conduct for Tourists in the Carpathians”)	Year 4
<b>Develop common principles and guidelines on tourism infrastructure</b> and undertake activities to make them sustainable	Year 4
<b>Establish a tour operators’ cooperation platform</b>	Year 4
<b>Design</b> , where applicable, a <b>common system of marking trails</b> throughout the Carpathians	Year 5
<b>Develop, maintain and keep up to date a common online Carpathian platform on sustainable tourism, including products and services</b> database, trans-boundary products and mapping, as well as good practices, with continuously updated information, and including the preparation of a Carpathian touristic map	Year 1
<b>Develop, maintain and keep up to date an online platform promoting labelled products</b> , linking with the websites of NTOs	Year 6

**Objective 2: DEVELOP INNOVATIVE TOURISM MANAGEMENT, FULLY INTEGRATING THE NEEDS OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND ECONOMIES AND OTHER SUPPORTING SECTORS, AND RESPECTING THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Activities	Proposed start
<b>Initiate resource mobilization for the implementation of the strategy at national and international level involving all relevant stakeholders</b>	Year 1
<b>Develop a common communication paper on the Carpathian Brand</b>	Year 3
<b>Define the use of the Carpathian Brand</b> and its management structure with relation to other sectoral or geographical brands	Year 3
<b>Analyze the touristic resources</b> of the Parties based on research, to identify the key - areas and products to be involved, and undertake further detailed research	Year 3
<b>Develop guidelines for contributions by the tourism sector to the conservation of natural and cultural resources</b>	Year 4

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Proposed start</b>
<b>Develop a methodology for monitoring the impacts</b> of existing and planned tourism development on biodiversity and landscapes, as well as the social, economic and cultural impacts	Year 4
<b>Define and implement a common set of indicators</b> on the effects of implemented policies and strategies for developing sustainable tourism in the Carpathians	Year 4
<b>Initiate the establishment of an organizational unit (Carpathian Observatory on Sustainable Tourism)</b> , contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Protocol and this Strategy by monitoring and evaluation of tourism activities in the Carpathians	Year 4
<b>Develop methods for the protection of „brand - making“ elements of the Carpathians cultural heritage</b> by implementing common projects on preservation of cultural heritage	Year 5
<b>Support setting up of a common mechanism for the implementation of the strategy</b>	Year 5
<b>Develop common guidelines for the support of sustainable local supply chains</b>	Year 6
<b>Develop common guidelines for a monitoring system scheme on traffic</b> to destinations and the flow of visitors within destinations	Year 6
<b>Initiate the exchange of good practices and lessons learned</b> from the operation of DMOs in terms of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians	Year 1

**Objective 3: ESTABLISH A CONTINUOUS PROCESS OF AWARENESS RAISING, CAPACITY BUILDING, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT AT ALL LEVELS**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Proposed start</b>
<b>Create an online platform for education, training and sharing of best practices</b> available to all stakeholders	Year 4
<b>Create a program of workshops &amp; conferences</b> and study visits in order to exchange innovative experience on sustainable tourism development	Year 5
<b>Exchange know - how</b> on the contribution of tourism to biodiversity and cultural heritage conservation with other destinations	Year 6

## 4 IMPLEMENTATION

### 4.1 Institutional Arrangements

- ⇒ With reference to the Terms of Reference of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (CC - WGST), each Party appoints one or more members for the CC - WGST responsible for coordination and information sharing of Carpathian sustainable tourism specific topics at the national and international level. The objective is to avoid overlaps and to create synergies with other initiatives wherever possible.
- ⇒ Each Party establishes a national Sustainable Tourism Task Force in order to communicate Carpathian Sustainable Tourism initiatives to the wider governmental structure and bodies. Stakeholders' institutions working in different fields (e.g. tourism development, education, culture or business) may be invited to join this task force. The aim of the task force is to strengthen and monitor the effective implementation of the Strategy for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians and the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and to formulate recommendations to the CC - WGST.
- ⇒ The Parties to the Convention mandate the Carpathian Convention – Working Group on Sustainable Tourism to oversee and guide the implementation of the Strategy, specifically its Joint Action Plan, and to report periodically to the Conference of the Parties on the progress. The CC - WGST further specifies the action plans (e.g. guidelines, indicators) in order to streamline measures to be taken on the national and Carpathian – wide level.
- ⇒ The Parties in cooperation with other major stakeholders in the Carpathians may consider setting up a common international mechanism to support the implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Protocol and this Strategy if funding is available. Modalities and functioning of this common mechanism are to be agreed upon and overseen by the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee. The common mechanism might focus on:
  - Developing, maintaining and keeping up to date a common online Carpathian platform on sustainable tourism
  - Resource mobilization
  - Exchange of good practices
  - Product Development
  - Branding and Certification
  - Marketing and Promotion
  - Capacity Building of stakeholders, businesses and destinations

## 4.2 Financial Arrangements

- ⇒ The Parties are exploring the possibilities for **project based funding** from national or international sources in order to implement the strategy on their territory and/or in trans - boundary or multi - national cooperation with other Parties.
- ⇒ The Parties request the Carpathian Convention – Working Group on Sustainable Tourism and the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention to cooperate on resource mobilization and to share information with relevant stakeholders.

## 4.3 Time Frame and Reporting

- ⇒ A ten - year time frame (2014 – 2024) is envisaged for the Strategy implementation (see 8.4 Monitoring and Evaluation).
- ⇒ Both *Action Plans* in chapter 3 cover a time frame of 1 - 6 years, allowing for periodic progress review and necessary adjustments of the implementation.
- ⇒ Based on a common format developed by the CC - WGST, each Party prepares on a three yearly basis, in English language and if possible in national language, a progress report on the implementation of the Protocol for Sustainable Tourism and the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians. This aims to inform national stakeholders. This report is submitted to the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism.

## 4.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

### Measuring the progress of Strategy implementation

The Strategy outlines a vision, objectives and activities to be accomplished in a given period of time. These activities represent the milestones for achieving the Strategy partly or as a whole.

The strategy implementation progress is measured by a set of milestone indicators. Parties shall report on progress based on these indicators and review the Strategy when needed. The CC - WGST is responsible for the development of the set of indicators and sub - indicators.

The CC - WGST might use the following set of progress indicators as a future reference:

Progress indicators as guidance for the development of specific indicators as per activities in the Action Plans	Target Year
1. A coordination platform for product development, promotion, marketing and monitoring is established and operational.	tbd
2. Small and micro businesses are supported by organizational systems and incentive policies.	2016
3. Governments adjust their voluntary and legal frameworks for the support of sustainable tourism based on common assessments. *	2017

Progress indicators as guidance for the development of specific indicators as per activities in the Action Plans	Target Year
4. A properly managed network of hiking, biking, skiing and horse riding trails is established.	2017
5. Products and services follow common quality standards and are integrated into a labelling system (The Carpathian Experience).	2017
6. A network of ecotourism destinations is established.	2017
7. A common brand is created for touristic products and destinations in the Carpathians.	2017
8. All destinations in the Carpathians have an effective management and DMO following a set of sustainability criteria (tourist hubs).	2019
9. A number of products (STP – sustainable tourism products) are promoted in the regional as well as global tourism - related markets.	2018
10. A governmental support scheme for the sustainable use of authentic landscapes and wilderness areas, with associated tourism infrastructure, which forms the foundation of any tourism operations.	2020
11. An information system is established throughout the Carpathians providing online solutions, and data for monitoring and for visitors at the same time.	2020
12. A number of Carpathian service providers are successfully communicating to tourists the value of this mountain region based on a code of practice.	2022
13. A number of laboratories and incubators are established as learning institutions on sustainable tourism practices for providers and communities.	2023

\*For indicator 3 the “Methodology for the Assessment of National Tourism Strategy” (CEEweb; 2013) might be used. It can be found on <http://www.ceeweb.org/work-areas/working-groups/sustainable-tourism/activities/>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The „Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians“ was developed thanks to the involvement of many stakeholders between 2007 and 2014.

Initiated and supported by the Parties to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, its Working Group on Sustainable Tourism convened five times (Lopenik/Czech Republic, April 2007; Sucha Beskidzka/Poland, April 2008; Rytro/Poland, September 2010; Brasov/Romania, October 2013; Bratislava/Slovak Republic, May 2014) to discuss the structure and content of the Sustainable Tourism Protocol and this strategy.

In the years 2013 and 2014 more than 800 individuals and organizations provided feedback on the strategy during a number of country consultation meetings. Thanks to the Centrum Veronica Hostetin/Czech Republic, the Ecological Institute for Sustainable Development Miskolc/Hungary together with the Ekocentrum SOSNA/Slovak Republic, the Naturalists Club/Poland, the Association of Ecotourism/Romania, OZ Pronatur and Jantarova Cesta/Slovak Republic, the Association FAUNA/Ukraine and Vavel Pozlovi Turizma/Serbia, the stakeholders in the seven countries provided valuable inputs to the strategy.

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Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE) with the help of its partners CEEweb for Biodiversity (CEEweb), WWF - Danube - Carpathian Programme Office (WWF - DCPO) and the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (UNEP - SCC) carried out coordination of the consultation process in the years 2013 - 2014.

The German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety financed the project in 2013 - 2014 via the Advisory Assistance Programme for Environmental Protection in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. It has been supervised by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (Bundesamt für Naturschutz, BfN) and the German Federal Environment Agency (Umweltbundesamt, UBA).

### 7.3 Updated Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism



#### Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism

##### **Mandate**

The First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP1) to the Carpathian Convention (Kyiv, Ukraine, 11-13 December 2006) in its Decision COP1/10 para 2 decided “to support the establishment of a Working Group on sustainable tourism under the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee” (CCIC), a subsidiary body of the Convention, established pursuant to Decision COP1/3 para 4.

The Second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 2) to the Carpathian Convention (Bucharest, Romania, 17 - 19 June 2008) in its Decision COP2/6 para 1 welcomed “the work of the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism invited Parties and stakeholders to ensure the proper follow-up”, in para 2 invited “Parties and other stakeholders to continue to take part in the preparatory work towards the development of a Protocol and Strategy on Sustainable Tourism, and requested the interim Secretariat to further coordinate and service them in the process”; and in Para 3 called “upon Parties and invites relevant institutions to support the development of future projects/programmes (including the “Via Carpatica”)”.

The Third Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP3) to the Carpathian Convention (Bratislava, 25-27 May 2011) adopted the revised Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism, requests the Secretariat and recommends the World Tourism Organization to continue the development of the sustainable tourism strategy with the involvement of relevant stakeholders and the support of the national tourism agencies, welcomed the cooperation with and assistance by the UNWTO, ETE, CEEWEB, EURAC, UNEP, etc., in particular related to the development of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians and of projects aimed at its implementation, and adopted the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians.

The Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP4) to the Carpathian Convention (Mikulov, Czech Republic, 23 – 26 September 2014) by its Decision COP4/6 para 3 adopted the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians, welcomed the Background Document and took note that the Strategy aims at the implementation of relevant paragraphs of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism adopted at COP3.

## **Tasks**

The Working Group (WG) 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. Pursuant to Decision COP2/6 para 2 and 3, the main goals of the Working Group is to guide the implementation of the Strategy for sustainable tourism development, to support the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism, Decision COP4/6, COP4/14, Programme of Work of the Carpathian Convention 2015 - 2017 and the development of future projects and programmes.

## **Field of activities**

1. The Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians

The Working Group shall coordinate and guide the implementation of the Strategy for the Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians.

2. Contribution to the follow-up platform

The Working Group shall provide its guidance and recommendations for the identification and development of follow-up projects in the area of sustainable tourism.

## **List of results**

- Relevant provisions of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and its Strategy implemented,
- Common website of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism developed, maintained and kept up to date,
- National, regional and local stakeholders involved in the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and its Strategy implementation, experience with this process and stakeholder involvement is shared on the Carpathian level,
- Inputs for CCIC and COP of the Carpathian Convention and other WGs, if relevant, proposed,
- WG Progress Report for submission to COP prepared in cooperation with the Secretariat,
- Development of report format on the implementation of the Protocol of Sustainable Tourism and its Strategy initiated,
- Inputs for follow-up actions and projects provided and information on possible funding resources actively shared by the members of the WG,
- Cross-border cooperation in sustainable tourism enhanced, especially using available funding resources such as Goal2Recommendations and inputs to the Carpathian Convention Information System provided,
- Recommendations and inputs to the Carpathian Convention Information System provided.

## **Composition and organization of work**

The Working Group is composed of persons nominated by the Parties through the National Focal Points for the Carpathian Convention. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties, the meetings of the Working Group are open for observers.

Working Group members shall strive to consult the activities of the WG with their national, regional and local stakeholders (public administrations, NGOs, private sector etc.), transmit the stakeholder's view to other WG members when necessary and to ensure the stakeholders' involvement in the implementation.

One or more Parties shall provide leadership to the Working Group and shall together with the Secretariat coordinate the implementation of the WG's programme of work and COP4 decisions.

Working Group members shall share their expertise and take active part in online consultations, coordinated by the Secretariat and the leadership of the Working Group.

At each meeting, the Working Group shall elect its Chair and Co-Chair; the Secretariat shall act as rapporteur. In conducting its business, the Working Group shall base itself on the applicable Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties.

The Working Group shall meet as necessary. Agenda of the meeting and background documents shall be made available to the WG members at least one month prior the Working Group meeting.

The Working Group will report to the Conference of the Parties through the CCIC.

Observers such as the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion Poland, CEEweb for Biodiversity, Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE), European Wilderness Society, Green-tourism Ecological Association, State Nature Conservancy, WWF - DCP are welcome to provide inputs to the Working Group.

All Working Group meetings are conducted in English, unless otherwise decided. Participants may bring interpreters at their own expenses.

The Parties hosting Working Group meetings bears the costs of meeting rooms and equipment related to organization of a meeting, unless otherwise decided.

Meeting participant cover their respective travel and accommodation expenses, unless otherwise decided.

## **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 (e.g. Working Group on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity, Working Group on Sustainable Forest Management, Working Group on Sustainable Transport, Working Group on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge, Working Group on Agriculture and Rural Development) 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.

## 7.4 Terms of Reference for the National Tourism Task Forces



# Draft Terms of Reference for the National Tourism Task Force

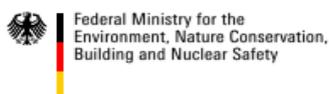
(version 1 – 27<sup>th</sup> June 2016)

Note: This Draft Terms of Reference for the National Tourism Task Forces has been elaborated for the seven member states to the Carpathian Convention and is developed as a blueprint, which should be adapted and finalized to the needs of a specific country in consultation with stakeholders.

Project “Support for the Implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians”

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# Draft Terms of Reference for the National Tourism Task Force

## Background

The basis for comprehensive international cooperation in the Carpathians was laid down by “**The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians**” (Carpathian Convention), which was adopted and signed by the seven Parties (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Ukraine) in May 2003 in Kyiv, Ukraine, and entered into force in January 2006.

The purpose of the **Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians** is to determine common actions and measures in order to value and sustainably use the outstanding natural and cultural assets for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians.

This strategy aims at harmonizing and coordinating country-specific approaches by providing a common understanding and umbrella platform for planning and management. The strategy is not a stand-alone activity; it is part of the comprehensive effort of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention to coordinate the responsible use, protection and promotion of the Carpathians as a tourism destination.

In line with the objectives of the Carpathian Convention, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties adopted in May 2011 the **Protocol on Sustainable Tourism** to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians. In this Protocol, which is in force since 29<sup>th</sup> April 2013, the Parties decided the following in Article 27 (Implementation), Paragraph 3: *The Conference of the Parties shall develop and adopt the Strategy on Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians, which will accompany the implementation of this protocol.*

The Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP4) to the Carpathian Convention (Mikulov, Czech Republic, 23<sup>rd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014), by its Decision COP4/6 para 3, adopted the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians, welcomed the Background Document and took note that the Strategy aims at the implementation of relevant paragraphs of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism adopted at COP3.

In the strategy in chapter 4.1 - institutional arrangements - the establishment of a **National Tourism Task Force (NTTF)** is planned: *Each Party establishes a National Sustainable Tourism Task Force in order to communicate Carpathian Sustainable Tourism initiatives to the wider governmental structure and bodies. Stakeholders’ institutions working in different fields (e.g. tourism development, education, culture or business) may be invited to join this task force. The aim of the task force is to strengthen and monitor the effective implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians and the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and to formulate recommendations to the CC - WGST.*

### **Aim and objectives of the strategy**

As stipulated in the strategy, the aim of the National Tourism Task Force (NTTF) is to exchange information on the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and its Strategy with stakeholders at national and sub-national levels.

Objectives of the NTTF are to foster communication among stakeholders involved in tourism at different levels with a clear target on the Carpathian part of the country and to create synergies with existing strategies relevant to tourism at national and sub-national levels.

The role of the NTTF is not that of a decision-making body, but to formulate recommendations to support the implementation of sustainable tourism by the different stakeholders groups.

### **Institutional set-up of the NTTF**

There are several options to set-up the NTTF at national or sub-national level:

- In case a “body” (e.g. tourism board, scientific tourism committee) already exists at the national level, the NTTF could be integrated into such. However, it is advised that such a body will either form a NTTF sub-group or the agenda of each meeting distinguishes between general topics and those topics relevant for the Carpathians.
- Alternatively, the government may decide to establish the NTTF separately from existing bodies for that part of its country, which has been defined as the “part belonging to the Carpathians”.

