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## 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee

8 October 2020  
ONLINE MEETING

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### FINAL MEETING REPORT

#### Item 1: Opening of the meeting by the Secretariat

Mr. Harald Egerer, Head of the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants of the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (CCIC) and invited Mr. Péter Király, Head of the Department for International Relations of the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture, the representative of the Hungarian Presidency, to chair the meeting.

#### Item 2: Welcome remarks by the Hungarian Presidency and UNEP

The Chair delivered short opening remarks, stressing that the COVID-19 pandemic is having a great impact on the Carpathian Convention meetings planned for 2020, including the COP6, moving them into the online format. However, the Convention seems to be adopting well to the current circumstances allowing uninterrupted progress of Convention's work. Then, Mr. Chair, invited Mr. Bruno Pozzi, the Regional Director of UNEP, to address the meeting. In this speech, Mr. Pozzi, thanked the Parties and the observers for their contribution to UNEP work in the Pan-European region through the Carpathian Convention and its successful activities and projects, highlighting that the Convention is an important instrument for regional cooperation promoting integrated approach to sustainability, biodiversity conservation and science-policy interface that supports implementation of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the coming Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The approaching UNEA5 will be an important moment for multilateralism for environment, which will allow further strengthening cooperation and synergies for addressing the biodiversity crisis, climate change and natural resources.

#### Item 3: Adoption of the agenda

The Agenda was adopted without any changes.

#### Item 4: Report on status of ratification of the Protocols to the Carpathian Convention and the Article 12bis by the Depositary

Ukraine, on behalf of the Depositary of the Carpathian Convention, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, provided an update on the status of ratifications of the Protocols and the Article 12bis. According to the information provided, no changes had taken place since the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Implementation Committee. Thus, regarding the newest Protocols, the following results of ratification / accession to the protocols are in place:

- The Protocol on Sustainable Transport entered into force in 2019 for 6 signatory countries (except for Hungary)

- The Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development entered into force in January 2020 for Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia. Draft Law on ratification of the protocol is already under consideration in the Ukrainian parliament.

*Secretariat note:* Romania recently informed about the ratification of the Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development.

As for the accession to the new article of the Carpathian Convention 12bis on Climate Change, Hungary undertook obligations deriving from the amendment and Ukraine is advancing on the ratification process. In addition, Poland informed about recent ratification of the Article 12bis.

#### **Item 5: Presentation of the PhD thesis on the Impacts of Social Networks in Regional Environmental Regimes on Regime Outcomes and Interactions - The Case of the Carpathian Convention by Dr. Marta Vetier**

Dr. Marta Vetier, member of the Steering Committee of the Science for the Carpathian initiative, delivered a presentation on research conducted in regard to the Carpathian Convention and the interactions of involved actors and networks. Several recommendations were given by Dr. Vetier, to enhance the functioning of the network, among others, to establish an umbrella for NGOs and other informal organizations strengthening their voice within the implementation processes, develop project development and project management capacity in the region, strengthen the role of the Carpathian Convention as the regional framework to implement other conventions and policies.

[The presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website](#), including the link to the dissertation of Dr. Marta Vetier.

#### **Item 6: Revising of the Road Map towards the accession of the European Union to the Carpathian Convention**

The Secretariat presented an overview of the process on promoting the EU accession to the Carpathian Convention, including a short report on recently undertaken activities and presentation of the revised *Road Map towards the accession of the European Union to the Carpathian Convention* ([presentation available on the Carpathian Convention](#)). Mr. Pozzi was invited to comment on the process considering his experience as the Head of EU Representation to Kenya and the role of UNEP for strengthening cooperation with the EU. Mr. Pozzi stressed that strong political message of the Parties to the EU institutions will be necessary for reaching successful consideration of the EU accession. He ensured as well about standing support of UNEP for this process. Hungary and Poland emphasised their commitment to lead the process of the EU accession. Poland confirmed that closer cooperation with the EU, leading to the EU acceding to the Convention as a party, will be one of the priority of their incoming 3-year term as the Polish Presidency of the Carpathian Convention (2021 -2023). The Parties were asked to share the views and comments on the document *Road Map towards the accession of the European Union to the Carpathian Convention* that is proposing several next steps to be taken in this regard. As a result, the Parties agreed to the proposed way forward outlined in the Road Map, suggesting some editorial changes to the text, which will be submitted in writing to the Secretariat.

