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PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT · PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ



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

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Revised version 1

The Annex to this note has been replaced upon request by ANPED

Secretariat note on cultural heritage and traditional knowledge – Article 11 of the Carpathian Convention

Introduction

1. Article 11 of the Convention requests Parties to pursue policies aiming at preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage and of traditional knowledge of the local people, crafting and marketing of local goods, arts and handicrafts. The Parties are called upon to aim at preserving the traditional architecture, land-use patterns, local breeds of domestic animals and cultivated plant varieties, and sustainable use of wild plants in the Carpathians.
2. Article 14, paragraph 2 of the Carpathian Convention states that the Conference of the Parties shall discuss common concerns of the Parties and make the decisions necessary to promote the effective implementation of the Convention. In particular, it shall establish such subsidiary bodies, including thematic working groups, as are deemed necessary for the implementation of the Convention.

Implementation

3. The Carpathian Project is expected to produce a study on “cultural heritage for future development” (Action 2.3) and to support a Working Group on cultural heritage.
4. In the Annex to the present note, the Conference of the Parties has before it a report submitted by ANPED and prepared on the basis of stakeholder consultations and events held in the seven Carpathian countries, for its information and consideration. The report is intended to provide inputs and recommendations for a draft Protocol on cultural heritage and traditional knowledge in the Carpathians.

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Possible action by the Conference of the Parties

1. The Conference of the Parties may decide the establishment of the Working Group on cultural heritage and traditional knowledge, and request the interim Secretariat to convene its first meeting in order to define the Terms of Reference for the Working Group and initiate its concrete work;
2. The Conference of the Parties may appreciate the concrete contribution of ANPED to the Carpathian Convention implementation process and take note of information submitted in the Annex to the present note.

Annex



Cultural heritage and Traditional knowledge within the framework of the Carpathian Convention

A Position Paper based on consultations carried out in the region by ANPED

Background

This position paper has been prepared by ANPED, and draws upon results of national consultations with stakeholders from civil society in the Carpathian region, co-ordinated by ANPED members and partners. It aims to highlight issues for consideration in protecting and promoting the cultural heritage and traditional knowledge of the Carpathians, for the first Conference of Parties of the Carpathian Convention.

The Parties to the COP 1 are invited to consider :

1. The establishment of a working group on cultural heritage and traditional knowledge within the framework of the Carpathian Convention. The aims of the working-group should include to:
 - create an overview of expert and local materials, and knowledge, on the current diversity of cultural heritage in the region
 - develop a strategy to strengthen and support this cultural heritage
 - consider whether a legal instrument is required to assist regional cooperation
 - create a Carpathian Heritage list for sites and cultural activities
 - seek further resources for a programme of practical activities, such as the establishment of micro-grants schemes to support tangible actions for local communities active in this area, to assist the protection and development of cultural heritage within all of the Carpathian countries
2. Representatives from the governments, international organisations, non-governmental organisations and especially local stakeholders would be invited and encouraged to join and contribute.
3. National, regional and international funding organisations are invited to investigate ways to support this work, under the Carpathian Convention.

1) Rationale

The Carpathian Convention recognises the need to preserve and promote the Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge of the local communities in the Carpathians. To achieve this, the Convention will need to establish mechanisms to inform and involve civil society in its on-going work and decision making while fully recognising social and cultural heritage issues, as well as economic and environmental ones.

2) Traditional links between nature and culture

The cultural traditions of the peoples in the Carpathians, including the ethnic groups, were formed over centuries and determined by many factors, including natural conditions, geographical location and the possibilities to survive. Access to natural resources was linked with long-term survival, and this created a strong respect for nature. Local people's calendars were strongly connected to nature, more so than elsewhere. Determined by people's needs and rooted in nature, locations and seasons, different agricultural patterns, handicrafts and cultural traditions evolved and gave shape to local calendars.

Much of this is now being weakened. As modern circumstances encourage people to change their lifestyles, age-old cultural traditions are dying out. A huge price is being paid by ignoring fundamental traditions of living in harmony with nature. In our modern society those responsible for nature conservation often act separately from others, and a discrepancy has developed between the environmental movement, and those that try to preserve cultural traditions or develop new forms of art. Culture is exclusively regarded as *'art per se'*, instead of being integrated into a holistic way of life.

An old connection, 'harmony between nature and man', is disappearing from everyday life. These links need to be reconstructed on a new level, by applying new tools. We believe this is possible under the aims of the Carpathian Convention.

3) Links between environmental and cultural legislation

There is a need to recognize and develop links between environmental and cultural legislation and forms of protection. A disparity exists currently between the two: the environmental sector uses environmental legislation but are not specialists in cultural laws. Conversely, laws in the cultural sector do not include environmental approaches. The two worlds do not communicate. The Carpathian Convention provides an opportunity for them to co-operate. One possible approach, recognised in all the seven countries is in the development of sustainable tourism. Tourism applies itself to different spheres of Carpathian life and may offer opportunities to make connections between the environment, culture and legal instruments.

4) Links between history and the present situation

The Carpathian countries are still rich in genuine cultural diversity, in crafts and skills, traditional forms of agriculture, and land-use management. Cultural heritage is still a real part of local community life, and not just a performance put on for visiting tourists. Local people are proud of their local traditions and ethnic heritage.