(Note: In the finalized ToR only the relevant text may appear, e.g. “The NTTF is established within the scientific committee.....”)

The NTTF shall be coordinated by the government, which is a Party to the Carpathian Convention and reports on its progress of implementation. The Focal Point for the Carpathian Convention is appointed by the government and is normally located in the Ministry of Environment or related Ministries. Concerning the topic of tourism in the Carpathian Convention, the Ministry of Environment coordinates with the Ministry responsible for the tourism sector (e.g. Ministry of Economy; Regional Development, etc.) and appoints its separate Focal Point.

The Focal Point for Tourism (insert name of governmental institution) of (insert country) to the Carpathian Convention coordinates the establishment and operational function of the NTTF. The Focal Point is responsible for collecting the first list of stakeholders, who will become members of the NTTF. The list of stakeholders is open and can be amended at any time after the establishment of the NTTF.

The NTTF should include a wide range of stakeholders relevant to tourism, from governmental and non-governmental bodies and institutions to tourism sector representatives, scientific and educational sector as well as the financing sector. This is to ensure that the most relevant information on tourism planning and development in the Carpathians is circulated within this group.

During the first meeting, members of the NTTF might elect a chair and a rapporteur for a defined period of time – either for one meeting or a number of meetings. The chair and rapporteur, together with the Focal Point will compile contributions to and results of the meeting and make it available to the public. The Focal Point might use relevant information to report back to the Carpathian Convention and its Tourism Working Group.

## **Core tasks of the NTTF**

Baselines for the operation of the NTTF are the two consecutive action plans of the strategy. First of all the **Country Action Plan** with 27 actions in chapter 3.1 of the strategy and furthermore the **Joint Action Plan** in chapter 3.2 of the strategy, which outlines 25 actions, to be implemented with participation of two or more countries and its stakeholders in a trans-boundary and/or Carpathian wide manner.

According to the strategy the first priority tasks to be discussed and executed are:

**1. Communicating the Carpathian Tourism Strategy through a wide network of relevant stakeholders (e.g. local and regional governments, non-governmental organizations, science sector, and tourism business sector)**

The NTTF shall liaise with the relevant stakeholder networks and institutions covering the entire geographical scope of the Carpathians in the country and if necessary beyond the country borders.

**2. Establishing a structure for the implementation of the Country Action Plan**

The NTTF should frequently examine the 27 actions of the Country Action Plan of the strategy regarding its feasibility and if the actions are in line with country-specific strategies and planning documents (to be specified in the final ToR, depending on which documents the NTTF wants to refer to).

The current priorities in the Country Action Plan are recommendations and might not fit to emerging situations in the country and the availability of funds. Therefore, the NTTF should periodically propose certain priorities on the implementation of the Country Action Plan.

**3. Identifying financial support for the implementation of the strategy**

In line with item 2, the NTTF shall identify and recommend the most relevant financial instruments for the implementation of the actions of the strategy, not limited to the Country Action Plan. The NTTF might also want to give an input to the database provided by ETE and continue to improve and update, as well as to ensure the public access to the gathered information.

**4. Developing and implementing a communication strategy**

The NTTF may decide to draft a strategy on how to communicate their operation, networking and communication with stakeholders in the country.

**5. Developing a reporting format and report on the achievements of the NTTF**

The NTTF may decide to develop a format for reporting, which will be used by the rapporteur to deliver information to the members of the NTTF as well as to the Focal Points of the Carpathian Convention and the stakeholders in the country.

**6. Reviewing the Joint Action Plan**

The NTTF may want to deliver recommendations to the government and other stakeholders on the review of the Joint Action Plan of the strategy and how to implement its relevant components in the country.

## **Annex 1: Extract of the Strategy on Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians (chapters 3.1 and 3.2; pages 6-15)**

### 3.1 Country Action Plan

**Objective 1: ESTABLISHING OF SUPPORTIVE CONDITIONS FOR THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, INCLUDING DEVELOPMENT OF A MARKETING SCHEME FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE CARPATHIANS AS A UNIQUE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DESTINATION**

	Activities	Proposed start <sup>2</sup>
1	<b>Initiate destination and/or country specific tourism product development</b> (e.g. rural tourism, slow tourism, heritage tourism, ecotourism in protected areas, spa tourism, dark sky parks, social tourism and handicapped tourism), focusing on all seasons	Year 1
2	<b>Identify and support the establishment of Carpathian wide authentic clusters of sustainable tourism products</b> , e.g. thematic tours (e.g. architecture, cuisine, land use, mixed cultural/technical heritage etc.), agro tourism, hiking, cycling, ski touring	Year 1
3	<b>Identify, assess, and where applicable, remove conditions</b> unfavorable for the development of sustainable tourism	Year 1
4	<b>Set principles and develop guidelines on sustainable tourism infrastructure</b> and activities	Year 1
5	<b>Support rural tourism</b> which is maintaining traditional land use (e.g. beekeeping, food production)	Year 2
6	<b>Support the establishment of regional Carpathian touristic (destination) brands</b> contributing to the preservation of landscape character and tangible/intangible cultural heritage, possibly connected to a Carpathian brand	Year 2
7	<b>Support the development of cross-border tourism cooperation</b> , favorable visa regime where applicable, and linking of trails-implementation to joint cross-border tourism products	Year 4
8	<b>Establish incentive measures</b> for local tourism businesses developing and implementing sustainable tourism products, incl. measures for removing barriers to effective sustainable business operations	Year 4
9	<b>Ensure participatory involvement</b> (e.g. workshops, online consultations) of <b>local communities in regional product development</b>	Year 5
10	<b>Develop programs for promoting and funding the preservation of local cultural and natural heritage</b> through tourism	Year 6

<sup>2</sup> Proposed start of the activities is after the adoption of this strategy at COP 4, e.g. Year 1 is 2014.

**Objective 2: DEVELOP INNOVATIVE TOURISM MANAGEMENT, FULLY INTEGRATING THE NEEDS OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND ECONOMIES AND OTHER SUPPORTING SECTORS, AND RESPECTING THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**

	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Proposed start</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Establish the Sustainable Tourism Task Force</b> as part of the Sustainable Tourism Working Group of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians	Year 1
<b>12</b>	<b>Enhance the national coordination</b> structure and <b>encourage establishment of management centers</b> on sustainable tourism, if applicable, in the Carpathians	Year 1
<b>13</b>	<b>Support the integration</b> of the Carpathian dimension into the national and regional coordination of sustainable tourism	Year 2
<b>14</b>	<b>Zone the key touristic areas</b> with a focus on carrying capacity issues, and implement assessment measures based on EIA process principles	Year 3
<b>15</b>	<b>Contribute to a common set of indicators</b> on the effects of implemented policies and strategies to develop sustainable tourism in the Carpathians	Year 3
<b>16</b>	Develop programs for <b>promotion of local cultural heritage tourism</b> in the Carpathian countries taking into account the specificity and diversity of all the regions and sub-Carpathian areas	Year 3
<b>17</b>	<b>Enhance and support trans-boundary cooperation</b> by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organizing „both-sides“ events (fairs, exhibitions, workshops, etc.)</li> <li>• design trail network from „both-sides“ perspective</li> <li>• introducing non-Schengen border crossings solutions for tourist movement (if applicable)</li> <li>• new tourist border crossings, new bridges and footbridges over border rivers</li> <li>• tourist business initiatives</li> </ul>	Year 4
<b>18</b>	<b>Establish a working group for assessing tourism impact on natural and cultural heritage</b> (including Protected Areas), also using the results of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) processes and other tools	Year 4
<b>19</b>	<b>Support the establishment of destination management organizations (DMO) in key touristic areas</b> (if applicable) to implement sustainable tourism management schemes with local stakeholders	Year 5
<b>20</b>	<b>Develop a system of incentives</b> to support the improvement and use of local supply chains to and from tourism	Year 6
<b>21</b>	<b>Establish and support a Carpathian Coordination Platform</b> , if applicable and based on available funding	Year tbd
<b>22</b>	<b>Revise National Tourism Development Strategies</b> by incorporating the principles of sustainable tourism and the Carpathian dimension	As appropriate

**Objective 3: ESTABLISH A CONTINUOUS PROCESS OF AWARENESS RAISING, CAPACITY BUILDING, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT AT ALL LEVELS**

	Activities	Proposed start
23	<b>Create a platform for cooperation of farmers</b> linked with tourism entrepreneurship (to be integrated into the common online Carpathian platform on sustainable tourism)	Year 1
24	<b>Establish a system of continuous education and training for relevant target groups</b> on sustainable tourism development, e.g. education programs at schools, raising awareness of the public in regards to natural and cultural heritage	Year 2
25	<b>Enhance international cooperation</b> of entities responsible for sustainable tourism development in individual Parties	Year 3
26	<b>Implement campaigns</b> , especially in the Carpathian part of the country, to <b>raise the awareness among local population of sustainable tourism</b> and the Carpathian Convention	Year 3
27	<b>Contribute to a common Carpathian education, interpretation and awareness raising program</b>	Year 6

**3.2 Joint Action Plan**

**Objective 1: ESTABLISH SUPPORTIVE CONDITIONS FOR THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, INCLUDING DEVELOPMENT OF A MARKETING SCHEME FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE CARPATHIANS AS A UNIQUE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DESTINATION**

	Activities	Proposed start
1	<b>Develop, maintain and keep up to date a common online Carpathian platform on sustainable tourism, including products and services</b> database, trans-boundary products and mapping, as well as good practices, with continuously updated information, and including the preparation of a Carpathian touristic map	Year 1
2	<b>Create a Carpathian identity</b> and make use of a logo/slogan compulsory for all those service suppliers who joined and were labeled under the Carpathian product-line	Year 2
3	<b>Initiate and possibly create a certification and/or labeling system for sustainable tourism</b> for the Carpathian Brand, supported by a Carpathian-wide marketing strategy	Year 3
4	<b>Develop a Carpathian-wide quality standard system for local products and local services</b> (e.g. "Local food", "Local accommodation", "Local experience – how to guide tourists", "Code of Conduct for Tourists in the Carpathians")	Year 4
5	<b>Develop common principles and guidelines on tourism infrastructure</b> and undertake activities to make them sustainable	Year 4
6	<b>Establish a tour operators' cooperation platform</b>	Year 4

	Activities	Proposed start
7	<b>Design</b> , where applicable, a <b>common system of marking trails</b> throughout the Carpathians	Year 5
8	<b>Develop, maintain and keep up to date an online platform promoting labeled products</b> , linking with the websites of NTOs	Year 6

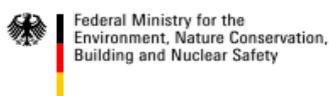
**Objective 2: DEVELOP INNOVATIVE TOURISM MANAGEMENT, FULLY INTEGRATING THE NEEDS OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND ECONOMIES AND OTHER SUPPORTING SECTORS, AND RESPECTING THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**

	Activities	Proposed start
10	<b>Initiate resource mobilization</b> for the implementation of the strategy at national and international level involving all relevant stakeholders	Year 1
11	<b>Develop a common communication paper on the Carpathian Brand</b>	Year 3
12	<b>Define the use of the Carpathian Brand</b> and its management structure with relation to other sectoral or geographical brands	Year 3
13	<b>Analyze the touristic resources</b> of the Parties based on research, to identify the key-areas and products to be involved, and undertake further detailed research	Year 3
14	<b>Develop guidelines for contributions by the tourism sector to the conservation of natural and cultural resources</b>	Year 4
15	<b>Develop a methodology for monitoring the impacts</b> of existing and planned tourism development on biodiversity and landscapes, as well as the social, economic and cultural impacts	Year 4
16	<b>Define and implement a common set of indicators</b> on the effects of implemented policies and strategies for developing sustainable tourism in the Carpathians	Year 4
17	<b>Initiate the establishment of an organizational unit (Carpathian Observatory on Sustainable Tourism)</b> , contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Protocol and this Strategy by monitoring and evaluation of tourism activities in the Carpathians	Year 4
18	<b>Develop methods for the protection of „brand-making“ elements of the Carpathians cultural heritage</b> by implementing common projects on preservation of cultural heritage	Year 5
19	<b>Support setting up of a common mechanism for the implementation of the strategy</b>	Year 5
20	<b>Develop common guidelines for the support of sustainable local supply chains</b>	Year 6
21	<b>Develop common guidelines for a monitoring system scheme on traffic</b> to destinations and the flow of visitors within destinations	Year 6
22	<b>Initiate the exchange of good practices and lessons learned</b> from the operation of DMOs in terms of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians	Year 1

**Objective 3: ESTABLISH A CONTINUOUS PROCESS OF AWARENESS RAISING, CAPACITY BUILDING, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT AT ALL LEVELS**

	Activities	Proposed start
23	Create an online platform for education, training and sharing of best practices available to all stakeholders	Year 4
24	Create a program of workshops & conferences and study visits in order to exchange innovative experience on sustainable tourism development	Year 5
25	Exchange know-how on the contribution of tourism to biodiversity and cultural heritage conservation with other destinations	Year 6

**Funding institution:** Federal Environment Agency (UBA) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety with funds from the Advisory Assistance Programme for environmental protection in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and other counties neighbouring the European Union (AAP). It is supervised by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN).



## 7.5 Terms of Reference for the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform



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# Draft Terms of Reference for the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform

Project “Support for the Implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians”

**Implement. organisation:** Ökologischer Tourismus in Europa (Ö.T.E.) e.V. (Ecological Tourism in Europe, ETE)

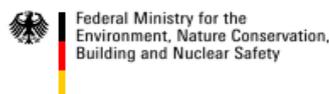
Contact person: Michael Meyer, Member of the Board, E-Mail: [m.meyer@oete.de](mailto:m.meyer@oete.de).

Postal address: Koblenzer Str. 65, 53173 Bonn, Germany

Tel. - Fax - Internet: Tel: +49-228-359008, Fax: +49-228-18470820, [www.oete.de](http://www.oete.de)

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**Funding institution:**



## **Draft Terms of Reference for the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform**

The Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform (CSTP) is a platform consisting of several centers, which aims at coordinating the implementation of the “Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians. The operation of the CSTP is guided and monitored by the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism.

### **Background**

The basis for comprehensive international cooperation in the Carpathians was laid down by **The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians** (Carpathian Convention), which was adopted and signed by the seven Parties (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Ukraine) in May 2003 in Kyiv, Ukraine, and entered into force in January 2006.

The purpose of the **Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians** (Strategy) is to determine common actions and measures in order to value and sustainably use the outstanding natural and cultural assets for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians.

This Strategy aims at harmonizing and coordinating country-specific approaches by providing a common understanding and umbrella platform for planning and management. The Strategy is not a stand-alone activity; it is part of the comprehensive effort of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention to coordinate the responsible use, protection and promotion of the Carpathians as a tourism destination.

In line with the objectives of the Carpathian Convention, the Third Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP3), held in Bratislava, Slovakia, 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> May 2011, adopted the **Protocol on Sustainable Tourism** to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians. In the Protocol, which is in force since 29<sup>th</sup> April 2013, the Parties decided the following in Article 27 (Implementation), Paragraph 3: *The Conference of the Parties shall develop and adopt the Strategy on Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians, which will accompany the implementation of this protocol.*

The Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP4) to the Carpathian Convention (Mikulov, Czech republic, 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014), by its Decision COP4/6 para 3, adopted the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians, welcomed the Background Document and took note that the Strategy aims at the implementation of relevant paragraphs of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism adopted at COP3.

In the Strategy in action 3.2.19 (see Annex 1) and in chapter 4.1 - institutional arrangements - the establishment of a Common Sustainable Tourism Coordination Platform (CSTCP) is planned: *The Parties in cooperation with other major stakeholders in the Carpathians may consider setting up a common international mechanism to support the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and its Strategy if funding is available. Modalities and functioning of this common mechanism are to be agreed upon and overseen by the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee. The common mechanism might focus on e.g. Developing, maintaining and keeping up to date a common online Carpathian platform on sustainable tourism; Resource mobilization; Exchange of good practices; Product Development; Branding and Certification; Marketing and Promotion; Capacity Building of stakeholders, businesses and destinations.*

## **Vision and objectives of the strategy**

The vision of the Strategy encompasses three dimensions – competitiveness, conservation and cooperation, which are fundamental to adding value to tourism, agreed by the Parties to the Carpathian Convention:

<b>The Carpathians are a top competitive sustainable tourism destination in Europe, based on its unique natural and cultural heritage preserved and maintained on large integral areas</b>	
The people in the Carpathians are successful in, and proud of, maintaining their local authentic traditions, cultures, and landscapes, which contribute to unique tourist experiences	Good cooperation, local management and partnerships contribute to the high quality of responsible tourism and ecosystem services, which ensures continuous benefits for local communities and economies

In order to become a top sustainable tourism destination the Parties agree that the following three objectives form the targets to accomplish the vision by 2024:

### **Objective 1**

*Establish supportive conditions for sustainable tourism products and services, including development of a marketing scheme for the promotion of the Carpathians as a unique sustainable tourism destination*

### **Objective 2**

*Develop innovative tourism management, fully integrating the needs of local people and economies and other supporting sectors, and respecting the preservation of natural and cultural heritage*

### **Objective 3**

*Establish a continuous process of awareness raising, capacity building, education and training on sustainable tourism development and management at all levels*

## **Institutional set-up of CSTP**

The CSTP has to provide a coordinated communication platform for in-house and external experts working on the specific topics for implementing the Strategy and communication between the Parties and its stakeholders.