## **Item 7: Introductory presentation on progress of work since COP5 and preparations for COP6 by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat reported on the progress of work of the Carpathian Convention since the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP5) and related preparation for COP6 ([link to the presentation](#)). The presentation was focused on the main activities undertaken within the implementation period 2018 -2020, paying special attention to the documents and activities that shall be reflected in the COP6 Decisions. The detailed reporting on the Carpathian Convention activities from the COP5 (2017) until now is available in the [Progress Report for COP6](#).

## **Item 8: Introductory presentation on Data Reporting Tool for MEAs – DaRT by UNEP**

UNEP DaRT Team provided an overview of the Data Reporting Tool for MEAs, which is the first tool supporting Parties to effectively use synergies in the field of knowledge and information management for national reporting to biodiversity-related conventions ([link to the presentation](#)). The participants were informed how the Carpathian Convention can contribute to and benefit from the DaRT system. [Note on the DaRT](#).

Short Q&A session followed the presentation, answering several technical questions on the DaRT tool and its usage. The DaRT Team ensured the participants about its interest of further promoting the tool among the Carpathian Convention Parties. The Secretariat will further facilitate the consultation in this regard.

## **Item 9: Reviewing and finalizing the draft COP6 Decisions, including administrative and financial matters**

The Chair together with the Secretariat led the discussion on reviewing and negotiating the 3<sup>rd</sup> draft of the COP6 Decisions prepared with consideration of the comments received. The next steps agreed in order to finalize the COP6 Decisions are presented in the Annex 1 to this document.

## **Item 10: Reviewing and finalizing the COP6 organizational documents (draft agenda, credentials, etc.)**

The Chair invited Poland to update the participants on the situation related to the organization of the COP6 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Having considered uncertainties related to the coronavirus pandemic and possible restrictions linked to that, Poland proposed to change a format of COP6 to an online meeting at the technical level, which would adopt necessary decisions. This proposal was presented and agreed by the COP Bureau Members agreed on 1 July 2020. The online COP6 meeting will take place on 25 November 2020, most likely via MS Teams platform. In addition, and in order to compensate the lack of physical meeting at the COP6, Poland proposed to organize a ministerial conference in 2021 in Poland, if COVID-19 situation allows. The Ministerial Conference would allow for a political debate on the currently most important topics within the framework of the Carpathian Convention, including the EU accession to the Carpathian Convention.

Next, the Secretariat presented a [draft agenda of the COP6](#), which due to the online arrangement will have a limited format. Furthermore, in agreement with the COP6 Bureau Members, the Secretariat

prepared a guidance documents that shall be followed for a online inter-governmental meeting of the Carpathian Convention, facilitating the meeting and its protocol. [The Operating procedures for online meeting](#) shall be considered as a supplement to the current Rules of Procedures of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention.

Poland informed about the intended high-level online handover of the Presidencies at the beginning of the COP6 meeting, that should take a form of a high-level speeches of Hungary and Poland. The Secretariat informed about possibility of delivering opening remarks by Executive Director of UNEP, Ms. Inger Andersen at the COP6. The Secretariat reminded the Parties of the importance of credentials for the COP6 that will inform the Secretariat about the composition of a countries' authorised representation at the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties. As informed in separate notification, taking into account the online format of the COP6, the Parties shall submit to the Secretariat, in an electronic format via email as soon as available, and before start of the Meeting at the latest, duly signed credentials of a Head of Delegation, Alternate Head of Delegation and Representatives, as appropriate. The hard copy shall be mailed to the Secretariat, for its records.

#### **Item 11: Location of the Permanent Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention – updates by the Parties**

Poland and Romania reconfirmed their respective proposals to host the Permanent Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention. Slovakia informed about the initial idea of a rotating Secretariat that would follow to the Party holding the Presidency of the Convention.

The Secretariat recalled the Decision COP5/17, which states that COP will review the issue of the Secretariat location and relevant requirements at a next meeting of the COP, if consensus has been reached.

#### **Item 12: Location and date of the CC COP7**

Serbia kindly offered to host COP7 in Serbia and requested the Parties and the Secretariat to assist Serbia in preparation for the Serbian Presidency 2024 -2027.

#### **Item 13: Other matters**

No other matters were announced for discussion.