Historically, many ethnic minorities have been repressed and / or forcibly relocated as a result of wars and social upheavals. The legacy of the communist centralised model of

industrial development and the economic turbulence following the harsh transition to market economy has brought dramatic changes, particularly in the field of agriculture and tourism.

Many elements of traditional culture are now threatened: local production of cheese and wine, traditions of fruit-growing (e.g. variety of species), traditional services and farming practices, some old handicrafts, folklore and cultural ceremonies. The on-going economic transition, and trends towards ever-growing consumerism and the development of infrastructure for mass tourism brings dramatic and detrimental change to the region and exacerbate the loss of traditions.

Despite the negative trends, the changes since 1989 have also allowed for a re-emergence of, and confidence in, the expression of ethnic identity, heritage and traditions. Local communities are now active in restoring and promoting their own traditional cultures, and this may benefit local economies. However, this window of cultural expression maybe very short-lived before it is swamped by 'western' mass consumer culture. Consequently, there is a need for support measures and practical assistance to enable existing cultures to survive and flourish.

A strategic approach is needed, ranging from direct support, subsidies and tax exemption benefits to interest free-loans, and highlighting success stories from other 'green businesses'. This could help to show the benefits of such approaches to local communities, and promote and preserve traditional cultural activities. Such an approach we believe would increase social stability and help reduce emigration from mountain areas.

The Carpathian Convention includes only environmental structures, but has relevance to many other aspects of society. As shown from the above, there is a need for improved co-operation between different structures when developing future protocols, plans and projects and legal bodies.

5) Summary of main results from the stakeholder consultations

The following main problems were identified:

- loss of cultural values due to globalisation and unsustainable development tendencies
- loss of many elements of traditional culture
- loss of local production and traditional services
- loss of recognition of importance of local culture
- past repression and relocation of ethnic minorities have left them in currently unstable positions to cultivate and promote their ethnic heritage

The following main priorities were identified:

- Develop an overall development plan and for the region in order to improve quality of life in a sustainable manner
- Design local sustainable development strategies, with local communities, and secure resources to implement these
- Create local/regional institutions to co-ordinate and supervise the implementation of the Carpathian Convention
- Preserve and promote local traditions, through practical demonstration of their

benefits to the local economy, as an integrated part of strengthening local community life

- Secure support and space for existing cultures to grow and develop
- Stimulate and educate local communities in the establishment of traditional culture businesses, and develop capacity building for the local people in the Carpathian region
- Develop information exchange between local people in the regions and countries of the Carpathians, to help them learn from each others experiences

The following main proposals for action were identified:

- Map the current status of cultural and ethnic heritage in each region
- Record natural, ethnic and cultural traditions, practices and monuments, and monitor the effectiveness of their protection
- Work with regional authorities to research and secure funding to support ethnic and cultural heritage
- Work with local communities to improve their awareness of the region and its value and significance to the wider world
- Develop common activities and strategies to protect and promote the cultural and ethnic heritage in the Carpathian Countries
- Facilitate cross-border co-operation with regard to ethnic and cultural heritage
- Co-ordinate co-operation with all Carpathian countries on cultural heritage promotion (creation of common tourist products, exhibitions, expositions and promotion),
- Develop mechanism to promote products and services including regional „trade marks“ for local traditional crafts
- Include the study of local culture and traditions in the education system within the Carpathian region
- Support the process of education and promotion of sustainable tourism for local communities, as well as registration of services
- Train local communities on new data communication technologies and modern techniques
- Promote plans to support traditional Carpathian agricultural activities which help conserve biological diversity of domestic plants and animals

Recommendations for future work relating to the progress of the Convention :

- Involve both public authorities and civil society organisations in the creation of protocols (and other relevant legal instruments) to promote cultural heritage
- Build working relationships between civil society, ministries and regional authorities on heritage and culture, tourism and rural development
- Ensure that protocols and instruments apply to, and are implemented by, governmental and private sector tourism structures
- Establish an information centre in each country, as set-out in the position paper on public participation, which aims to reach the ethnic groups in the Carpathians, even if these are very informal groups
- Develop closer co-operation with international forums, primarily UNESCO
- Create an internationally recognised Carpathian Heritage List with guidance for items to be included and mechanisms for promotion
- Establish a special fund for the Carpathian Heritage List to support sites and activities, with clear rules of procedure, and stakeholder involvement in the decision-making process

- Collect and organise available materials on the cultural and ethnic heritage of the Carpathian region, with strong and direct input from all stakeholders (with the inclusion of civil society) and use the resulting materials to promote Carpathian Culture across the region and beyond, e.g. at EU level
- Promote innovative forms for managing culture and monuments
- Inspire all governments to develop local action plans, involving local relevant stakeholders, to include concrete activities, with recognized priorities, as soon as possible according the Carpathian Convention

This paper draws upon the stakeholder consultations and events carried out in the Carpathian countries coordinated by ANPED, and delivered by a team of ANPED members and partners:

Overall coordination: ANPED

Czech Republic - Institute for Environmental Policy

Hungary - CEEWEB (Central and East European Working group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity)

Poland - Polish Green Net and League of Nature Protection

Romania - UNESCO Pro-Natura and Pro Conventia Carpatica Association

Serbia - Young Researchers of Serbia

Slovakia - SOSNA

Ukraine - 'Our Home' Association and Green Dossier

For full details and results from the stakeholder process please see the country reports.