



United Nations Environment Programme

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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



Project co-financed by the EU



Distr.: General
UNEP/CC/COP1/19
27 November 2006

Original: English

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

First meeting

Kyiv, Ukraine, 11-13 December 2006
Item 13 of the provisional agenda

ELEMENTS FOR THE CARPATHIAN DECLARATION

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FINAL ACT

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

A - CARPATHIAN DECLARATION

We, the Ministers and High Representatives of the seven Parties and Signatories to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (hereafter Carpathian Convention), gathering in Kyiv on 13 December 2006, for the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention;

Reaffirming the commitment to implement the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, chapter 13 of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”), in particular paragraph 42 hereof, including the time-bound goals and targets, and the other internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and reaffirmed in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, as the overall policy frameworks for sustainable development in mountain regions;

Recalling the UN General Assembly resolutions 53/24 of 10 November 1998, 55/189 of 20 December 2000, 57/245 of 20 December 2002, 58/216 of 23 December 2003, 59/238 of 22 December 2004 and 60/198 of 22 December 2005, proclaiming and celebrating the International Year of Mountains that highlighted the crucial importance of mountains worldwide, and drawing attention of governments, organisations and individuals to the particular role mountains play for biodiversity, wild life and cultural heritage preservation, water and energy supply providing benefits for a significant proportion of humanity, in both mountain and lowland areas;

Noting the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions (“Mountain Partnership”), launched during the World Summit on Sustainable Development, further developed during the first Global Meeting 2003 in Merano and the second Global Meeting 2004 in Cusco, implemented in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/61 of 25 July 2003 as an important approach to address the various interrelated dimensions of sustainable development in mountain regions, *recalling* the outcomes of the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit 2002, and *appreciating* the Mountain Partnership as an important platform for cooperation and experience-sharing between mountain regions of the world;

Noting with appreciation that a growing number of Governments, organizations and individuals around the world recognize the importance of sustainable development of mountain regions for poverty eradication, as well as the global importance of mountains as the source of most of the Earth's freshwater, as repositories of rich biological diversity, as popular destinations for recreation and tourism and as areas of important cultural diversity, knowledge and heritage;

Noting the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent adopted on 7-8 September 2000 in Hannover at the 12th Session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning of the countries members of the Council of Europe, with the goal to achieve regionally balanced sustainable development in Europe, applying the principles of partnership and subsidiarity;

Have expressed the following:

Achievements

We express our satisfaction with the entry into force of the Carpathian Convention on 4 January 2006, *we highly welcome* the progress made in the swift ratification of the Carpathian Convention, and *we underline* our commitment to faithfully implement the Carpathian Convention;

We note with satisfaction that the Carpathian Convention unites seven Carpathian countries in a unique partnership, providing a transnational framework for cooperation and multisectoral policy integration, an open forum for participation by stakeholders and the public, and a platform for developing and implementing transnational strategies, programmes and projects for protection and sustainable development;

We highly appreciate the contribution of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention through the Interreg IIIb CADSES Carpathian Project;

We appreciate the establishment of an operational and highly efficient interim Secretariat by UNEP in Vienna, and welcome its activities in the development and leading of the Carpathian Project, on behalf of the Carpathian Convention Parties and Signatories;

We underline the importance of the Carpathian Convention as an instrument to enhance the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathian region, based on its exceptional natural and cultural heritage of global importance.

Challenges

We are aware that the Carpathian region represents a unique and dynamic living environment, ecologically valuable and rich of cultural heritage, having enormous ecological and economic potential, but currently facing rapid environmental, social and political changes;

We note with concern that unbalanced and spontaneous development patterns in the Carpathian region can lead to loss of traditional knowledge and values, livelihoods, and local practices;

We underline the need for culturally sustainable and coherent policies to be formulated and implemented for the Carpathians, in order to halt and reverse this trend before it is too late. Rural de-population poses a challenge for maintaining the traditional character of the Carpathians countryside. Policy measures must be implemented and incentives developed, to

support the populations of mountain villages as guardians of the landscape and traditional knowledge, and to secure their livelihoods. Education, communication and public participation, together with public participation in environmental decision-making, could represent a basis for protection and sustainable development in the Carpathians;