The CSTP will be guided, as stipulated in the Agreement between UNEP Vienna - Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (UNEP Vienna – SCC) and the Centers, by the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (WG Sustainable Tourism). The WG Sustainable Tourism will overview the operation of the CSTP and advise the CSTP in application of most relevant and innovative approaches.

The CSTP will be set-up as described on the Joint Proposal of the currently proposed three Centers. One representative of each Center and the representative of the UNEP Vienna – SCC will establish the CSTP Steering Group. The lead of the Steering Group will be elected for the first two years, starting upon the signature of the Agreement, from the representatives of centers and will rotate every two years.

## **Core tasks of the CSTP**

Fundamentals for the operation of the CSTP are the two consecutive Action Plans of the Strategy. First of all the **Joint Action Plan** in chapter 3.2 of the Strategy, which outlines 24 actions, to be implemented with participation of two or more countries and its stakeholders in a trans-boundary and/or Carpathian wide manner. Furthermore, the CSTP shall assist the Parties to the Convention and its National Tourism Focal Points in the implementation of the 27 actions of the **Country Action Plan** through their National Tourism Task Forces.

According to the Strategy the first priority tasks to be executed are:

### **1. Establish a network of relevant stakeholders (e.g. local and regional governments, nongovernmental organizations, science, tourism business sector)**

The CSTP shall liaise with the relevant stakeholder networks and institutions covering the entire geographical scope of the Carpathians. These networks have to be established at horizontal and vertical levels.

For the tourism sector, the CSTP shall create a network of (a) destinations, (b) tourism institutions within their national sphere and (c) tourism institutions at Carpathian and European level. This network will ensure effective communication with the tourism stakeholders and the coordination of joint efforts to implement the strategy.

For the governmental sector, the CSTP shall receive the mandate from the WG Sustainable Tourism to directly liaise with the National Tourism Task Forces (NTTF) in each of the Carpathian countries. Communication with the NTTFs will ensure the effective development and implementation of relevant projects and initiatives of the strategy.

For the non-governmental sector, the CSTP shall ensure their full integration into the developed network in order to cover relevant topics such as conservation of biological diversity and the protection of cultural heritage. The NGO sector can provide the CSTP with information on innovative approaches in communication and project implementation.

### **2. Establish a structure for the implementation of the Joint Action Plan**

The CSTP should cluster the 24 actions of the Joint Action Plan of the Strategy according to feasibility in time and financial capacity with regard to:

- Sustainable Product Development
- Sustainable Tourism Management
- Training, Education and Capacity Building
- Marketing and Promotion
- Monitoring

The current priorities in the Joint Action Plan are recommendations and might not fit to emerging situations in the countries and availability of funds. Therefore, the CSTP Centers are requested to submit an Annual Work Plan on the implementation of the Joint Action Plan to the WG Sustainable Tourism for approval.

#### **4. Develop a financial overview and structure for the implementation of the Strategy**

In line with item 2, the CSTP has to provide a continuous update on the financial structure for the implementation of the entire Strategy, so not limited to the Joint Action Plan. The CSTP will take over the database provided by ETE and continue to improve and update and ensure the public access to the gathered information.

#### **5. Develop and implement a communication strategy**

The CSTP shall draft a strategy on how to communicate their operation, networking and communication to the Parties to the Convention and the stakeholders of the Carpathians. This communication strategy will be approved by the WG Sustainable Tourism and published on the CSTP homepage. The CSTP homepage should provide at least but not limited to an online exchange platform and databases on financial mechanisms, initiatives and projects. The CSTP will take over the database provided by ETE and continue to improve and update and ensure the public access to the gathered information.

#### **6. Develop a reporting format and report on the achievements on a yearly basis to the WG Sustainable Tourism**

During the first six months after establishment, the CSTP will submit a reporting format to the WG Sustainable Tourism for approval. The reports should integrate information e.g.

- Description of internal and external staff
- Financial spreadsheet
- Detailed actions of the strategy commenced and/or completed
- Forecast work plan

The CSTP shall use the indicators of each strategy action, developed by ETE.

#### **7. Assist Parties to implement Country Action Plans**

The CSTP shall undertake efforts to assist the National Tourism Task Forces and their stakeholders in the implementation of the Country Action Plan. It should be ensured through the CSTP homepage that NTTFs could exchange information on their initiatives to implement the Strategy.

#### **8. Develop common principles and guidelines (based on available resources and projects):**

- on tourism infrastructure and undertake activities to make them sustainable,
- for contributions by the tourism sector to the conservation of natural and cultural resources,
- for the support of sustainable local supply chains,
- of a common set of indicators on the effects of implemented policies and strategies for developing sustainable tourism in the Carpathians.

**Annex1: Extract of the Strategy on Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians (chapter 3.1 and 3.2; pages 6-15)**

**3.1 Country Action Plan**

**Objective 1: ESTABLISHING OF SUPPORTIVE CONDITIONS FOR THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, INCLUDING DEVELOPMENT OF A MARKETING SCHEME FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE CARPATHIANS AS A UNIQUE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DESTINATION**

	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Proposed start<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Initiate destination and/or country specific tourism product development</b> (e.g. rural tourism, slow tourism, heritage tourism, ecotourism in protected areas, spa tourism, dark sky parks, social tourism and handicapped tourism), focusing on all seasons	Year 1
<b>2</b>	<b>Identify and support the establishment of Carpathian wide authentic clusters of sustainable tourism products</b> , e.g. thematic tours (e.g. architecture, cuisine, land use, mixed cultural/technical heritage etc.), agro tourism, hiking, cycling, ski touring	Year 1
<b>3</b>	<b>Identify, assess, and where applicable, remove conditions</b> unfavorable for the development of sustainable tourism	Year 1
<b>4</b>	<b>Set principles and develop guidelines on sustainable tourism infrastructure</b> and activities	Year 1
<b>5</b>	<b>Support rural tourism</b> which is maintaining traditional land use (e.g. beekeeping, food production)	Year 2
<b>6</b>	<b>Support the establishment of regional Carpathian touristic (destination) brands</b> contributing to the preservation of landscape character and tangible/intangible cultural heritage, possibly connected to a Carpathian brand	Year 2
<b>7</b>	<b>Support the development of cross-border tourism cooperation</b> , favorable visa regime where applicable, and linking of trails-implementation to joint cross-border tourism products	Year 4
<b>8</b>	<b>Establish incentive measures</b> for local tourism businesses developing and implementing sustainable tourism products, incl. measures for removing barriers to effective sustainable business operations	Year 4
<b>9</b>	<b>Ensure participatory involvement</b> (e.g. workshops, online consultations) of <b>local communities in regional product development</b>	Year 5
<b>10</b>	<b>Develop programs for promoting and funding the preservation of local cultural and natural heritage</b> through tourism	Year 6

**Objective 2: DEVELOP INNOVATIVE TOURISM MANAGEMENT, FULLY INTEGRATING THE NEEDS OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND ECONOMIES AND OTHER SUPPORTING SECTORS, AND RESPECTING THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**

	Activities	Proposed start <sup>3</sup>
11	<b>Establish the Sustainable Tourism Task Force</b> as part of the Sustainable Tourism Working Group of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians	Year 1
12	<b>Enhance the national coordination structure and encourage establishment of management centers</b> on sustainable tourism, if applicable, in the Carpathians	Year 1
13	<b>Support the integration</b> of the Carpathian dimension into the national and regional coordination of sustainable tourism	Year 2
14	<b>Zone the key touristic areas</b> with a focus on carrying capacity issues, and implement assessment measures based on EIA process principles	Year 3
15	<b>Contribute to a common set of indicators</b> on the effects of implemented policies and strategies to develop sustainable tourism in the Carpathians	Year 3
16	Develop programs for <b>promotion of local cultural heritage tourism</b> in the Carpathian countries taking into account the specificity and diversity of all the regions and sub-Carpathian areas	Year 3
17	<b>Enhance and support trans-boundary cooperation</b> by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organizing „both-sides“ events (fairs, exhibitions, workshops, etc.)</li> <li>• design trail network from „both-sides“ perspective</li> <li>• introducing non-Schengen border crossings solutions for tourist movement (if applicable)</li> <li>• new tourist border crossings, new bridges and footbridges over border rivers</li> <li>• tourist business initiatives</li> </ul>	Year 4
18	<b>Establish a working group for assessing tourism impact on natural and cultural heritage</b> (including Protected Areas), also using the results of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) processes and other tools	Year 4
19	<b>Support the establishment of destination management organizations (DMO) in key touristic areas</b> (if applicable) to implement sustainable tourism management schemes with local stakeholders	Year 5
20	<b>Develop a system of incentives</b> to support the improvement and use of local supply chains to and from tourism	Year 6
21	<b>Establish and support a Carpathian Coordination Platform</b> , if applicable and based on available funding	Year tbd
22	<b>Revise National Tourism Development Strategies</b> by incorporating the principles of sustainable tourism and the Carpathian dimension	As appropriate

<sup>3</sup> Proposed start of the activities is after the adoption of this strategy at COP 4, e.g. Year 1 is 2014

**Objective 3: ESTABLISH A CONTINUOUS PROCESS OF AWARENESS RAISING, CAPACITY BUILDING, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT AT ALL LEVELS**

	Activities	Proposed start
23	<b>Create a platform for cooperation of farmers</b> linked with tourism entrepreneurship (to be integrated into the common online Carpathian platform on sustainable tourism)	Year 1
24	<b>Establish a system of continuous education and training for relevant target groups</b> on sustainable tourism development, e.g. education programs at schools, raising awareness of the public in regards to natural and cultural heritage	Year 2
25	<b>Enhance international cooperation</b> of entities responsible for sustainable tourism development in individual Parties	Year 3
26	<b>Implement campaigns</b> , especially in the Carpathian part of the country, to <b>raise the awareness among local population of sustainable tourism</b> and the Carpathian Convention	Year 3
27	<b>Contribute to a common Carpathian education, interpretation and awareness raising program</b>	Year 6

### 3.2 Joint Action Plan

**Objective 1: ESTABLISH SUPPORTIVE CONDITIONS FOR THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, INCLUDING DEVELOPMENT OF A MARKETING SCHEME FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE CARPATHIANS AS A UNIQUE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DESTINATION**

	Activities	Proposed start
1	<b>Develop, maintain and keep up to date a common online Carpathian platform on sustainable tourism, including products and services</b> database, trans-boundary products and mapping, as well as good practices, with continuously updated information, and including the preparation of a Carpathian touristic map	Year 1
2	<b>Create a Carpathian identity</b> and make use of a logo/slogan compulsory for all those service suppliers who joined and were labelled under the Carpathian product-line	Year 2
3	<b>Initiate and possibly create a certification and/or labelling system for sustainable tourism</b> for the Carpathian Brand, supported by a Carpathian-wide marketing strategy	Year 3
4	<b>Develop a Carpathian-wide quality standard system for local products and local services</b> (e.g. “Local food”, “Local accommodation”, “Local experience – how to guide tourists”, “Code of Conduct for Tourists in the Carpathians”)	Year 4
5	<b>Develop common principles and guidelines on tourism infrastructure</b> and undertake activities to make them sustainable	Year 4
6	<b>Establish a tour operators’ cooperation platform</b>	Year 4
7	<b>Design</b> , where applicable, a <b>common system of marking trails</b> throughout the Carpathians	Year 5
8	<b>Develop, maintain and keep up to date an online platform promoting labelled products</b> , linking with the websites of NTOs	Year 6

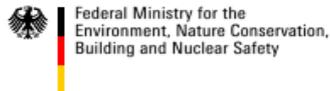
**Objective 2: DEVELOP INNOVATIVE TOURISM MANAGEMENT, FULLY INTEGRATING THE NEEDS OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND ECONOMIES AND OTHER SUPPORTING SECTORS, AND RESPECTING THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**

	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Proposed start</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Initiate resource mobilization</b> for the implementation of the strategy at national and international level involving all relevant stakeholders	Year 1
<b>11</b>	<b>Develop a common communication paper on the Carpathian Brand</b>	Year 3
<b>12</b>	<b>Define the use of the Carpathian Brand</b> and its management structure with relation to other sectoral or geographical brands	Year 3
<b>13</b>	<b>Analyze the touristic resources</b> of the Parties based on research, to identify the key-areas and products to be involved, and undertake further detailed research	Year 3
<b>14</b>	<b>Develop guidelines for contributions by the tourism sector to the conservation of natural and cultural resources</b>	Year 4
<b>15</b>	<b>Develop a methodology for monitoring the impacts</b> of existing and planned tourism development on biodiversity and landscapes, as well as the social, economic and cultural impacts	Year 4
<b>16</b>	<b>Define and implement a common set of indicators</b> on the effects of implemented policies and strategies for developing sustainable tourism in the Carpathians	Year 4
<b>17</b>	<b>Initiate the establishment of an organizational unit (Carpathian Observatory on Sustainable Tourism)</b> , contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Protocol and this Strategy by monitoring and evaluation of tourism activities in the Carpathians	Year 4
<b>18</b>	<b>Develop methods for the protection of „brand-making“ elements of the Carpathians cultural heritage</b> by implementing common projects on preservation of cultural heritage	Year 5
<b>19</b>	<b>Support setting up of a common mechanism for the implementation of the strategy</b>	Year 5
<b>20</b>	<b>Develop common guidelines for the support of sustainable local supply chains</b>	Year 6
<b>21</b>	<b>Develop common guidelines for a monitoring system scheme on traffic</b> to destinations and the flow of visitors within destinations	Year 6
<b>22</b>	<b>Initiate the exchange of good practices and lessons learned</b> from the operation of DMOs in terms of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians	Year 1

**Objective 3: ESTABLISH A CONTINUOUS PROCESS OF AWARENESS RAISING, CAPACITY BUILDING, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT AT ALL LEVELS**

	Activities	Proposed start
23	Create an online platform for education, training and sharing of best practices available to all stakeholders	Year 4
24	Create a program of workshops & conferences and study visits in order to exchange innovative experience on sustainable tourism development	Year 5
25	Exchange know-how on the contribution of tourism to biodiversity and cultural heritage conservation with other destinations	Year 6

**Funding institution:** Federal Environment Agency (UBA) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety with funds from the Advisory Assistance Programme for environmental protection in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and other countries neighbouring the European Union (AAP). It is supervised by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN).



## 7.6 Work Programme and Reporting of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Center Romania



MINISTERUL TURISMULUI



Consiliul Județean Brașov

### WORK PROGRAMME 2017 - 2020

#### And Performance Indicators

### Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Center ROMANIA

	TASKS	INDICATORS
<b>GENERAL TASKS</b>		
1	<p><b>Internet appearance of the CSTP</b> - CSTC will link up with the webpage and frequently upload information</p> <p><a href="http://www.cstp.center/">http://www.cstp.center/</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uploading 20 events / year</li> <li>• Uploading data on website (work program, team, stakeholders, etc.)</li> </ul>
2	<p><b>List of stakeholders for Romania</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Tourism Task Force members</li> <li>• Country level stakeholders</li> </ul> <p><b>a. Government cluster</b> Government national level - all ministries Government subnational level (county contact points and Tourism Information Centres)</p> <p><b>b. Scientific cluster</b> Universities, science institutions, consultancy companies attached to universities (ex. Institute for Geography, Institute of Biology, etc)</p> <p><b>c. Tourism sector</b> Accommodation, Food production, Transportation, Marketing, Travel agencies, Tour operators - national / subnational <b>NGOs (maybe subcluster on fields of action)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of stakeholders, including all clusters mentioned, uploaded by December 2017 and frequently uploaded - until next report 3 years</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Request the list of stakeholders from all the Carpathian countries</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carpathian wide list of stakeholders including all clusters mentioned above</li> </ul>

3	<b>Overtaking the database from CEEWeb / ETE by the end of 2017 and frequently uploading new information</b> a. Projects on implementing the Strategy b. Funding sources c. Handbooks / guidelines on sustainable tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Database managed by CSTC RO December 2017</li> <li>• Number of documents uploaded (a,b,c)</li> </ul>
	<b>Request the information from all the Carpathian countries and frequently uploading new information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carpathian wide list of documents uploaded (a,b,c)</li> </ul>
4	Elaborating and implementing a <b>communication strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aim of the centre</li> <li>• staff members</li> <li>• programme</li> <li>• ways to communicate with the stakeholders</li> <li>• output - which documents we send</li> <li>• input - how do you expect input, which tools you use</li> <li>• integrate events – present the center, presentations, once a year a meeting of the parties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 (one) communication strategy</li> <li>• Distribution on CSTC homepage and to NTTFs in all Carpathian countries</li> </ul>
<b>ACTIONS FROM COUNTRY ACTION PLAN</b>		
1	<b>Act.1 Initiate destination and/or country specific tourism product development (e.g. rural tourism, slow tourism, heritage tourism, ecotourism in protected areas, spa tourism, dark sky parks, social tourism and handicapped tourism), focusing on all seasons</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify all sub-clusters (thematic clusters, types of tourism) according to the strategic documents approved</li> <li>• identify strategies, sub-strategies treatment bases, stakeholders, projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of clusters identified</li> <li>• Number of strategies collected</li> <li>• Number of projects identified</li> </ul>
2	<b>Act.4 Set principles and develop guidelines on sustainable tourism infrastructure and activities</b> <b>Compile all available principles and guidelines on sustainable tourism infrastructure and activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify relevant guidelines</li> <li>• upload guidelines on the homepage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of guidelines identified and uploaded</li> <li>• Discussions within at least 2 CC WG Tourism towards Action 5. within Joint Action Plan <i>“Develop common principles and guidelines on tourism infrastructure and undertake activities to make them sustainable”</i></li> </ul>