#### **Item 14: Closure of the meeting**

The Secretariat in summarizing the meeting, thank the Parties for their cooperative spirit and fruitful discussion and informed that the follow up after the CCIC meeting all include a list of topics that will need to finalize before COP6 (Annex 1). The Secretariat will contact the identified Parties in order to consult on the outstanding COP6 Decision. Upon the suggestion by the Chair, an additional meeting of the Focal Points will be possible in case of difficulties in finalizing the COP6 Decisions in a written procedure.

The Chair thanked the participants for their active contribution the meeting and declared the 11<sup>th</sup> CCIC meeting closed.

## ANNEX 1

### Finalizing the COP6 Decisions – next steps

- 1) COP6/1 para 3 on reporting system, in consideration of possible further support and cooperation with DaRT, the Secretariat proposed some changes in the wording presented in the para of the COP6 Decision directly with reasoning in the comment for consideration of the Parties.
- 2) COP6/1 on improving functioning of the WGs, in consultation with Romania, a new para 7 of the COP6/1 that will be prepared in order to present the point of view of Romania on the work of the Working Groups. Secretariat will approach Romania with a proposal shortly.
- 3) COP6/3 para 3 on Road Map toward the EU accession to the Carpathian Convention, Czech Republic and Romania offer to send editorial comments to text of the Road Map.
- 4) COP6/3 para 9 on Macro-regional Strategy for the Carpathians, CCIC asked the Secretariat to redraft the para taking into account proposal by Poland but shortening it. New para is proposed in the Draft 4 of the COP6 Decisions.
- 5) COP6/3 para 13 awaiting for the Eu Council conclusion on EU 2002 Biodiversity Strategy to finalized.
- 6) COP6/3 para 14, on welcome/takes note of EU Green Deal, the Secretariat suggested keeping “welcome” with the explanation in the comment.
- 7) COP6/3 new para 15 on EU Forest Strategy proposed by Poland, in square brackets until the Parties have a chance to get familiar with the new para and take position on it.
- 8) COP6/3 new para 16 – new para proposed by Hungary requires further justification by Hungary.
- 9) COP6/5 para 7 on UN Biodiversity Summit, CCIC proposed that Poland and Czech Republic further elaborate on the COP6/5 para 7 providing more information on Biodiversity Summit with possible reference to the biodiversity pledge
- 10) COP6/9 para 1 on adopting International Action Plan for the Conservation and Sustainable Management for the Carpathian Populations of Large Carnivores (Large Carnivores Action Plan), para still in square brackets until final version of the document is agreed by the Parties. In this respect, the Secretariat encourages the Parties to submit the comment to the 5th draft of the Large Carnivores Action Plan (Poland and Czech Republic did so already). Follow up email by Secretariat will be send shortly.
- 11) COP6/9 para 6 on promoting results of the ConnectGREEN project, especially the Action Plan for the Identification, Preservation and Management of Ecological Corridors, the Secretariat provided further rationing for keeping the references to the ConnectGREEN project results in COP6 Decisions text (comment)

- 12) COP6/10 on map of administrative unites, the Secretariat revised the text, avoiding impression that the map is presenting the official scope of the Carpathian Convention implementation. Furthermore, the process of updating the map based on the comments and further information provided by the Parties is ongoing.
- 13) COP6/13 on forest, entire Decision is a subject of written consultation between PL, SK, UA and the Secretariat. The Secretariat will contact the respective representative shortly.
- 14) COP6/13 para 1 on adopting Joint Strategic Action Plan (SAP) 2021 – 2026 for the Implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Transport (Transport SAP), para in square brackets until final version of the document is agreed by the Parties. The Secretariat will send the final version of the document shortly.
- 15) COP6/16 para 3 on approval of the Carpathian Route project, the Secretariat informed about recently emerged complications for the project realization. Due to the time constrains, the Secretariat proposed bilateral consultations that will be shortly initiated by the Secretariat.
- 16) COP6/16 para 4 on listing activities of the Carpathian Route project, the Secretariat revised the text aiming at shortening it.
- 17) COP6/19 para 3 on adoption of the Long-term Vision 2030 towards combating climate change in the Carpathians” and the corresponding Workplan for the implementation period 2021-2023. The Secretariat will shortly circulate revised version of the documents that reflects comments received from the Parties.
- 18) COP6/19 para 8 on assessment on climate change impacts on forests and other aspects, the Secretariat revised the para the relevant documents ensuring the consistency of the wording.
- 19) On a draft Progress Report and Programme of Work, the Parties may still submit comments to these documents. Note by the Secretariat – the PoW will be still amended in accordance with the final version of the COP6 Decisions.