



Terms of Reference for the Strategy for the Future Tourism Development of the Carpathians

Guiding Principles

The strategy for the future tourism development of the Carpathians (from now on referred to as Tourism Strategy) is a voluntary document that aims to support the implementation of Tourism Protocol to the Carpathian Convention. It is a strategic document with an overlying vision, guiding principles and a framework for action that will help to combine and effectively strengthen all efforts that strive towards a sustainable tourism future of the Carpathians.

Supporting sustainable tourism in the Carpathians means to provide for the conservation of nature, the economic prosperity of regions and the safeguarding of social structures and cultural assets throughout the Carpathian Mountains.

The Tourism Strategy will strongly place its focus on trans-national cooperation in order to, firstly, cope with common challenges together and, secondly, to better use and conserve the natural and cultural treasures which exist across the borders and which make the Carpathians in their whole to one of the most unique mountainous regions in Europe.

Process of Tourism Strategy Development

The Tourism Strategy shall be developed in close cooperation among governmental experts, NGOs and other stakeholders. Therefore, the strategy development process will take place through open-ended meetings.

The meetings between COP1 and COP2 will be scheduled as follows:

- April 2007: 1st Meeting of the Working Group on sustainable tourism
- October 2007: Reporting to the Carpathian Convention Extended Bureau Meeting
- April 2008: Reporting to the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee Meeting
- April 2008: 2nd Meeting of the Working Group on sustainable tourism

The results of the meetings will serve as both, basis and input, to the outline of the strategy. The Working Group will further develop the contents of the strategy in between the meetings. The outline of Tourism Strategy will be submitted to COP2 as information document for taking a decision about the finalisation of the Tourism Strategy.

Stakeholder Involvement

The Tourism Strategy is a document, which meets the demands of future sustainable tourism development in the Carpathian Countries. In order to achieve this goal the involvement of all relevant stakeholders is of vital importance. Therefore, the strategy shall be developed in cooperation with:

- (1) experts delegated by the Parties from all Carpathian Countries
- (2) stakeholders from all relevant sectors related to tourism development (e.g. agriculture, nature protection, economy)
- (3) stakeholders from all levels (local, regional, national), and
- (4) stakeholders from all Carpathian countries,
- (5) International organisations working in the Carpathians

This interdisciplinary, cross-level and trans-national approach will help to ensure the broad acceptance and applicability of the Tourism Strategy in the Carpathians and will support cooperation in and success of sustainable tourism development in the Carpathian Countries.

A public consultation process will be initiated to ensure the involvement of all stakeholders, including international and non-governmental organizations and initiatives, as well as indigenous peoples, local communities and the private sector. The electronic consultation process with the stakeholders will be started before the second meeting of the Working Group on sustainable tourism.

The Parties are invited to organise public consultation process on national level and report about the results of the consultations at the working group meetings.

Relationship of the Tourism Strategy with the Draft Tourism Protocol

The Tourism Strategy will outline the measures that are necessary for the implementation of the Tourism Protocol, which is being elaborated by the Working Group on sustainable tourism. The Tourism Strategy will target governments, businesses and NGO community and will help them to concert their action when implementing the Protocol.

The Tourism Strategy will be finalised after the final draft of Protocol is developed.

Financial Matters

The participation in the working group meetings takes place on a voluntary basis. Therefore, expenses related to the participation in the working group meetings and expenses of working group experts delegated by the Parties will be typically covered by the Governments of the respective countries.

The participation of a limited number of non-governmental organizations from the Carpathians in the working group on sustainable tourism that otherwise would not be able to attend the meetings of the working group may be supported by CEEWEB through the INTERREG III B CADSES Project '*Protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians in a transnational framework*'.