3	<p><b>Act.5 Support rural tourism which is maintaining traditional land use (e.g. beekeeping, food production)</b></p> <p><b>Linking the activities of Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Development – are we maintaining traditional land use?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify relevant documents</li> <li>• identify relevant projects</li> <li>• identify gaps and communicate to responsible bodies</li> <li>• upload documents on the homepage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of documents</li> <li>• Number of projects</li> <li>• Number of identified gaps and communicates to the responsible bodies</li> <li>• Number of documents uploaded on the homepage</li> </ul>
4	<p><b>Act.6 Support the establishment of regional Carpathian touristic (destination) brands contributing to the preservation of landscape character and tangible/intangible cultural heritage, possibly connected to a Carpathian brand</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further develop the Carpathian National Brand in Romania in connection with the action 3 of the Joint Action Plan "Initiate and possibly create a certification and/or labelling system for sustainable tourism for the Carpathian Brand, supported by a Carpathian-wide marketing strategy"</li> <li>• Identify destination level brands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Set of recommendations elaborated for the national brand and the destination management plan towards sustainable tourism</li> </ul>
5	<p><b>Art.7 Support the development of cross-border tourism cooperation, favorable visa regime where applicable, and linking of trails-implementation to joint cross-border tourism products</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Project applications by 2020</li> </ul>
6	<p><b>Art.9 Ensure participatory involvement (e.g. workshops, online consultations) of local communities in regional product development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design a pilot area and develop a methodology for participatory involvement of local communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a methodology for participatory involvement of local communities by 2020 to be distributed to the county levels in Romania</li> </ul>
7	<p><b>Art.11 Establish the Sustainable Tourism Task Force as part of the Sustainable Tourism Working Group of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NTTF established already (List of members, agenda, minutes)</li> <li>• At least 1 meeting per year</li> </ul>

8	<b>Art.12 Enhance the national coordination structure and encourage establishment of management centers on sustainable tourism, if applicable, in the Carpathians</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on how the recommendations of the CSTC and the NTTF enhanced the national coordination structure or changed the existent one</li> </ul>
9	<b>Art.16 Develop programs for promotion of local cultural heritage tourism in the Carpathian countries taking into account the specificity and diversity of all the regions and sub-Carpathian areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 national/county level programmes for promotion of cultural heritage</li> </ul>
10	<b>Art.17 Enhance and support trans-boundary cooperation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Project applications by 2020</li> </ul>
11	<b>Art.19 Support the establishment of destination management organizations (DMO) in key touristic areas (if applicable) to implement sustainable tourism management schemes with local stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislative provisions</li> <li>• 5 DMOs created by 2020</li> <li>• Introducing "Carpathian set of indicators" to 5 destinations</li> </ul>
12	<b>Art.21 Establish and support a Carpathian Coordination Platform, if applicable and based on available funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of CSTCs created by 2020</li> <li>• Joint work programme</li> <li>• Joint reporting</li> </ul>
13	<b>Art.22 Revise National Tourism Development Strategies by incorporating the principles of sustainable tourism and the Carpathian dimension</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report under revision on national tourism strategy</li> <li>• Discussion with NTTF and submission of the revised strategy to the government</li> </ul>
14	<b>Art.25 Enhance international cooperation of entities responsible for sustainable tourism development in individual Parties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common agreements with at least 2 Parties</li> </ul>
15	<b>Art.26 Implement campaign, especially in the Carpathian part of the country, to raise the awareness among local population of sustainable tourism and the Carpathian Convention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 awareness raising campaigns per year</li> <li>• Number of meetings with representatives of local population</li> </ul>
<b>ACTION FROM JOINT ACTION PLAN</b>		
1	<b>Art.1 Develop, maintain and keep up to date a common online Carpathian platform on sustainable tourism, including products and services database, trans-boundary products and mapping, as well as good practices, with continuous updated information, and including the preparation of a Carpathian touristic map</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uploading 20 events / year</li> <li>• Uploading relevant information work program, team, stakeholders, etc on website</li> <li>• Linking the platform with the websites of NTOs and vice-versa</li> </ul>

2	<b>Art.4 Develop a Carpathian-wide quality standard system for local products and local services (e.g. “Local food”, “Local accommodation”, “Local experience – how to guide tourists”, “Code of Conduct for Tourists in the Carpathians”) connect</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 3 Carpathian countries implementing ServiceQ (mapping)</li> <li>● Initiate act. 3 of the joined action plan „Initiate and possibly create a certification and/or labelling system for sustainable tourism for the Carpathian Brand, supported by a Carpathian-wide marketing strategy,,</li> </ul>
3	<b>Art.7 Design, where applicable, a common system of marking trails throughout the Carpathians</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Number of identified official systems of marking trails in Carpathian countries</li> </ul>
4	<b>Art.9 Initiate resource mobilization for the implementation of the strategy at national and international level involving all relevant stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Number of projects</li> <li>● Meeting with CC WG Tourism for voluntary contributions</li> <li>● Unitary format for reporting of the Parties on how they mobilised resources</li> </ul>
5	<b>Art.10 Initiate the exchange of good practices and lessons learned from the operation of DMOs in terms of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identified DMOs in all Carpathian countries – connection with country action plan action 19 ”Support the establishment of destination management organizations (DMO) in key touristic areas (if applicable) to implement sustainable tourism management schemes with local stakeholders</li> <li>● At least 1 project application by 2020 for sharing good practices between these DMOs</li> </ul>

6	<p><b>Art.13 Analyze the touristic resources of the Parties based on research, to identify the key-areas and products to be involved, and undertake further detailed research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation system of all Carpathian countries on the procedure of developing the Carpathian brand and how we can take over on the initiative made by Carpathian Euroregion (in preparation for the following actions from the Joined Action Plan 4, 3,2,12,11, 18)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with members of at least 2 CC WG Tourism meetings towards action 5</li> <li>• All countries have identified destinations or key areas</li> <li>• Develop a <b>road map</b> (what has been done, what is the need, voluntary contributions, existing Polish contribution)</li> </ul>
7	<p><b>Art.15 Develop a methodology for monitoring the impacts of existing and planned tourism development on biodiversity and landscapes, including the social, economic and cultural impact, and prepare for Action:</b></p> <p><b>Art. 16 Initiate the establishment of an organizational unit (Carpathian Observatory on Sustainable Tourism), contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Protocol and this Strategy by monitoring and evaluation of tourism activities in the Carpathians</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DANOST (Ukraine, Serbia, Romania, Hungary) project approved and implemented March 2019 – Feb 2021</li> </ul>
9	<p><b>Art.19 Support setting up of a common mechanism for the implementation of the strategy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual reporting format of the CSTP</li> </ul>

# REPORTING FORMAT

## Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Center

### ROMANIA

**A. Reporting period: Oct 2017 – Oct 2020**

**B. Interim reports:**

- 6 weeks prior meeting of WG 2018 (dates tbe)
- 6 weeks prior meeting of WG 2019 (dates tbe)

**C. Final Report**

- 8 weeks prior meeting of CCIC 2020 (dates tbe)

**D. STAFF**

- a. Number of staff
- b. List of staff (names/functions)
- c. Tasks allocated
  - Coordinator
  - Communication officer
  - Financial Officer

**E. Volunteers:**

- a. Number of volunteers
- b. List of volunteers (names/institutions/period of stay)
- c. Tasks allocated and ToR
- d. Call for volunteers – posted on ETE, Carpathian Convention website, Parties – also remote volunteers with specifically assigned tasks)

**F. Overall budget**

- a. Ministry of Tourism
- b. County of Brasov
- c. Voluntary contributions
- d. Generated projects

**G. Work programme 2017-2020**

- Activities of WP achieved; indicators presentation
- Forecast on activities for the next reporting period

**Signatures:**

**CSTC - RO**

## 7.7 A Common Set of Indicators Measuring the Positive and Negative Impacts Caused by Tourism in the Carpathians



### Ninth Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (CC-WG Tourism)

September, 12-14, 2017, Brasov

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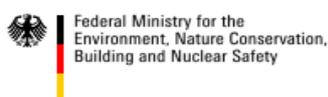
# A common set of indicators measuring the positive and negative impacts caused by tourism in the Carpathians

Project “Support for the Implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians”

**Implement. Organisation:** Ökologischer Tourismus in Europa (Ö.T.E.) e.V. (Ecological Tourism in Europe, ETE)  
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Funding institution:



## Acknowledgements

First of all, we would like to thank the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) for their support through the Advisory Assistance Programme, which gave us the opportunity to implement this project in the Carpathians from 17 August 2015 – 30 November 2017, including the development of a set of indicators which this publication will focus on.

During the consultation process on the implementation of the “Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians”, the project team at Ecological Tourism in Europe was tasked by the members of the Working Group on Tourism of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians to elaborate on a “Common set of indicators measuring the positive and negative impacts caused by tourism in the Carpathians”.

Also thanks to the Sustainable Development of Tourism Programme of UNWTO a number of experts and institutions were gathered to provide input to a set of indicators, which reflect the current situation in the Carpathians on data availability and the existence of institutions at destination level, which have the capacity to collect and process the information for the indicators.

Given the fact that UNWTO is working frequently on tailor-made indicators and the European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS) provides a well described set of indicators for destinations, the gathered team had the task to find a well-balanced compromise for the Carpathian destinations and to come up with 25 core indicators.

Special thanks go to Ms. Cinzia de Marzo (Belgium, former responsible of ETIS at the European Commission- DG GROW), who has worked with the team from Ecological Tourism in Europe throughout the elaboration stages and who provided the first input document and further expert contribution in the next stages. The following expert team has provided their valuable contributions to the various draft documents:

- Dr. Edward W (Ted) Manning, President of Tourisk Inc. (Canada)
- Mr. László Puczkó and his team at Xellum Ltd. (Hungary)
- Dr. Dirk Glaesser and his team at the Sustainable Development of Tourism Department of World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (Spain)
- Mr. Carlos Romero and his team (Ms. Lourdes Maria de Pedro, Ms. Susana Garcia, Mr. Luis Javier Gadea Lucas) at Segittur (Spain)
- Ms. Silvia Giulietti and her team at the European Environment Agency (EEA) – Natural Systems and Sustainability Programme (Denmark)
- Mr. Krzysztof Borkowski and his team (Mr. Marek Łabaj, Mr. Tomasz Pasierbek, Mr. Sandor Nemethy) at the University of Tourism and Ecology (Poland)

The outcome of this work will first be submitted to the Working Group on Tourism of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians and later on to the National Tourism Task Forces, responsible for the implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians. These institutions will take a final decision on the set of indicators and will select destinations for the testing.

Michael Meyer (Project Manager)

Ökologischer Tourismus in Europa Ö.T.E. e.V. (Ecological Tourism in Europe, ETE)

## List of Abbreviations

EDEN	European Destination of Excellence
EU	European Union
EEA	European Environment Agency
ENAT	European Network for Sustainable Tourism
ETIS	European Tourism Indicator System
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
GSTC	Global Sustainable Tourism Council
INSTO	UNWTO International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories
MST	Measuring Sustainable Tourism initiative
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
WWF	World Wide Fund For Nature

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 The development of indicators

Travel to mountain ecosystems is increasing at a rapid pace globally. Growing numbers of tourists are attracted to the clean air, unique landscapes and wildlife, scenic beauty, rich culture and heritage, history, and recreational opportunities that mountain destinations offer. The Carpathians, a mountain destination with very rich natural, cultural and historical heritage, have a wide range of tourism and leisure amenities to offer.

Over the last 10 years the Carpathian countries were able to improve their role in the international tourism sector, with the number of visitors increasing from 87.9 million in 2002 to 111.6 million in 2012. Central and Eastern European countries attract 20% of all international travellers to Europe. It is estimated that the Carpathian region receives approx. 45 million overnight stays per year, including domestic and international travellers.

To prevent the development of unsustainable (mass) tourism in the Carpathians, The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention) was adopted and signed by the seven Parties (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic and Ukraine) in May 2003 in Kyiv, Ukraine, and entered into force in January 2006. This Framework Convention builds the basis for comprehensive international cooperation in the Carpathians. In order to value and sustainably use the outstanding natural and cultural assets of the Carpathians, the seven Carpathian countries developed *The Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians*. This Strategy outlines a vision, objectives and activities to be accomplished in a given period of time. Furthermore, the Strategy describes concrete measures either to avoid or to mitigate existing and potential negative impacts of tourism development.

A set of criteria is required in order to measure whether the implementation of the Strategy is successful in each of the seven Carpathian countries. Moreover, governments need to monitor and assess the implementation status of the Strategy against similar standards and thresholds. Therefore, the Parties shall report on progress based on these indicators and review the Strategy when needed. The indicators proposed to the Carpathian countries are listed in Chapter 4.

## 1.2 Tourism grows continuously in Central and Eastern Europe<sup>1</sup>

International tourism arrivals in Europe grew 5% in 2015 to reach 609 million, just over half of the world's total (51%). Europe was the fastest growing region in absolute terms, with 28 million more tourists than in 2014. The 28 countries (before Brexit) of the European Union posted over 5% growth, increasing international arrivals by a record 25 million to 479 million.

By sub-region, Central and East Europe (+6%) saw the highest growth in relative terms, welcoming 5 and 7 million more tourists respectively. The sub-region returned to growth in 2015 after a decline in international arrivals in 2014 amid the conflict in Ukraine and the slowdown of the Russian economy.

Most destinations reported strong results in 2015. Hungary (+18%) is enjoying double-digit growth for the second year in a row, with improved air connectivity and growing popularity of Budapest for city and business tourism. Romania and Slovakia (both +17%) also recorded double-digit growth in 2015. The Czech Republic (+7%) and Poland (+5%) also performed well in 2015, driven by robust intraregional demand.

Meanwhile, the Balkan destinations of Bosnia-Herzegovina (+26%), Montenegro (+16%), FYR Macedonia (+14%), Albania (+13%), Slovenia (+12%) and Serbia (+10%), all reported a double-digit growth this year. Serbia's government has implemented a new tourism strategy in recent months which includes tax incentives and promotional efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> UNWTO Barometer, Volume 14 – March 2016

### **1.3 The economic value of tourism and its social and cultural impacts**

The socio-cultural and economic impacts on host communities are inextricably linked. There may be beneficial synergies or inverse relations amongst the three impact areas and different opinions amongst several community groups and individuals as to what constitutes a benefit and what is negative for the community.

Some traditional or indigenous communities may not want to share their culture with tourists at all, while some rural, agricultural communities may not even recognise the interest tourists might have in their way of life. Accepting economic development often means accepting the cultural changes that accompany tourism development.

Socio-cultural benefits to communities can be very difficult to measure. Thus, it may be easier to measure economic benefits as an indicator of community socio-cultural benefits.

A concrete example of a survey on this topic for the Carpathian region (Lake Balaton, Hungary)<sup>2</sup> showed that the most positive impacts of tourism perceived by the local residents were related to the increase of a settlement's overall tax revenue, resident's pride in their settlement, hospitality and courtesy toward strangers. On the contrary, the increase of cost of living, costs of land and housing, general prices for goods and services, resident's concern for material gain, prostitution, gambling, organised crime, individual crime, noise and congestion, were perceived as negative impacts.

### **1.4 A comparison of tourist product development and marketing in the Carpathian and the Alps**

The Carpathian Convention is the unique multi-level governance mechanism covering the whole of the Carpathian area. After the Alpine Convention<sup>3</sup> it is the second sub-regional treaty-based regime for the protection and sustainable development of a mountain region worldwide. The interested parties are committed to taking measures to promote sustainable tourism in the Carpathians, providing benefits to the local people, based on the exceptional nature, landscapes and cultural heritage of the area.

Traditionally, the Alps were, and still are, a platform for innovation in the field of sustainable tourism and several sustainability oriented tourism and leisure products which combine the responsible use of resources and a high level of leisure services. It is important to underline that sustainable development of tourism in general is not to be confused with related forms of tourism.

## **2 Objectives**

The main goal of this project is the development of a set of core indicators (and possible supplementary indicators), for the specific objectives of the commonly agreed Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathian Convention<sup>4</sup>. These indicators need to be tailored to the needs of the Carpathian mountain ecosystems and of the local community, in order to allow for the tracking of the progress towards sustainability within the region, and also the international and the interregional comparability with other destinations. In addition, the establishment of Sustainable Tourism Observatories, under the umbrella of INSTO, and with the endorsement of the UNWTO, can be considered as a desired milestone in the next years.

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<sup>2</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook

<sup>3</sup> The Alpine Convention was signed on November 7, 1991 in Salzburg by Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, and the European Union. Slovenia signed the Convention on March 29, 1993, and Monaco became a party on the basis of a separate additional protocol. The Convention entered into force on March 6, 1995.

<sup>4</sup> In May 2011, during the 3rd Conference of the Parties, the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Carpathian Convention was adopted, and entered into force on April 29, 2013.

### 3 Methodology

The successful implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians, under the framework of the Carpathian Convention, is strictly related to the correct and qualified measurement of the positive and negative effects caused by tourism flows in this mountain area, as well as the identification of risks and potential benefits.

