

Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD)

Mandate

The First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP1) to the Carpathian Convention (Kyiv, Ukraine, 11-13 December 2006) by its Decision COP1/7 para 3 decided “to support the establishment of a Working Group on sustainable agriculture, rural development and forestry under the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee”, a subsidiary body of the Convention established pursuant to Decision COP1/3 para 4.

The Second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP2) to the Carpathian Convention (Bucharest, Romania, 17-19 June 2008) by its Decision COP2/4 para 1 “welcomes the work of the Working Group on Sustainable Agriculture, Rural Development and Forestry, takes note of its report as contained in the document UNEP/CC/COP2/2, and invites Parties and other stakeholders to ensure the proper follow-up”.

Tasks

The Working Group will aim at supporting the Parties to the Carpathian Convention towards their cooperation for the implementation of Article 7 on sustainable agriculture and forestry and other related Articles of the Carpathian Convention.

Furthermore, WG shall consider and consolidate the background documentation made available to it by the EU INTERREG IIIB CADSES Carpathian Project and the UNEP Vienna ISCC - FAO SARD-M (Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountainous Regions) Project.

WG shall provide recommendations for possible development of a draft Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD) for the Carpathian region for submission to the Bureau of COP4 / Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee.

The WG might consider the development of a Carpathian trademark for food and non-food products.

Field of activities

1. The Working Group will focus on sustainable agriculture and rural development issues, and in this regard will benefit from the outputs provided by the EU INTERREG IIIB CADSES Carpathian Project and the FAO SARD-M Project.
2. The Working Group shall consider making a proposal on the development of appropriate policy instruments such as a Protocol on SARD to the Bureau of COP4 and prepare recommendations to the Bureau in this regard.
3. The Working Group will evaluate the outputs of the national and regional assessments on SARD-M policies, institutions and processes in the Carpathian countries, will formulate its recommendations for improvements/development of SARD-M policies with attention to the concept on high nature value farmland that

needs also a common definition, and a concept on a Carpathian trademark for food and non-food products.

4. The Working Group will provide its guidance and recommendations for the identification and development of the follow-up projects in the area of sustainable agriculture and rural development to COP4 Bureau.

List of results

- Proposal for the draft Protocol on SARD submitted to the Bureau of COP4;
- Recommendations for improvements/development of SARD-M policies and proposals for follow-up activities at the country and/or the Carpathians levels;
- Concept for a Carpathian trademark for food and non-food products;
- A list of follow-up actions and proposals.

Composition and organization of work

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

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

The Working Group will meet as necessary and its meetings will be financially supported by the work programme of the Carpathian Convention and supporting projects. Work through email is encouraged.

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

Coordination and cooperation

The Working Group will exchange information and foster communication with other relevant Working Groups of the Carpathian Convention (e.g. Working Group on conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity, Working Group on Sustainable Forest Management) and will seek cooperation with other interested constituencies beyond the Carpathian Convention.

Scientific contributions and background information

The Working Group will benefit from the inputs provided by

- Carpathian Environment Outlook (KEO), which will provide a holistic and integrated assessment of the current state and future trends of the Carpathian environment;
- Handbook on the Carpathian Convention prepared in the framework of the Umbrella Project financed by the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS) and implemented by the Regional Environmental Centre (REC) in partnership with the European Academy (EURAC);
- National assessments of the policy, legislative and institutional frameworks related to the Carpathian Convention, available in English and national-language

versions, prepared in the framework of the Umbrella Project financed by the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS) and implemented by the Regional Environmental Centre (REC) in partnership with the European Academy (EURAC);

- National (seven countries) and regional SARD-M policies, institutions and processes assessments conducted in the framework of UNEP Vienna ISCC – FAO SARD-M Project; Brief summary of SARD-M policy assessments conducted in Romania, Slovakia, and the Ukraine can be found on the SARD-M website: (<http://www.fao.org/sard/common/ecg/2361/en/CarpathianShortSummaryOctober2006EN1.pdf>);
- VASICA – Visions and Strategies in the Carpathian Area, developed within the INTERREG IIB CADSES Carpathian Project;
- FAO SARD-M database containing documents (policy studies, partners' experiences, case studies, etc.) concerning social, economic, environmental and institutional policies for sustainable agriculture and rural development in mountain regions (http://www.fao.org/sard/sard-m/orgdb/policy_query.jsp);
- Other related documentation:
Information on SARD-M policy assessments conducted in various mountain regions of the world (<http://www.fao.org/sard/en/sardm/Communi/materials/index.html>.)