

Planning and coordination Proposal

For use of national allocations from the "Swiss Contribution to EU Enlargement" for the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and (in future) Romania for activities of common interest for the practical implementation of the Carpathian Convention and Carpathian Network of Protected Areas

Background:

Development of the Carpathian Convention and the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas has been financed to date through the Carpathian Project, co-financed by the EU, the Italian Government, and other sources; through the 2012 Protected Areas Programme co-financed by the MAVA Foundation and WWF; as well as the Italian Government and other sources. As these sources are ending or are projected to end in the next years, the question is how to fund continuing activities and implementation related to the Carpathian Convention and the CNPA in future – particularly those activities that are of common interest and require some common organisation or at least coordination.

Funding is potentially available from a number of sources, not least from the EU through the Structural Funds and Financial Instrument for Environment (LIFE+). The Carpathian Convention is specifically mentioned in the funding priorities for the Swiss Enlargement Contribution in Poland, Slovakia and Hungary. Funds are also available e.g. from the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms as well.

Unfortunately, some of the most promising funding sources are only available under national allocations. The Swiss and EEA/Norwegian Funds, for example, could be used to support international activities related to the Carpathian Convention, but the funding for this must come from the allocation from individual eligible countries – thus, e.g., while it is possible to gain Swiss funding for organising the annual conference of the CNPA, including travel support for participants from all Carpathian countries, the funding for this would have to come from one of the national allocations – e.g. Slovakia would have to use the Slovak allocation on behalf of all others. Unfortunately, there is no supra-national allocation available for international projects.

Therefore, in order to be able to tap these funds to support common activities and priorities, some coordination and agreement among the parties to the Carpathian Convention will be needed, ideally with some form of “burden sharing”.

Vision

Available funds provided through the Swiss Contribution to EU Enlargement and other relevant funds will be targeted at projects which will contribute to preserve or restore the nature and biodiversity values in the Carpathian EcoRegion and to strengthen trans-national cooperation which will in turn contribute to a stronger network of well-managed landscapes.

I. Common priorities in need of central organisation/delivery

The following work packages are of common interest to the parties to the Carpathian Convention and to a greater or lesser extent need to be centrally organised and/or delivered.

Carpathian Convention – Implementation

- Regular meetings of the Carpathian Convention implementation group
- Consultancies e.g. to prepare reports or studies required by the implementation group
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Carpathian Ecological Network:

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The Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA):

- Organisation of annual conferences
- Regular meetings of steering committee and working groups of the CNPA
- Capacity building/training for Protected Area managers across the Carpathians (e.g. to develop common capacity building/training programmes and standards)
- Management planning (e.g. developing common management standards/guidelines for the Carpathians as a whole)
- Promotion and awareness raising of the Carpathians and Protected Areas (e.g. including administration and development of website and common materials)

Ideally, these priority activities would be delivered by one party on behalf of all others – i.e. eligible Carpathian countries would take responsibility for part or all of the work packages on behalf of all Carpathian countries, building these components into the projects that they submit for funding from the Swiss or other funding sources.

Examples:

- Poland, with agreement of other parties to the Carpathian Convention, might take responsibility for supporting activities related to the meetings and activities of the implementation committee of the Carpathian Convention. In this case, Poland would include support for these activities, including e.g. travel and meeting costs of representatives not only of Poland but also of all other Carpathian countries, in a proposal submitted for funding from the Swiss or other funding sources allocated to Poland.
- Similarly, Slovakia, again with the agreement of other parties to the Convention, might take responsibility for supporting some of the activities of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas, including e.g. annual conferences and regular meetings of the steering committee. In this case, Slovakia would include support for these activities in a proposal submitted for funding from the Swiss funds allocated for Slovakia. The proposal would include support e.g. for travel and meeting costs not only for Slovak participants in the annual conference of the CNPA, but also of participants from other Carpathian countries as well.

II. Common priorities where coordination may be useful

Some other activities may not require central organisation and delivery, but could profit from some coordination among countries. For example, parallel projects in more than one

country focused on tourism might not necessarily require coordination (they would be feasible in one country alone) but might nevertheless profit from some coordination, e.g. to develop and implement common standards for ecotourism.

Priority activities of this type might include:

- Capacity building and training for Protected Area managers
- Tourism/ecotourism development and promotion
- Management planning for protected areas (e.g. especially in a trans-boundary context and for wide-ranging species such as large carnivores)
- Valuation studies for protected areas and ecosystem benefits (e.g. to exchange know how and experience between valuation studies in different countries or to agree on common methodologies in those Carpathian countries where such studies are being undertaken).
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Some coordination and possibly joint planning may be beneficial between national proposals sharing some of these or other activities.

Proposed next steps:

- National focal points for the Carpathian Convention review the common priorities in need of central organisation proposed under section I. above and suggest anything that might be missing.
- National focal points review their own priorities and possibilities to take responsibility for one or more of these activities and include them in a project to be submitted for funding from the Swiss or other funding sources.
- National focal points to determine what institution/s or organisation/s should develop and implement the national funding proposal (e.g. Ministry, Protected Area authority or agency, or NGO).
- Division of these activities and responsibilities to be discussed at the next meeting of the Steering Committee for the Carpathian Convention to take place in Sibiu in early April and if possible agreed among all parties.
- Where possible, national proposals are then prepared that incorporate the agreed common international activities.

Facilitation and support:

The WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme is willing and able to help UNEP ISCC to facilitate coordination between the parties to the Carpathian Convention in this matter and to provide practical support for preparing the project proposals in relevant countries if this

is needed and desired. Please note that as an Austrian-registered organisation, WWF-DCP cannot itself benefit from these funding sources.