First of all, it is important to have a clear overview of the historical evolution of the policies and measurements systems recognised at international and European level in the tourism sector. In this sense it is vital to observe what can be learnt from existing systems that fit to the specific characteristics of the Carpathian region.

In this regard, several tools, methodologies and legal frameworks have been provided by international organizations such as UNWTO, UNEP, OECD, WWF, UNESCO, WTTC, etc., as well as by EU institutions such as the European Commission, EUROSTAT, EEA and other transnational private stakeholders including GSTC, ECOTRANS, GRI, EUROPARC, ENAT, NECSTOUR, INSTO, TRAVEL LIFE, among others.

The framework of INSTO, which has recently been updated, aligns with efforts in this field made by other relevant initiatives such as the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS)<sup>5</sup> and the GSTC. Since its establishment in 2004, a total of fourteen observatories have been recognised by UNWTO for their commitment to regular monitoring: eight in China, one in Greece, one in Croatia one in Mexico, one in Brazil and three in Indonesia.

INSTO key objectives are:

- Integrated approach: To provide a framework for the systematic, timely and regular monitoring of resource-use and a better understanding of tourism impacts.
- Evidence: To establish a strong foundation of tangible information for well-informed decision making.
- Stakeholder empowerment: To actively engage local stakeholders in the measurement of risks, costs, impacts, limits and opportunities through an inclusive and participatory approach.
- Engagement: To network and exchange information for improved collaboration, communication and greater public accountability.
- Performance measurement: To monitor the implementation of sustainable development plans, policies and management actions.
- Continuity: To foster long-term commitment for regular monitoring, thus contributing to the sustainable growth of the sector at the destination-level.
- Knowledge building: To highlight and share good practices and lessons learnt.

The comparability of some parts of the forthcoming Carpathian set of indicators, considering the geographical context of the Carpathian region, will take into account the continuous progress on definition of standards, criteria and indicators for sustainable tourism realised so far on this issue. In fact, new approaches (from top down to integrated and participatory processes), methodologies, commitments, shared responsibilities, governance models, thematic priorities, territorial dimensions, targets and transversal topics (e.g. Biodiversity, climate change, protected areas, transport accessibility, digital and mobile positioning data, social-cultural, economic value, environment), have been developed.

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<sup>5</sup> An official measurement and management tool launched by the European Commission in 2013

From a global perspective, the most comprehensive and complete guide and reference for the development of indicators for sustainable tourism is the UNWTO Guidebook<sup>6</sup>, published in 2004. This Guidebook provides definitions, sources of information and recommendations, offering a detailed description of key steps on how to develop and use indicators. For the purpose of this work, the guidelines on measurements and expression of indicators will be taken into account, in addition to examples of practical application in destinations, with a focus on mountain, ecotourism, parks and protected area destinations, as well as culture, heritage, and community dimensions.

Following the UNWTO input, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (known as the GSTC or the Council) was formally constituted in 2010 as an independent body for establishing and managing standards for sustainable tourism. At the heart of its work are the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria and Indicators (which are neither a definitive set nor are they all-inclusive and they can be applied to a broad range of destinations type). These indicators are organised around the four sections: (1) *demonstrate effective sustainable management*; (2) *maximise economic benefits to the host local community and minimise negative impacts*; (3) *maximise benefits to communities, visitors, and culture: minimise negative impacts*; (4) *maximise benefits to the environment and minimise negative impacts*.

From a regional scale perspective, in a pan-European context, the experience of the Alpine Convention and its further developments towards the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable tourism in the Alps<sup>7</sup> and the Action Plan on the European Union Strategy for the Alpine region<sup>8</sup>, will be useful to identify common issues and challenges, complementarities and links with the Carpathian Convention, in view of the development of specific indicators for the Carpathians.

An interesting example illustrating how local Alpine tourism destinations can implement indicators is the process to identify a set of mountain specific indicators for sustainable tourism conducted in 2011<sup>9</sup>. In this particular case, three Alpine EDEN destinations (European Destinations of Excellence)<sup>10</sup> were involved: Pielachtal in Austria, and Solčavsko and Soča Valley in Slovenia. The method used to identify the indicators consisted on the evaluation of the feedback received from destination representatives, who were asked to rate which indicators they considered most relevant in the field of management and evaluation of sustainability in their destination.

However, there are many more possible indicators and measurements that could be also taken into account if they are considered appropriately. They include aspects such as water management, mobility and connectivity issues, climate change, protection of natural heritage, quality, mobile activities, online reputation and social networks, etc.

Nevertheless, in terms of establishing potential synergies between the Alps and the Carpathian, Action 7 'Developing ecological connectivity in the whole territory' of EUSALP Action Plan, recognises the need to strengthen ecological continuity and share experiences, building also on the Alpine-Carpathian corridor project<sup>11</sup>. In addition to this, Action 8 'Improving risk management and to better manage climate change, including major natural risk prevention', highlights the relevance of exchanges of knowledge and good practices with other mountain areas, such as the Carpathian region.

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<sup>6</sup> Indicators for sustainable development in tourism destinations

<sup>7</sup> Sustainable tourism in the Alps – Report on the state of the Alps – Alpine Convention – Special Edition 4 – 2013

<sup>8</sup> COM (2015) 366 concerning the European Union Strategy for Alpine Region – EUSALP

<sup>9</sup> Core indicators for sustainable tourism list – Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 2012

<sup>10</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/eden\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/eden_en)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.alpenkarpatenkorridor.at>

### 3.1 The importance of measurement and monitoring at different levels and with different tools

It is extremely important to take into account what has been done in different areas on this issue of measurement to coordinate with other regions and jurisdictions. In order to ensure comparability between destinations in the Carpathians, a clear understanding and the creation of a common framework is required. Challenging aspects are still an 'on-going open discussion' at different levels, in terms of:

- measurement's concept definition,
- problem of connectivity (governance issue),
- identification of positive messages,
- capitalisation of the best story-telling,
- bringing the industry into the loop,
- improving destination sustainable management,
- balance between /investments/additional costs and benefits,
- use of non-traditional data and their relevance at destination level,
- role of transnational networks.

Assessment and reporting are complex tasks that will not produce the expected results unless they are carried out with the needed time and energy devoted to it. This requires that the mandates and capacities to carry out this task are considered as part of the core infrastructure of social organizations, oftentimes a responsibility of the government. The mandate should be clearly backed by laws and regulations.

UNWTO has recently launched, with the support of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the Measuring Sustainable Tourism (MST) initiative<sup>12</sup>. The aim of the MST is to develop an international statistic framework to measure key aspects of tourism's role in sustainable development, including economic, environmental and social dimensions. The starting foundation involves bridging two UN standards: The Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) and the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA).

By integrating tourism more fully within economic, social and environmental measurement standards, the framework aims to provide a common language and organizational structure for exploiting the richness of data already available and for more effective data production, management and integration. Such a standard-based framework can further support the credibility, comparability and outreach of various measurement and monitoring programmes relating to sustainable tourism.

In this regards, civil societies and other stakeholder groups must be given a leading role along with the local administration. This will create synergies and provide the public with different points of view.

The role of the coordination team (and or the local coordinator manager at destination level) is to manage and coordinate the entire process. This includes engaging the wider expert community; gathering, analysing and interpreting data; and organising peer review. The selection of effective technical partners is crucial for the process.

The European Tourism Indicator System – ETIS, a management and monitoring tool for tourism destinations - was specially designed by the European Commission in 2013, aiming at helping them to develop and carry out their plans for greater sustainability. ETIS methodology, which was already welcomed and implemented by 100 destinations across Europe during 2-year pilot phase (2013-2015), will be carefully taken into account in order to choose some core indicators for the Carpathians region. This methodology provides a good common framework in order to benchmark the findings against a set of universally recognised indicators, and to assess and support sustainable tourism development with the involvement of the local community.

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<sup>12</sup> Working group on measuring sustainable tourism terms of reference (as of 26/07/2016)

Still at European level, efforts to monitor and assess environmental impacts and sustainability trends of tourism have been undertaken by the European Environment Agency (EEA). The EEA has so far carried out an exploratory work on the technical feasibility and policy relevance of using a set of indicators to develop regular assessments on the environmental dimension of tourism sustainability. A proposal for a set of indicators, based on the “Drivers – Pressures – Impacts – State – Response” chain includes a set of 25 core indicators to be used at European level that can be also downscaled at sub-regional level (see Tab. 1, in paragraph 4.2).

The indicators developed so far as proxies aim at covering a wide range of topics related to tourism such as attractiveness of places, water consumption, biodiversity disturbance, spread of sustainability practises by the adoption of environmental certification schemes and labelling, potentials for eco-tourism and -to some extent, initially- land take by development of specific tourism and recreational related facilities (ski area, marina and golf courses).

## **4 Developing a (draft) set of indicators for the Carpathians measuring tourism impacts in destinations**

### **4.1 General explanatory note**

Indicators are information sets which are formally selected to be used on a regular basis to measure changes that are of importance for tourism development and management. They can measure a) changes in tourism’s own structures and internal factors, b) changes in external factors which affect tourism, c) the impact caused by tourism. It is worth noting that all of the work associated with creating good indicators can be wasted if there are no effective means to make certain that the information gets to those stakeholders who need it, and that they have an incentive to use it. Both quantitative<sup>13</sup> and qualitative<sup>14</sup> information can be used for indicators of sustainability useful to the tourism sector. Information is much more powerful if shared.

An indicator is normally chosen from a range of possible data sets or information sources because it is meaningful with regard to the key issues to which tourism managers must respond.

The best indicators are those which respond to the key risks and concerns regarding sustainability of tourism, and also provide information which can help clarify issues and measure responses (usually the issues concerning the natural resources and environment of a destination, economic sustainability, cultural assets and social values, organization and management issues). Within this context, indicators are the warning system for destination managers and policy makers of potential risks and a signal for possible action, in order to address issues such as community based regional planning, carrying capacity of natural areas, or quality of life issues in many nations.

To validate the indicators and facilitate the final acceptance of the document, it is recommended to apply a participatory methodology that combines the use of focus groups with holding open public meetings. This way, once the document is finally accepted it will count with the support of diverse social groups, which will add credibility to the process.

Planning and management of tourism in many destinations have occurred with insufficient information, particularly with regard to the impacts of tourism destinations, the impacts of changes in the social and natural environment on tourism and the long-term maintenance of the key assets which make a destination attractive.

The process of establishing and using indicators can be a catalyst for improvement of the decision-making process, and create greater participation in solutions and accountability for the results.

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<sup>13</sup> Quantitative measurements: comparable numbers can be obtained over time, i.e. number of tourists visiting a site year/month, percentage of waste water receiving treatment etc.

<sup>14</sup> Qualitative/normative measurements: the variation in a situation can be described, i.e. existence of tourism development plans, level of tourist satisfaction etc.

A more systematic development and application of indicators can reinforce and improve the process by stimulating better use of existing data sources, identification of new ones, improvement of data collection and analysis processes, and improve reporting and communication for the stakeholders involved.

Clarification of key indicators can frequently stimulate re-examination of plans and explanation of performance measures.

This was the case for a Canadian plan, which in 2000 defined a broad set of policy goals<sup>15</sup> for rural development. This plan used an extensive public consultation process followed by a series of indicator development workshops with (government) officials who were required to later clarify whether the goals were realistic and attainable. A similar process was used by the city of Keszthely in Hungary<sup>16</sup> where indicator workshops were held by the UNWTO, this was the first time a majority of the key local stakeholders had met, understanding the potential to work together for shared solutions and goals.

The rationale behind the selection of the present draft of core indicators for the Carpathian region is based on the following criteria:

- Relevance to the key issues of a destination,
- Practicality of generation and user friendliness,
- Feasibility of obtaining and analysing required information,
- Credibility, clarity and ability to be used as benchmark for comparison over time and with other destinations,
- Dynamic procedure and continuous improvements of information sources and processing aiming at more accurate indicators.

There is no need to reinvent the wheel. Numerous indicator systems have been developed (GSTC, ETIS, SDIs for enterprises), and some initiatives are looking at identifying the most suitable ones to allow a comparison across European destinations.

The number of indicators should not be too high, otherwise data collection will be too time-consuming and the report will become complicated and less user-friendly. Therefore, the “Carpathian approach” will be to downscale existing indicators to this region to be easily applicable for destinations.

It is of great importance to use the same unit-metrics, types and periods of measurement as well as the same components of the system being measured, to evaluate performance regarding particular sustainability indicators.

In line with ETIS methodology, supplementary indicators have to be considered as a starting point and as an example of specific indicators which have already been tested and can be tailored for a specific type of destination for other needs.

They can be added to the basic information provided with the core indicators, and allow destinations to tailor the system to their own particular needs or destination category, e.g. mountain, rural, biodiversity, protected area, maritime and coastal tourism, also considering coordinated approaches and macro-regional and/or transnational dimension.

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<sup>15</sup> Improved rural leadership, improved quality of life, improved access

<sup>16</sup> UNWTO Guidebook 2004

## 4.2 List of indicators

The list below shows a set of 25 selected core indicators (shown in black) in addition to 35 possible supplementary indicators (shown in grey). This compilation of indicators is the result of a combination of already-existing indicators and the input from various experts.

Tab. 1 List of core and supplementary criteria and indicators for measuring the positive and negative impacts caused by tourism in the Carpathians

Criteria	Indicators
<b>Section A: Destination Sustainable Management</b>	
<b>A.1 Sustainable destination strategy</b> <sup>17</sup>	<b>A.1.1</b> Political commitment to implement the multi-year destination plan, through the existence of an enabling system (e.g. capacity building, measures for local stakeholder's participation)
	<b>A.1.2</b> <sup>18</sup> Existence and quality of management plans, visitor regulations and monitoring
<b>A.2 Private sector commitment to sustainability</b> <sup>19</sup>	<b>A.2.1</b> Percentage of tourism enterprises/establishments in the destination using a voluntary certification/labelling for environmental /quality/sustainability and/or Corporate Social Responsibility
<b>A.3 Customer retain</b> <sup>20</sup>	<b>A.3.1</b> Percentage of repeat/return visitors (within 5 years) to be exploited with additional technologies data
<b>A.4 Inventory of tourism assets and attractions</b> <sup>21</sup>	<b>A.4.1</b> Regular inventory and classification of tourism assets and attractions including natural and cultural sites
<b>Section B: Economic Value</b>	
<b>B.1 Tourism flow (volume and value) at destination</b> <sup>22</sup>	<b>B.1.1</b> Number of tourist nights per month
	<b>B.1.2</b> Number of day visitors
	<b>B.1.3</b> Relative contribution of tourism to the destination's economy (% GDP)
	<b>B.1.4</b> Revenue from the tourism industry in a destination <sup>23</sup>

<sup>17</sup> GSTC criteria&indicators destinations (amended by authors)

<sup>18</sup> ETE and UNESCO-BRESCE, 2008 Criteria for sustainable tourism for three biosphere reserves Aggtelek, Babia Gora and Sumava

<sup>19</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook

<sup>20</sup> ETIS toolkit March 2016 (amended by authors)

<sup>21</sup> GSTC Criteria &Indicators

<sup>22</sup> ETIS toolkit March 2016 (amended by authors)

<sup>23</sup> Indicators draft proposal for the Carpathians from the Polish team

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
<b>B.2 Quantity and quality of employment</b> <sup>24</sup>	<b>B.2.1</b> Direct tourism employment as percentage of total employment in the destination
	<b>B.2.2</b> Employment rate in the tourism industry in a destination <sup>25</sup>
<b>B.3 Tourism supply chain</b> <sup>26</sup>	<b>B.3.1</b> Percentage of locally produced food, drinks, goods and services sourced by the destination's tourism enterprises (to be further specified in order to be measurable)
<b>Section C: Social and Cultural Impact</b>	
<b>C.1 Community / social impact</b> <sup>27</sup>	<b>C.1.1</b> Number of beds per 100 residents
	<b>C.1.2</b> Percentage of permanent residents who are satisfied with tourism in the destination (per month/season)
<b>C.2 Gender equality</b> <sup>28</sup>	<b>C.2.1</b> Percentage of women employed in the tourism sector
<b>C.3 Inclusion / accessibility</b> <sup>29</sup>	<b>C.3.1</b> Percentage of rooms in commercial accommodation establishments accessible for people with disabilities
	<b>C.3.2</b> Percentage of public transport that is accessible to people with disabilities and specific access requirements
	<b>C.3.3</b> Percentage of tourist attractions that are accessible to people with disabilities and/or participating in recognised accessibility information schemes
	(Alternative to C.3.1-3.3: % of touristic infrastructure (e.g. accommodation, transport, attractions) accessible for people with disabilities)
<b>C.4 Attraction protection, local identity and assets</b> <sup>30</sup>	<b>C.4.1</b> Percentage of areas locally/ecologically managed, to maintain natural and cultural sites, including build heritage and rural and urban scenic views and its identity
<b>C.5 Destination's image</b> <sup>31</sup>	<b>C.5.1</b> Percentage of tourists who have a positive image of the destination (exit survey or non-traditional data)
	<b>C.5.2</b> Percentage of tourists who would recommend destination to their peers (exit questionnaire)

<sup>24</sup> ETIS toolkit March 2016

<sup>25</sup> Indicators draft proposal for the Carpathians from the Polish team

<sup>26</sup> ETIS toolkit March 2016 (amended by authors)