We note that major environmental concerns in the Carpathians include, inter alia, the continuing fragmentation of habitats and ecological corridors, impacts of tourism infrastructure (resorts, ski lifts) on protected areas, changes in land ownership leading to short term, quick profit exploitation of natural resources, air pollution resulting from switching to cheaper but polluting heating fuels in communal use, emergence of new categories of hazardous chemicals and increasing pesticide use, growing amounts of municipal waste, pollution from mining of mineral resources, as well as increased risks of floods and natural disasters, associated with climate change and the degradation of forest resources and wetlands.

We emphasize that more environmentally-friendly practices and technologies will need to be implemented, along with appropriate policies to support the development of sustainable transport, organic farming, renewable energy sources, sustainable forest management and sustainable tourism, creating new jobs in these sectors. Regional policy coherence and consistency between national policies are among the major prerequisites to achieve sustainability in the Carpathians.

We are aware that the challenge is to preserve and valorise the region's potential, specificity and uniqueness, while increasing its sustainability. This will require responsible actions, taking into account global, regional and trans-boundary contexts and linkages, in order to enhance both the Carpathian environment and human livelihoods;

We stress that upon the Carpathian Convention's entry into force, its implementation must result in concrete action on the ground. Areas for further action in the Carpathian Convention's framework include the conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity, water/river basin management and promotion of wise management of surface and groundwater resources; agriculture and forestry as well as environmentally sound management of land traditionally cultivated in a sustainable manner; transport and infrastructure which take into account the specificities of the mountain environment; tourism based on the exceptional nature, landscapes and cultural heritage; industrial and energy practises and introduction of environmentally-sound production technologies.

Partnerships

We recall the Merano Declaration of the Ministers of the Contracting Parties of the Alpine Convention at the occasion of the VII. Alpine Conference 2002, confirmed by the VIII. Alpine Conference 2004, and the Long Term Working Programme of the Alpine Conference 2005-2010 which foresees the co-operation with the Carpathians as one of its priorities, and the joining of the Mountain Partnership by the Alpine Convention confirmed by the IX Alpine Conference;

We recall with appreciation that the Alpine States have actively supported the development of the Carpathian Convention, and *welcome* the increasing cooperation between the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions as partners, promoting together the protection and sustainable development of mountain regions at a European and global level;

We, therefore, welcome the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding for the cooperation between the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention, which will provide a solid basis for the collaboration between the Conventions in fields of mutual interest,

also reflecting the ecological and natural connections between the two mountain ranges, and the cooperation with the Alpine Network of Protected Areas (ALPARC);

We express our gratefulness to the Government of Austria for its support to the Carpathian Convention, notably by continuing to host and co-finance the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention on an interim basis;

We appreciate the continued support of the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea, and the efficient cooperation and partnership with the European Academy EURAC in Bolzano, Italy, cast into a Memorandum of Cooperation between UNEP and EURAC, including scientific, logistical and communication support;

We appreciate the successful cooperation with the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation), which resulted in the assessments of the SARD-M (sustainable agriculture and rural development in mountains) related policies in the Carpathians in the framework of the Carpathian Convention, and recommendations for the development of a regional instrument for SARD-M and sustainable forest management policies in the Carpathians;

We note with appreciation the cooperation with Euromontana, promoting the integrated rural development of mountain areas at the pan-European level;

We welcome the successful completion of the first phase of the Regional Environmental Center (REC) and EURAC project that resulted in national assessments of the policy, legislative and institutional frameworks related to the Carpathian Convention and national stakeholder meetings in each Carpathian country. *We note with satisfaction* that in the second REC-EURAC project a significant progress has been achieved in developing the Handbook on the Carpathian Convention;

We appreciate the contribution of ANPED and its member and partner organizations, to public participation and awareness raising activities, directed towards informing and involving stakeholders in the implementation of the Carpathian Convention, and focused on consultations to identify stakeholder priorities and recommendations for the successful implementation of the Carpathian Convention. Additionally, *we welcome* the commitment of ANPED to preserve and promote the cultural heritage and traditional knowledge of the local communities of the Carpathians;