<sup>27</sup> ETIS toolkit March 2016

<sup>28</sup> ETIS toolkit March 2016

<sup>29</sup> ETIS toolkit March 2016

<sup>30</sup> GSTC +ETIS Toolkit 2016 (amended by authors)

<sup>31</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook -

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
<b>C.6 Cost and benefits</b> <sup>32</sup>	<b>C.6.1</b> Cost per annum of new or maintained infrastructure or services needed to serve tourist
	<b>C.6.2</b> Estimated expenditure needed to expand tourism (per resident, per projected tourist day)
<b>C.7 Creating partnership</b> <sup>33</sup>	<b>C.7.1</b> Number of tour operators serving the region
	<b>C.7.2</b> Number of linkages/partnerships with operators, communities or organizations to jointly bring tourists to the destination
<b>C.8 Community involvement</b> <sup>34</sup>	<b>C.8.1</b> Degree of community participation in tourism development (e.g. workshops)
	<b>C.8.2</b> Percentage of potential local establishments involved
	<b>C.8.3</b> Percentage of community in favor of more / less tourism
<b>C.9 Tourism as catalyst for social and cultural change</b> <sup>35</sup>	<b>C.9.1</b> Percentage of local residents concerned about loss of culture community structure and values (questionnaire)
	<b>C.9.2</b> Percentage of residents not speaking the local language
<b>C.10 Tourism intensity</b> <sup>36</sup>	<b>C.10.1</b> Number of overnights spent/month per inhabitant
	<b>C.10.2</b> Number of tourism arrivals per 100 residents
<b>C.11 Tourism density</b> <sup>37</sup>	<b>C.11.1</b> Number of overnight stays per km <sup>2</sup>
	<b>C.11.2</b> Number of bed-places in tourist accommodation establishments per km <sup>2</sup>
<b>C.12 Occupancy rate</b> <sup>38</sup>	<b>C.12.1</b> Bedroom occupancy rate in hotels and similar
<b>Section D: Environmental Dimension</b>	
<b>D.1 Low-impact transportation</b> <sup>39</sup>	<b>D.1.1</b> Percentage of visitors using low-impact transportation (electric public transport, cycle route, pedestrian areas etc.)
	<b>D.1.2</b> Utilization rate of public transport by tourist <sup>40</sup>
	<b>D.1.3</b> Indicator of local transportation usage among tourists <sup>41</sup>

<sup>32</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook

<sup>33</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook

<sup>34</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook

<sup>35</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook

<sup>36</sup> EEA

<sup>37</sup> EEA

<sup>38</sup> EEA

<sup>39</sup> GSTC Criteria & Indicators (amended by authors)

<sup>40</sup> Indicators draft proposal for the Carpathians from the Polish team

<sup>41</sup> Indicators draft proposal for the Carpathians from the Polish team

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
<b>D.2 Climate change</b> <sup>42</sup>	<b>D.2.1</b> Functioning climate change adaptation plan
	<b>D.2.2</b> Frequency of extreme events
	<b>D.2.3</b> Value of damage to tourism sector
	<b>D.2.4</b> Percentage of tourist infrastructure (hotels, other), located in vulnerable zones
	<b>D.2.5</b> Degree to which key tourist zones are covered by contingency or emergency planning (existence of plan, % area included);
	<b>D.2.6</b> Percentage of water used for snow production
	<b>D.2.7</b> Percentage of non-functioning ski areas, closed due to climate change events
	<b>D.2.8</b> Percentage of key species considered vulnerable to climate change
<b>D.3 Solid waste management</b> <sup>43</sup>	<b>D.3.1</b> Percentage of recycled solid waste of the tourism sector (accommodation and food processing sector) in comparison to the total production of solid waste
<b>D.4 Water use</b> <sup>44</sup>	<b>D.4.1</b> Water consumption per tourist compared to general population water consumption per resident night
<b>D.5 Energy usage and management</b> <sup>45</sup>	<b>D.5.1</b> Energy consumption per tourist, compared to general population energy consumption per resident
	<b>D.5.2</b> Percentage of tourism enterprises taking actions to reduce energy consumption (renewable energy)
<b>D.6 Landscape and biodiversity protection</b> <sup>46</sup>	<b>D.6.1</b> Percentage of local enterprises in the tourism sector actively supporting protection, conservation and management of local biodiversity and landscapes
<b>D.7 Measuring potential impact of tourism on the natural environ-</b> <sup>47</sup>	<b>D.7.1</b> Percentage of projects/initiatives where tourism impact is evaluated

<sup>42</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook (added by authors)

<sup>43</sup> ETIS toolkit March 2016 (added by authors)

<sup>44</sup> ETIS toolkit March 2016 (amended by authors)

<sup>45</sup> ETIS toolkit March 2016 (amended by authors)

<sup>46</sup> ETIS toolkit March 2016

<sup>47</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook

Criteria	Indicators
	<b>D.7.2</b> Percentage of conservation projects where tourism financial contribution is a component, compared to the overall investment
<b>D.8 Loss of flora and fauna due to tourism activity</b> <sup>48</sup>	<b>D.8.1</b> Percentage of visitors accompanied by trained guides
	<b>D.8.2</b> Area of degraded vegetation attributable to tourist use (i.g. alpine meadows, % of surface area of key ecosystems disturbed)
	<b>D.8.3</b> Average size of tourism group or party
<b>D.9 Access</b> <sup>49</sup>	<b>D.9.1</b> Percentage of ease of access to key sites (both visitors and locals) using questionnaire methodology
	<b>D.9.2</b> Cost of entry (for controlled access areas such as parks or protected areas or transport access expressed in hours work at local wage)
<b>D.10 Seasonality</b> <sup>50</sup>	<b>D.10.1</b> Percentage of tourism businesses open all year (accommodation and services) <sup>51</sup>
	<b>D.10.2</b> Percentage total tourism which occurs in peak month or season

<sup>48</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook,

<sup>49</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook,

<sup>50</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook

<sup>51</sup> UNWTO 2004 Guidebook

## Annex: Overall source of information and data needed

Tab. 2 Types of data obtained from different institutions

<b>Institutions</b>	<b>Types of Data</b>
<b>Government bodies</b>	<p>Responsible for state statistics, national population census, environmental monitoring.</p> <p>Responsible for information to formulate local level public policies.</p> <p>Responsible for formulating and administering public policies.</p>
<b>Foundations</b>	<p>Public or private institutions that finance research and may establish a critical comparison with official data.</p>
<b>Research and urban planning institutes</b>	<p>Public or private, that produce socio-environmental information to complement or classify official data.</p> <p>Also sources of information on public opinion and the local perception of the city's urban-environmental problems.</p>
<b>Universities</b>	<p>Academic institutions continue to be dedicated to producing information, to scientific research and their technical staff show a more scientific slant.</p> <p>They are a prime source, but information from academic research tends to circulate among a restricted university public.</p>
<b>Non-Government Organizations</b>	<p>NGOs are the most important social intervention stakeholders.</p> <p>They produce information and other materials that contain relevant facts.</p>
<b>Business associations</b>	<p>They hold specific information on local economic activities that allow an analysis of the economic dynamics and of pressure factors to be made.</p>
<b>Trade unions</b>	<p>They possess or are able to produce specific information about a city's economic and social situation. Their data tends to complement and/or qualify information provided by other bodies representative of business (employment, wages, income, ...).</p>

<p><b>Private sector (SMEs, tourism enterprises)</b></p>	<p>Tourism, in a statistical context, refers to the activity of visitors taking a trip to a destination outside their usual environment, for less than a year. It can be for any main purpose, including business, leisure or other personal reasons other than to be employed by a resident person, household or enterprise in the place visited. Tourism statistics are currently limited to at least one overnight stay; as of reference year 2014, outbound same-day visits are also covered by official European statistics.</p>
<p><b>Local and national media</b></p>	<p>Newspapers, magazines, television, radio and the Internet serve as a counter-part to information collected from other local sources.</p>
<p><b>International organizations and/or bilateral and multilateral agencies</b></p>	<p>They provide financial resources, prepare projects and take actions on the basis of international resolutions, supervise compliance with such resolutions and use data about the situation in each country. Although they usually do not produce these data, they often finance research and provide training on producing information and, therefore, are an important source for consultation.</p>

Note: The fact that data are available from a particular source does not mean that these data can be easily accessed. In addition, some indicators will have data that are missing or that need expanding. This **information can be obtained by conducting surveys, questionnaires** and other type of activities.

## 7.8 Meetings on the Development of the Tourism Strategy

As part of the process of developing the content of the Strategy, various meetings were scheduled to discuss the content with stakeholders and include their comments into the draft. The meetings took place on international, national or subnational level.

Please note: all information related to the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Carpathian Convention (e.g. COP, WG TOURISM, CCIC) like results, materials, minutes etc. can be found on the web page of the Carpathian Convention:

For the Conferences of the Parties (COP):

<http://www.carpathianconvention.org/conference-of-the-parties-50.html>,

for CCIC: <http://www.carpathianconvention.org/implementation-committee-50.html>,

for WG TOURISM: <http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tourism.html>.

### 7.8.1 International Consultations

#### **Partners Meeting, March 22, 2013, Vienna, Austria**

The partners of the project – ETE, CEEweb, WWF-DCPO and UNEP-ISCC – met to discuss steps in order to launch the process of developing of the Strategy. The partners agreed on their roles, list of meetings, experts for drafting and country experts to be contracted for the country consultations. A list of strategic points to be followed was delivered along with the official project description.

#### **4th Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism Meeting, October 21-22, 2013, Poiana, Brasov, Romania**

The 4<sup>th</sup> WG TOURISM meeting was attended by 27 participants with government delegates from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia. The participants were representatives of the governmental sector, NGOs, administrations of protected areas and international experts and observers.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the first draft of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy for the Carpathians, its vision, objectives, as well as outcomes and financial technicalities for the implementation to help preparing the second draft of the Strategy.

After a long discussion, an agreement was reached among participants in regards to formulating the Vision of the Strategy:

The Carpathians is a top sustainable destination in Europe, based on its unique natural and cultural heritage preserved and maintained on large integral areas.

- The people in the Carpathians are successful in maintaining and proud of their local authentic traditions, cultures and landscapes, which contribute to unique tourist experiences.
- Good cooperation, local management and partnerships contribute to the high quality of responsible tourism and ecosystem services, which ensure continuous benefits for local communities and economies.

The participants also reached a consensus on the question of Objectives of the Strategy:

- Establishing of supportive conditions for responsible tourism products and services, including development of a marketing scheme for the promotion of the Carpathians as a unique sustainable destination.
- Developing an innovative tourism management at all levels, integrating the needs of local people and economies, and the preservation of natural and cultural heritage.
- Establishing a continuous process of awareness raising, capacity building, education and training on sustainable tourism development and management at all levels.

Also, 13 performance indicators that are presented in the Strategy to help measuring the successful implementation of sustainable tourism practices in the Carpathians were discussed during the meeting.

An initiative for creation of a Carpathian brand was presented by Mr Dawid Lasek from the Carpathian Euroregion.

Based on the meeting outcomes and additional comments that were to be sent, a new version was to be drafted. A decision was taken that the new draft will be divided into two separate documents – core text of the Strategy and a Background Document.

**Side event at the 2nd European Ecotourism Conference and Meeting of Tourism Agencies of the Carpathian countries – National Tourism Agencies and tour operators, October 23, 2013, Poiana, Brasov, Romania**

The meeting was organized by ETE and WWF – DCP on October 23, 2013 as a Side Event to the 2<sup>nd</sup> European Ecotourism Conference held on 23.-25 October 2013 in Poiana/Brasov, Romania. Invitations were sent to NGOs, tourism business sector of the Carpathian countries and participants of the 2<sup>nd</sup> EEC.

Goals of the side event were as follows:

- To discuss the outcomes of the four workshops held at the EEC earlier that afternoon and its relevance for the Carpathian Tourism Strategy,
- To invite stakeholders from the Carpathian Mountains region and other interested stakeholders to discuss and contribute to the current draft Carpathian Tourism Strategy,
- To discuss potential opportunities to develop such a multi-national Tourism Strategy for other mountain regions in Europe.

More than 30 stakeholders from the business sector, protected area administrations, tour operators, NGOs and universities from all over Europe found out the outcomes from the four workshops that aim to help drafting a Sustainable Tourism Strategy for the Carpathians.

Participants agreed on the need of coordination mechanism for the implementation of the strategy, marketing and promotion that should be done at Carpathian level with no promotion of single countries. Critical mass of initiatives is needed at the destination level (the bottom-up approach) and the conservation of cultural landscapes should be integrated into sustainable destination management.

The discussion showed that there is a commitment from the business sector to support the implementation of the strategy and to make it a business-driven initiative.

### **5th Meeting of CCIC, February 18 - 20, 2014, Prague, Czech Republic**

The 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee took place on 18 – 20 February 2014 and was hosted by the Czech Ministry of the Environment under the Slovak Presidency of the Carpathian Convention.

As part of the Agenda, the Status of signature and ratification of the Tourism Protocol was discussed. The Secretariat reported on Sustainable tourism – Article 9 of the Carpathian Convention and Michael Meyer presented the 3<sup>rd</sup> Strategy Draft.

### **Meeting of the National Travel Agencies at ITB, March 5, 2014, Berlin, Germany**

The Tourism Department of the Slovak Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development together with ETE and WWF organized a discussion on the potential of sustainable tourism infrastructure in the Carpathians. The event was hosted by the Slovak Tourism Agency. Despite sending the invitations well in advance to all 7 National Tourism Organisations and their representatives, the relevant actors at ITB did not find the time to attend the meeting. The discussion was attended by 5 participants. The current draft of the Strategy was introduced by ETE and Mr. Lasek, Association of the Carpathian Euroregion Poland presented a draft of a Carpathian logo, which has been developed under a Swiss Cooperation project in Poland.

### **5th WG TOURISM Meeting, May 12 – 14, 2014, Bratislava, Slovakia**

The 5th WG TOURISM meeting held in Bratislava, Slovakia, was attended by 21 participants. Five out of the seven Carpathian Countries sent government delegates (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Serbia and Slovakia).

The aim of the meeting was to update the Parties on the 4th draft of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy, discussion on its content and the next to be taken in order for the Strategy to be adopted at the COP4 in September 2014 in Mikulov, Czech Republic.

The conclusion of the meeting was the agreement on the content, which was later reflected in the final 5th draft of the Strategy. In addition, the Parties agreed on moving some parts of the core document of the Strategy into the Background Document. This document was recommended to be welcomed by the Parties at COP4.

Along with the Strategy, the scope of its application was discussed. A draft map with the list of administrative units was presented to the working group. The Parties decided to review the lists and provide vector files of a country map with LAU1 administrative level to the UNEP-ISCC in due time.

ETE distributed a Briefing note on tourism stakeholder consultations that were due to be organized with the tourism business sector in each of the Carpathian countries in cooperation with the NFP, National Tourism Agencies and project country experts.

### **Final Conference at COP4, September 23 – 26, 2014, Mikulov, Czech Republic**

Before the official start of COP4, on September 23, 2014, ETE and its partners organized a conference on Sustainable Tourism in the Carpathians – A joint effort of the Seven Parties of the Carpathian Convention. The meeting brought together 38 participants from governmental and non-governmental organisations and business sector. The aim of the conference was to inform the stakeholders about the Final Draft of the Strategy ready for

adoption at the ministerial segment of COP4 on September 26, 2014. In addition, projects and case studies related to implementation of the Strategy were presented.

The presentations were followed by a discussion on how to proceed with the implementation. All in all, the Strategy received a very positive feedback as the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathian would bring an added value to local communities. The participants pointed out many challenges to be faced during the implementation process and also defined some of the priority areas to focus on as a start.

COP4 was hosted by the Czech Republic, who took over the presidency from Slovakia. The participants were informed about the status of the ratification of the protocols to the Carpathian Convention. The delegates went through the list of draft decisions for COP4 and on September 24, 2014, as a decision COP4/6 the text of the Strategy was recommended to the Ministerial segment for adoption. The Strategy was adopted by the ministers and high-level representatives on September 26, 2014.

#### **6th WG TOURISM Meeting, November 24 – 26, 2014, Belgrade, Serbia**

With the adoption of the Strategy at COP4, there was an urgent need to hold a meeting of the WG TOURISM to take decisions in order to start implementing it as soon as possible.

The meeting was attended by 35 participants with government delegates from five of the Carpathian Countries (Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia).

The aims of the meeting were to review the Terms of Reference for the WG TOURISM and representation of country experts, to discuss the interpretation of activities of both Action Plans in the Strategy, to select priority actions at country and Carpathian level, and to identify short and mid-term funding resources for the implementation and discussion on the online platform establishment, as well as on the coordination centre. In addition, the Parties reported on the selection of Tourism Focal Points for the WG TOURISM, establishment of Sustainable Tourism Task Force and the vision on communication on the adoption of the Strategy at country level.

The discussion on usefulness of the project for elaborating the Strategy was added to the Agenda. As a result, the participants decided to mandate ETE to request further support for the structuring of implementation of the Strategy from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, as the Parties and the WG TOURISM were not at that stage in the position to fully operate the implementation and further assistance was crucial.

The Parties agreed they would submit the nomination of Tourism Focal Points and experts/members to the WG TOURISM to UNEP-SCC in writing. Two offers to host the Carpathian Coordination Centre were presented at the meeting, from Poland and Slovakia. These offers were to be submitted to UNEP-SCC so they can proceed with online consultations, as two Parties were not present at the meeting.

#### **7.8.2 Tourism Stakeholder Consultations**

The aim of the project was to enhance the cooperation between the stakeholders, especially governments, the tourism industry and non-governmental organisations in the Carpathians and to reach an agreement on a strategy regarding the future sustainable tourism development of the Carpathian region. Therefore, after the fifth meeting of the WG TOURISM, there was a will to bring together the tourism industry in each country, to consult on the implementation and collaboration with the business sector. In order to do so, the

parties at the fifth WG TOURISM meeting in Bratislava were approached to inform their National Tourism Agencies about the proposal and help with organizing the stakeholder meetings in their countries.

After extensive communication, the meetings took place between June and September 2014 in six Carpathian countries, with the exception of Czech Republic as outlined below:

- 11.6.2014 Lviv, Ukraine
- 24.6.2014 Banska Bystrica, Slovakia
- 29.7.2014 Beograd, Serbia
- 26.8.2014 Krakow, Poland
- 9.9.2014 Bucharest, Romania
- 16.9.2014 Budapest, Hungary

All meetings were successful and brought fruitful discussion about the implementation of the Strategy. Stakeholders identified priority actions to be carried out in their countries and also informed each other about on-going projects and finance opportunities.

As the consultations showed, Carpathian countries are facing similar challenges and therefore identified an overlap in priority areas to be focused on: common marketing and promotion of the Carpathians, joint product development, removal of administrative barriers for tourism SMEs establishment, destination development and management, branding and labelling.

### **7.8.3 Consultations with Country Experts**

#### **1st NGO meeting, June 13 -14, 2013, Banska Stiavnica – Svaty Anton, Slovakia**

The meeting of the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (WG TOURISM) of CEEweb for Biodiversity was attended by 17 participants from NGOs from all Carpathian countries, Bulgaria and Germany.

The purpose of the meeting was to involve seven country experts in the elaboration process of the Strategy, to set the plan of actions and responsibilities, and to discuss the initial content of the Strategy, including the input from the National Tourism Development Strategies Assessments in the Carpathian countries.

The participants recommended the vision and the rationale of the Strategy: Moreover, they stated that stakeholders responsible for the implementation of the Strategy, should be identified and that governments and sectorial actors should be included as important target groups. The experts agreed on draft results and deliverables, which should form the basis for the further elaboration of the Strategy. They also identified tasks to be completed throughout country consultations. The Action Measures Worksheet was elaborated, to be filled in by the relevant stakeholders.

### **7.8.4 Consultations with tourism stakeholders on the content of the Strategy**

As stated in the Terms of Reference for country experts, a consultation process in each country was launched in order to collect comments from the stakeholders to improve the draft Strategy and discuss the geographical scope for the Carpathian Tourism Strategy.

Different means of communication were proposed to the experts, one of which was holding one stakeholder meeting of the country for approx. 30 participants.

The meetings took place as follows:

- Czech Republic: 29.-30.8.2013, Hostetin
- Hungary: 6.9.2013, Gömöraszölös
- Poland: 19.8.2013, Krakow
- Romania, 9.-11.9.2013, Bucharest
- Serbia: 26.8.2013, Zajecar
- Slovakia: 27.8.2013, Banska Bystrica
- Ukraine: 10.9.2013, Lviv

The experts compiled the comments into a country report. The main aim of the meeting was to create a SWOT analysis for Carpathian area in each country, fill in the Action Measures Worksheet which was adopted at the WG TOURISM meeting in Banska Stiavnica in June 2013 and also collect comments on the Strategy itself.

The outcomes were used by the country experts for the content of the first strategy draft.

### **2nd NGO Meeting, June 16 – 18, 2014, Budapest, Hungary**

The WG TOURISM meeting took place prior the COP4 to collect ideas from the NGOs for the implementation of the Strategy, discuss their involvement in adopting the Strategy, and to exchange project ideas. In addition, the Case Studies and the National Assessments that were developed as part of the project were presented. A discussion was held on how to disseminate these among the decision makers from the CEE region and the relevant stakeholders.

The participants also discussed the synergy of the Action Plans in the Strategy with the Danube Strategy. As a result, the participants agreed on a joint statement of CEEweb WG TOURISM on interlinkages between the proposed CC Strategy and tourism related targets of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region.

### **3rd NGO Meeting, October 8 – 9, 2014, Rackeve, Hungary**

As part of the CEEweb Annual Meeting, the meeting of WG TOURISM was also organized to discuss the next steps after the adoption of the Strategy. The meeting was attended by 15 participants.

The communication plan for the promotion of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy to investors and decision makers was discussed. The target group for WG TOURISM members are NGOs (that focus on climate, infrastructure, social issues, education, biodiversity on local, regional and national levels). The goal of the communication plan was to inform about the existence of the Strategy and receive feedback how NGOs can contribute to its implementation. The members of WG TOURISM agreed it would be useful to bring in new members so that to the group can work more actively.

In addition, the members agreed to look for project funding and share project ideas that would contribute to further cooperation and implementation of the Strategy.

## **7.9 Meetings on the Implementation of the Tourism Strategy**

As part of the process for the implementation of the Strategy, various meetings were scheduled to discuss the necessary steps with stakeholders and to come to clear proposals and decisions. The meetings took place on international, national or subnational level.

### **7.9.1 International Consultations**

#### **6th Meeting of CCIC, November 24, 2015, Brussels, Belgium**

The 6<sup>th</sup> CCIC meeting was attended by 12 participants with governmental delegates from 7 countries. Tourism related topics were: Overview of activities related to the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism – discussion and next steps; Carpathian Convention Project Platform with Overview of project proposals involving the Carpathian Convention, discussion on possible support to project proposals at the national level and funding instruments.

Overview of activities related to the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism – discussion and next steps.

CCIC emphasized that the need for establishing a common international mechanism to support the implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Protocol and its Strategy, and the possible tasks of such structure and financial sustainability of such an arrangement, should be further considered. Consequently, CCIC requested the WG Sustainable Tourism to consider the draft ToRs for a possible Common Sustainable Tourism Coordination Platform/common international mechanism and to submit a position for email consultation by the CCIC.

CCIC requested the Secretariat to also facilitate the elaboration of a joint proposal of the Common Sustainable Tourism Coordination Platform/common international mechanism to support the implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Protocol and its Strategy, by Euro-region Karpacki, Romanian National Authority for Tourism, and ETE/EWS, until the next WG Tourism meeting, and subsequent electronic consultation by the CCIC.

CCIC welcomed the establishment of the National Tourism Task Forces and approved the Terms of Reference for the WG Tourism.

CCIC welcomed the offer by Romania to host the 8th meeting of the WG Sustainable Tourism in Brasov, Romania, and the offer of Poland to host the 9th WG meeting in Kombornia, Poland.

CCIC thanked Serbia for organizing a meeting of the WG Sustainable Tourism, and Hungary for the leadership on WG Sustainable Tourism, and the continuous support of the German government.

UNEP/CC/CCIC6/3: CCIC thanked UNEP for its support to this CCIC meeting as well as various substantive activities through the TIM project.

Carpathian Convention Project Platform: CCIC took note of the report of the Secretariat on participation in EU programmes and the submission of the EU programme applications.

CCIC welcomed the submission and successful selection of the WILD for DC Project under the Technical Assistance Facility for Danube Region Projects (TAF-DRP) and of the ConnectGREEN Project under the START – Danube Region Project Fund.

CCIC welcomed the submission of the Expressions of Interest of the projects ConnectGREEN, TransGREEN, TRANSHERIT, Danubiom, Restar, JOINTisza, to the first step of

the first call of the Danube Transnational Programme; and appreciated the cooperation of various stakeholders on the development on these projects proposal, contributing to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention.

CCIC requested the Secretariat to keep the Project Platform on the website and up to date in the appropriate format.

CCIC considered that the Secretariat in Vienna has the capacity to participate in EU-financed programmes, and should continue to actively pursue these submission and further efforts of resource mobilization. The themes of such projects are set by the Programme of Work of the Carpathian Convention, the Convention, its Protocol and relevant COP Decisions.

CCIC requested the Secretariat to consult with all actors involved, and propose measures to enhance compatibility of procedures in order to facilitate the smooth participation in relevant EU programmes and projects.

#### **8th Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism Meeting incl. 2nd NGO-Meeting, April 12-15, 2016, Brasov, Romania**

The 8<sup>th</sup> WG TOURISM meeting was attended by 28 participants with governmental delegates from the Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia and representatives of the governmental sector, NGOs, tourism associations, administrations of protected areas and international experts and observers.

Main topics: Consultation on the final draft Joint Proposal of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform and the need for draft Terms of Reference for the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform; Feedback on the Database on Sustainable Tourism and on the proposals for detailed Description to the Country and Joint Action Plan of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians.

#### **7th Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee, November 21-22, 2016, Vienna, Austria**

The 7th CCIC meeting held in Vienna, Austria, was attended by 18 participants. All seven Carpathian Countries sent their government delegates (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Ukraine). The meeting was hosted by the UNEP-SCC and attended by ETE and WWF as observers.

As part of the agenda, the status quo of the implementation of the Tourism Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians was discussed. ETE stressed that it is crucial for the Carpathian Countries to join forces in order to implement sustainable tourism development on the ground and involve local people according to the Strategy. In order to do so, a joint agreement was supposed to be signed in April of 2016 and a centre for the implementation of the strategy should be established. However, a lack of commitment of some countries as well as missing transparency have slowed down the process and hence, the implementation.

In order to implement cross-border projects, countries discussed whether to make one joint agreement or to sign bilateral agreements. Since the attempt to make one joint agreement had been unsuccessful in the past, the UNEP-SCC made a case for bilateral agreements, while the countries had diverging preferences.

Mr. Octavian Arsene, National Authority for Tourism, Romania, presented the ongoing activities related to tourism in the Romanian Carpathians and arrangements made in the light of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform, Centre – Romania. Moreover, Mircea Verghetel informed about the Alpine film festival Predeal, the brown bear sanctuary, and the Pan Carpathian hike (2380 km).

Ms. Bożena Haczek, Polish Focal Point, informed about establishment of the Sustainable Tourism Task Force in Poland for the implementation of the Tourism Protocol and its Strategy. Ms. Haczek mentioned a Polish pan-Carpathian expedition of 1979.

Mr. Michael Meyer, Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE), informed about progress made thanks to the generous support provided by the Germany-funded project. He gave a presentation and mentioned delays in implementing the project, e.g. establishing the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform, the offer to support the operation of National Tourism Task Forces in the seven countries, and finding a new date for the next meeting of the WG Tourism.

The Secretariat informed about the letter received from the Undersecretary of State of the Ministry of Sport and Tourism of Poland, Mr. Dawid Lasek, expressing the readiness for signing the agreement regarding the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform between the Centre - Poland, Centre - Romania and the Secretariat.

The Secretariat will prepare draft agreements and share it with the CCIC members by the end of January 2017.

It was suggested that the next meeting of the WG Tourism should gather not later than March 2017, preferably still in February since by then the Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE) has funds available for supporting travels of the meeting participants.

The Secretariat and ETE informed participants about the upcoming Workshop on the Implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Carpathian Convention into National Law, foreseen for the 12 -13 December 2016 in Vienna at the Vienna International Centre.

#### **8th Meeting of CCIC incl. 3rd NGO-Meeting, June 13-16, 2017, Modra, Czech Republic**

The 8<sup>th</sup> CCIC meeting was attended by 32 participants with governmental delegates from 7 countries. Main topics were the future working program of the CCIC and the preparation of the upcoming 5th Conference of the Parties in October 2017.

The ongoing activities of the project were only discussed in a briefly manner.

The Protocol on Sustainable Tourism (Tourism Protocol) entered into force for Romania and Serbia, on 11 November 2014 and 30 June 2015 respectively. Ukraine provide the deposit of ratification on 4 May 2017 to the Depositary, the Protocol shall enter into force for Ukraine on 20 June 2017. Please see the Status of signature and ratification of the Protocols to the Carpathian Convention (Doc. 14).

Three meetings of the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism were organized during the last implementation period:

- First of them, was held on 24 - 26 November 2014 in Belgrade, Serbia thanks to great hospitality of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection of Serbia (Meeting Report – Doc. 19).
- The next meeting was organized on 18 - 20 May 2015 in Aggtelek, Hungary in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of the National Economy of Hungary, and great hospitality of the Aggtelek National Park Directorate (Meeting Report – Doc. 20).
- Another WG Tourism meeting was organized on 12 – 14 April 2016 in Brasov, Romania with support of the Brasov County Council and the Ministry of Environment of Romania (Meeting Report – Doc. 21).
- The WG Tourism meetings were supported by the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Project (led by the Ecological Tourism in Europe - ETE), which is sponsored by German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety.
- All of the WG Tourism meetings were almost entirely devoted for discussion on progress on implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians.

On the margins of the Conference Leveraging the UNESCO Brand for Sustainable Tourism Development in Central European Regions, two Carpathian countries, Romania and Ukraine, signed an Agreement (Doc.22) initiating a closer cooperation on activities related to sustainable tourism development in the region by establishing the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform. This initiative aims at enhanced implementation of the Carpathian Convention Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and its Protocol, and it has received political support from the Ministry of Tourism of Romania and Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine. Related Joint Proposal (Doc.23) are available on the website.

Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Project (led by the Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE)) supporting the implementation of the Tourism Protocol and its Strategy, was extended by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety until 28 February 2017. The additional activities shall focus on the establishment of National Tourism Task Forces (NTTF) in each of the seven Carpathian countries, developing a common ToR for the NTTFs, and coaching them for the implementation of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Strategy in their countries and beyond.

ETE with support of the Secretariat organized a workshop - Workshop on the Implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Carpathian Convention into National Law on 12 – 13 December in Vienna, Austria (Meeting Report – Doc. 24).

The Secretariat supported development of the “CARPATHIAN TOURISM: Cooperation of V4 Countries” project, financed by the Visegrad Fund. The project aims at empowering local entrepreneurs to improve handicraft workshops as tourism services and to increase quality and visibility of other rural tourism initiatives.

The Secretariat organized the Networking Event of the project Innovation in Rural Tourism, which was held in Vienna in July 2015. The event aimed at generating ideas for new projects in the field of ESD and sustainable tourism.

### **9th Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism, incl. 4<sup>th</sup> NGO-Meeting, September 12-14, 2017, Brasov, Romania**

The 9th meeting of WG Tourism was attended by 31 participants, incl. representatives of 5 Parties (except Serbia and Ukraine) and observers from Romania and Ukraine. The meeting focussed on the country reporting for the establishment of national Tourism Task Forces, the establishment of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform and its centres in Poland, Romania and Ukraine, and the future priorities of the WG Tourism for the upcoming years.

Outcome: Romania presented its strong commitment for the implementation of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy through its centre (CSTC) in Brasov, which is led by the Ministry of Tourism and the County of Brasov. The CSTC-Romania presented its Work Programme for 2017-2020 and invited other countries to support the initiative.

### **5th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (COP5), October 10 – 12, 2017, Lillafüred, Hungary**

The 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties was attended by more than 150 participants covering governmental delegations, science, NGOs and IOs from all Carpathian countries and beyond.

The achievements on implementing the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Strategy were presented during a plenary session and are reflected in the decision text as below:

#### *The Conference of the Parties*

- 1. Welcomes the progress made in establishment of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform (CSTP) by signature of the memorandum by Romania and Ukraine, initiating the cooperation, appreciates the efforts made by the Parties directly involved in the process, and encourages all the Parties to actively participate in implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Carpathian Convention (hereinafter Tourism Protocol) and the Strategy for the Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians, and requests the Secretariat to elaborate collaborative agreements with the centers;*
- 2. Welcomes cooperation with Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE) and CEEweb for Biodiversity implementing the project Support for the implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians, and appreciates the financial support of the Federal Environment Agency (UBA) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety and the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, provided to ETE for this purpose;*
- 3. Welcomes the Set of Indicators for measuring the positive and negative effects of tourism in the Carpathians, developed within the same project, and invites the WG Tourism to consider the Set of Indicators as a useful source for the implementation of Article 24 of the Tourism Protocol;*
- 4. Takes note of the organization of the Workshop on the Implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Carpathian Convention into the National Law on 12 – 13 December 2016 in Vienna, Austria, funded by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and acknowledges involvement of the ETE and the Secretariat in related preparations to the Workshop.*

## 7.9.2 Consultations with NGOs and Country Experts

### **1<sup>st</sup> Workshop with Country Experts, September 21-23, 2015, Dolny Smokovec, Slovakia**

7 experts from the Carpathian Countries, except Poland and Czech Republic, joined this first expert workshop.

Main topics of the workshop were introducing the project and current state of discussion at WG Tourism; Data collections on financial instruments, on (sustainable) tourism projects and initiatives and of handbooks and guidelines on sustainable tourism. Other actions of the project like detailing of action plans, indicators, common coordination platform.

Outcome: Main result of this meeting was that experts agreed on the methodology for gathering information to be inserted into the three data bases.

### **1<sup>st</sup> NGO-Meeting, October 5-8, 2015, Budapest, Hungary**

9 members of NGOs (CEEweb Working Group on Sustainable Tourism) from the Carpathian Countries joined this first NGO-meeting.

Topics of the meeting: Introduction to the Framework Convention for the Protection and Sustainable Use of the Carpathians; Introduction to the project and current state of discussion at the Carpathian Convention; Data collections on financial instruments, on tourism projects, on sustainable tourism handbooks and guidelines; establishment of the Common Sustainable Tourism Coordination Platform; Current initiatives on the implementation of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy and its influence on the EUSDR.