We welcome the contribution of CEEWEB (Central and Eastern European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity), to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention, promoting the development of a Protocol on sustainable tourism in the Carpathians, in the framework of the EU-IINTERREG IIIB CADSES Carpathian Project;

We note with appreciation the contribution of the Carpathian Environmental Outlook (KEO), to develop a holistic, integrated and strategic environmental assessment of key issues in the Carpathian region for the implementation of the Carpathian Convention;

We appreciate the continuous contributions by the WWF International, and its Danube Carpathian Programme Office, building on the outcomes of the Summit on Environment and Sustainable Development in the Danube-Carpathian region (Bucharest, March 2001), which had recommended the development of a legal framework of cooperation for the Carpathian region;

We welcome the cooperation with the Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative (CERI), promoting the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians at the grassroots level, and the contribution by CERI for the strengthening of the Carpathian Ecological Network;

We highly appreciate the cooperation with the Central European Initiative (CEI), and *value* its political support for the protection and sustainable development of mountain areas in Europe;

We welcome the cooperation with the Ramsar Convention, enhancing the implementation of the Ramsar and Carpathian Conventions through the Carpathian Wetlands Initiative;

We reaffirm our willingness to contribute to the global Mountain Partnership through activities of capacity building and successful cooperation and experience- sharing with other mountain ranges, focussing on the Alps, Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia, and will undertake to encourage and facilitate the further development of existing mountain partnerships in other mountain regions;

We appreciate the participation of the interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention in the Mountain Partnership, providing the informal and flexible framework for addressing common challenges and sharing of experience with other mountain regions of the world.

Cooperation with the EU – towards the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathian Space

We take note of the important political, economic and social changes in the region that have taken place since the start of the Carpathian Convention process in Kyiv in 2003, and *we underline* that the process of enlargement of the European Union provides the opportunity to strengthen the environmental protection and sustainable development in the Carpathian region, through the application and implementation of EU policies, programmes and legislation,

We appreciate the support expressed by the Visegrad Group countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) to the Carpathian Convention, in particular through fostering the dialogue with the European Commission;

We welcome the progress made using the Carpathian Convention as a framework for implementing neighbourhood policies and facilitating harmonized implementation of EU policies and standards across EU borders;

We recognize the important political support provided by the European Community and its Member States to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention through the EU INTERREG IIIB CADSES “Carpathian Project”;

We underline the significance of the Carpathian Project described in the document “Agenda and Strategic Approach of the Carpathian Project”, as a tool and means to demonstrate that mountains offer considerable potentials for sustainable development of the Carpathian region, based on the value of their rich natural and cultural heritage, and its protection and preservation for the future;

We encourage full participation and involvement of mountain communities in decision-making affecting mountain regions, and in relevant development policies implemented at local, regional, national, European and global levels;

We note that the experiences of cooperation of the “Alpine Space” reveal the need for long-lasting commitment and structural support by the European Union, to fully benefit of the considerable potential of the mountains for regional development;

We express our conviction that cooperation with and support from the European Community and its Member States will be crucial to the development of the “Carpathian Space”, as an

area of economic, social and environmental progress and sustainability in the heart of Europe, building on the region's advantages and potentials, and addressing the challenges of mountain regions in an innovative and coordinated manner;

We urge and invite the European Community and its Member States to join the transnational platform of the Carpathian Convention, and to continue to support the sustainable development of the "Carpathian Space" through relevant instruments and programmes.

B- “DECISIONS”

We, the Ministers and High Representatives of the seven Parties and Signatories to the Carpathian Convention, adopt the following decisions of the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Carpathian Convention:

Done in Kyiv, Ukraine, 13 December 2006

HE...
Czech Republic

HE ...
Republic of Hungary

HE
Republic of Poland

HE...
Romania

HE...
Republic of Serbia

HE
Slovak Republic

HE
Ukraine