## 7.9.3 Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Center (CSTC) /Platform (CSTP) National Tourism Task Forces (NTTF)

### **Meeting with Local Government of Ushhorod (UA) for establishing the Ukrainian Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Centre, April 15-19, 2016, Ushhorod, Ukraine**

Staff members of the European Wilderness Society (EWS) and representatives of the town council, department of tourism met together with ETE to discuss the procedure for the establishment of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Centre (CSTC) in Ushhorod. A memorandum was signed between EWS and the Council to agree on a cooperation for the CSTC where the Council will provide office facilities.

### **Meeting with Ekopolis Foundation to explore Solutions for the Establishment of a Slovak Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Centre, April 19-20, 2016, Banská Stianvicá, Slovakia**

3 members of the Ekopolis Foundation met with ETE to discuss the current situation in the Slovak Republic regarding the implementation of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Strategy and the Tourism Protocol. Since 2015 the government of the Slovak Republic is constantly changing its structure within the Ministry of Transport, which is responsible for tourism. For that reason, it was not possible in the years 2015-2017 to at least discuss the establishment of the National Tourism Task Force. However, since the Ekopolis Foundation has a positive influence in the Slovak Republic, also on the topic of tourism, it will further try to consult with the government on the implementation and the required structures.

### **Preparation and training measures for the Ukrainian Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Centre (CSTC), December 7-12, 2016, Ushhorod, Ukraine**

Staff members of the CSTC in Ushhorod, led by the European Wilderness Society, were trained by ETE on the topic of sustainable tourism in order to prepare for the tasks of the CSTC, which are described in its Terms of Reference. The two days training contained topics, such as definition of sustainable tourism, supply chain of tourism, product development and an insight into the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Strategy.

**Co-ordination-meeting with the Romanian Ministry for Tourism and the Council of Brasov for establishing the Romanian Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Centre and the National Tourism Task Force, April 18-21, 2017, Brasov, Romania**

The meeting aimed at the preparation of the official establishment of the CSTC in Brasov in May 2017. The staff members of the CSTC, 2 from the Council of Brasov and 3 from the Ministry of Tourism discussed with ETE the necessary actions, e.g. formulation of a work programme, indicators and a reporting format for the activities of the CSTC. This discussion led to the preparation of the next two meetings with the staff members in June and August 2017.

**Co-ordination-meeting with the Ukrainian Ministry for Ecology and the Ministry for Economy for establishing the Ukrainian Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Centre and the National Tourism Task Force, April 24-28, 2017, Kiev, Ukraine**

Before, during and after the Odessa Economic Forum (August 25-26, 2017) consultations were held with representatives of the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry for Ecology on the governmental procedures for the first meeting of the NTTF and the establishment of the CSTC in Ushhorod. ETE drafted a Terms of Reference for the NTTF, as well as for the CSTC, which were subject for discussion. Both documents were translated into Ukrainian language. The discussions prepared the way for the first official meeting of NTTF in September 2017.

**Meeting with Czech Ministry for Environment and Ministry for Regional Development regarding the implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians and the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform, June 7, 2017, Prague, Czech Republic**

Topic of the meeting with representatives of the Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry for Regional Development was to discuss potential joint activities of the Czech Republic for the support of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform and its currently active centres in Romania and Ukraine. The most important question was how to transfer good practices on sustainable tourism in the Czech part of the Carpathians to the respective centres.

**Meeting with the Council of Brasov for establishing the Romanian Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Centre and the National Tourism Task Force, June 20-22, 2017, Brasov, Romania**

Representatives from 12 NGOs attended the NTTF meeting in Brasov. The staff members of the CSTC presented the institution, which was officially established in May 2017 and agreed with the NGOs on how to communicate with the wider stakeholder groups in Romania and to coordinate actions on future projects regarding sustainable tourism. First task of the NTTF is to compile a full list of stakeholders in Romania, which are working on the topic tourism. This list will be integrated into the Communication Strategy of the CSTC.

### **Meeting with the County Councils and Regional Development Agencies of Romania and the National Tourism Task Force, August 7-10, 2017, Brasov, Romania**

The staff members of the CSTC presented the institution, which was officially established in May 2017. All councils of Romania were present at the meeting and also the Regional Development Agencies, in total 28 institutions with 42 representatives. The participants of the meeting decided to meet at least once a year to discuss the topic tourism, which became an increased priority for the regions in Romania. The council expect a close cooperation with the CSTC and to initiate a number of projects, which are highlighted in the Work Programme.

#### **7.9.4 External Events to Promote the Project and Exchange of Know-How**

##### **International Conference "Visegrad as a Competitive Destination for Sustainable Tourism in Europe", October 28, 2015, Bratislava, Slovakia**

48 stakeholders from governmental bodies, NGOs and the tourism sector met to discuss recent innovation in destination management within the 4 Visegrad countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania). Representatives of the Ministries responsible for tourism presented their current marketing strategies, especially towards the American and Asian markets. ETE had the opportunity to introduce the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Strategy and its relevance for sustainable product development and promotion in the region.

##### **4th World Congress for Biosphere Reserves, incl. Moderation of a Workshop on Tourism, March 12-18, 2016, Lima, Peru**

With Presentation of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy.

About 100 participants from all regions of the world attended the workshop and gave life to a very vivid discussion based on inputs provided by selected presenters who introduced the main issues for debate.

A first series of presentations highlighted the strategic importance of considering tourism as a driving force for sustainable development of the entire BR, and beyond that for cooperation at the regional or even global level, not only because it has the potential to generate revenues for local communities as well as the management of BRs, but also to interlink with other sectors of development (e.g. forestry, agriculture, fisheries, etc.) demanding sustainable supply of good and services.

All this calls for integrated and inclusive BR management approaches considering the importance of territorial marketing and destination management, ideally supported by effective policies and strategies for the certification of sustainable tourism goods and services, integrated monitoring and capacity building. It has been emphasized that to build on existing international tools, methodologies and guidelines would be beneficial to BRs and would help enhancing their planning, development and management.

A second series of presentations was focused on the interactions between local communities and ecosystem services while developing sustainable tourism products, directly contributing to many of the SDGs. They also underlined the idea that tourism represents a unique opportunity to promote the BR concept and to achieve ESD in a wider context.

**Moderation of the Workshop on the Implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Carpathian Convention into National Law, December 12-13, 2016, Vienna, Austria**

This extraordinary meeting was attended by 25 participants with governmental delegates from Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine and observers from NGOs, tourism associations and international experts. Topic of the meeting was to discuss the governmental procedures for the implementation of the Tourism Protocol into national legislation. A representative of the Alpine Convention gave insights to procedure in their region, which initiated the discussion between the seven Parties to the Carpathian Convention.

Outcome: A reporting format on the implementation of the Tourism Protocol was discussed, which should be further elaborated by the WG Tourism. The Parties expressed their wish to benefit further from such workshops in order to strengthen the implementation process.

The full meeting report can be downloaded here:

<http://www.carpathianconvention.org/eventdetailothers/events/workshop-on-the-implementation-of-the-protocol-on-sustainable-tourism-to-the-carpathian-convention-into-national-law.html>

**Ukraine National Economic Forum, April 25-26, 2017, Odessa, Ukraine**

The Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Strategy was presented.

The Forum was attended by 120 participants, foremost from the tourism business sector, regional development agencies and governmental bodies from all districts (oblasts) of Ukraine. Workshops on different emerging topics were organized during the event, e.g. infrastructure development, marketing, tourism development.

In the tourism workshop 58 participants took part, who had the opportunity to receive the ETE's presentation about the Carpathian Convention, the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Strategy and how these tools could be of benefit for the tourism sector in Ukraine.

Outcome: Tourism sector representatives expressed their willingness to participate in the Ukraine National Tourism Task Force, as soon as it is established.

**UNESCO International Conference on Sustainable Tourism Development, May 5, 2017, Bardejov Spa, Slovakia**

The international conference was attended by 175 participants with representatives from UNEP, UNESCO, Slovak Republic, Poland, Hungary, Ukraine and lecturers from Austria, Germany, France, Ireland, Finland focussing on the sustainable management of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

A number of panel discussions were organized where ETE participated on the topic of sustainable tourism management of WHS, presenting the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Strategy and its opportunities for World Heritage Sites and protected areas in general. This panel discussion was attended by 78 participants.

Outcome: During the conference representatives from Romania and Ukraine signed a memorandum on the establishment of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform and its centres in their countries.

[http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl\\_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/02%20Activities/Sustainable%20Tourism%20Coordination%20Platform/CSTP%20Agreement\\_RO\\_UA.pdf](http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/02%20Activities/Sustainable%20Tourism%20Coordination%20Platform/CSTP%20Agreement_RO_UA.pdf)

### **Global Meeting of Mountain Partnership, December 11-13, 2017, Rome, Italy**

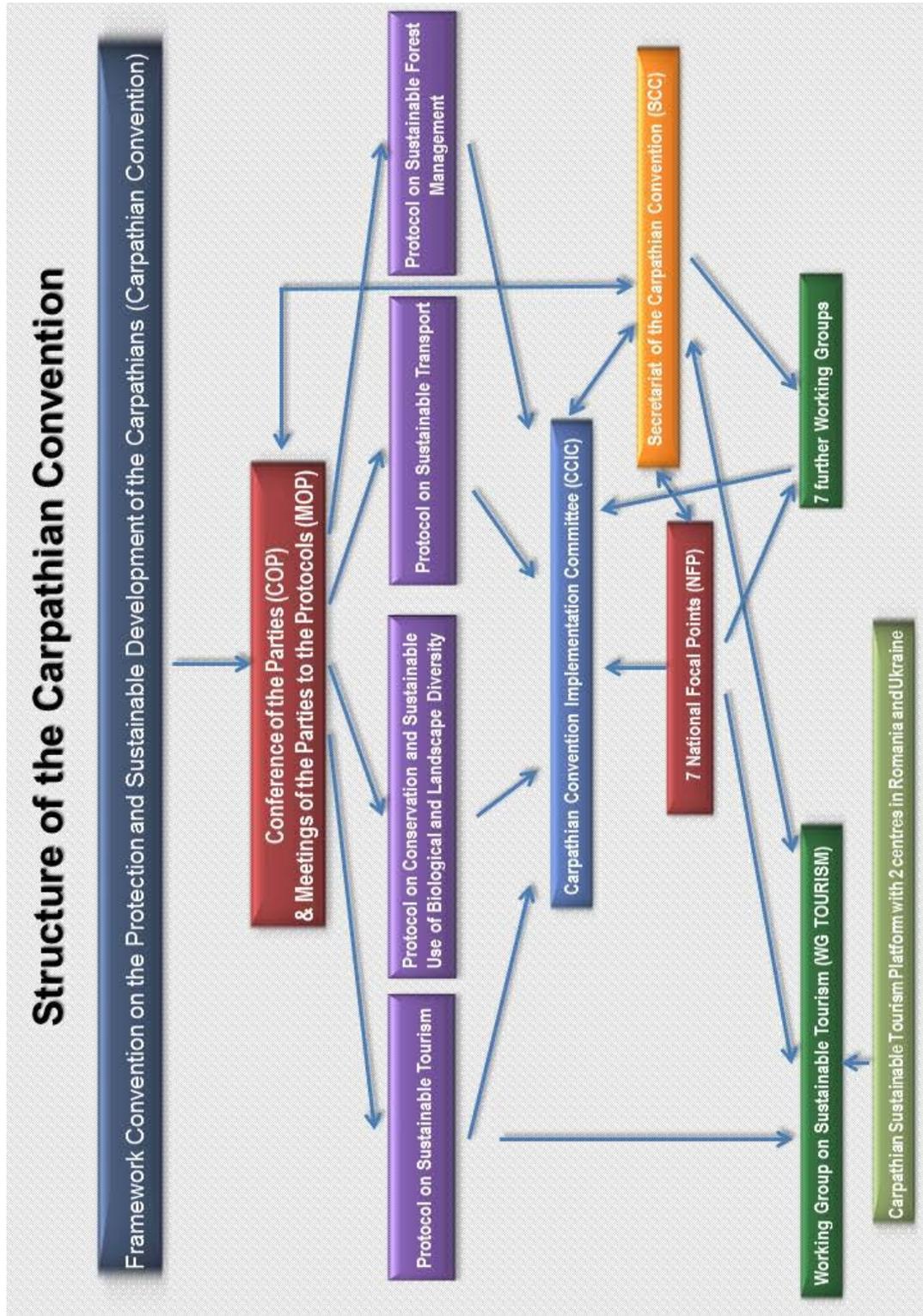
The Mountain Partnership is a United Nations voluntary alliance of partners, hosted by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), dedicated to improving the lives of mountain peoples and protecting mountain environments around the world. During this meeting the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention had the opportunity to present the methodology for the elaboration of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians and the followed process of supporting the implementation.

### **Global INSTO Meeting, December 13-14, 2017, Madrid**

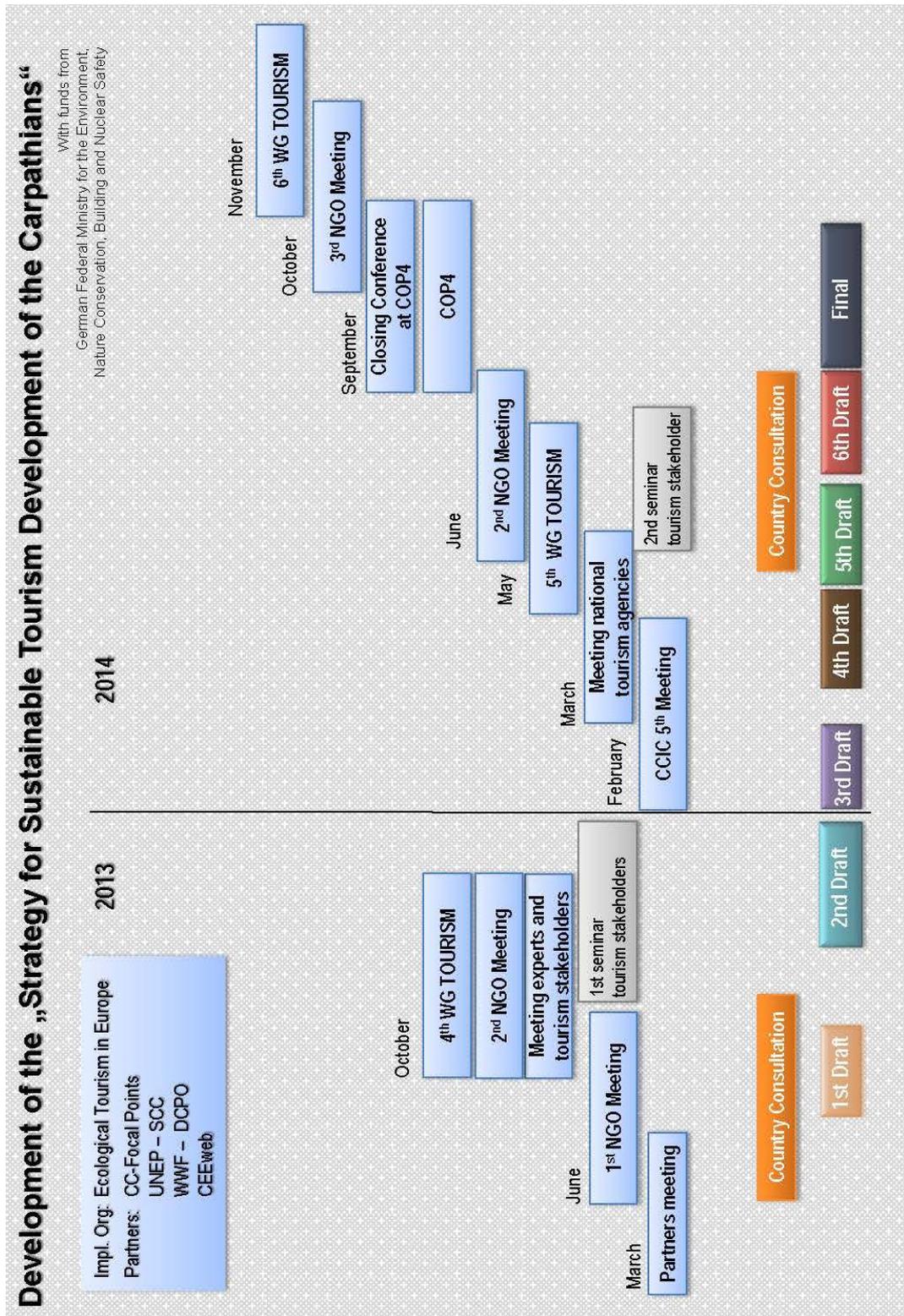
Meeting of the UNWTO-Network of Observatories (INSTO). UNWTO launched a continued dialogue and learning process regarding the measurement of sustainable tourism development by sharing experiences and discussing challenges among the operating observatories from 12 countries and involved experts. One of the topics was international criteria for sustainable tourism development. Here ETE presented the indicators for measuring positive and negative effects caused by tourism in the Carpathian, which were elaborated with the contributions also from UNWTO Sustainable Development of Tourism Programme.

## 7.10 Charts on Carpathian Convention and the Project

### 7.10.1 Structure of the Carpathian Convention



## 7.10.2 Implementation Steps Project Phase 1



7.10.3 Implementation Steps Project Phase 2

