



Romania Report - Consultations for Carpathian Heritage

The *Cultural Centre of Harghita County* organized the conference “*Our Cultural Heritage in the Carpathians*” connected with the programme of the Pro Conventia Carpatica Association on 5th March 2008. This project was initiated in seven Carpathian countries by ANPED (Northern Alliance for Sustainability), which is an environmental network with 109 NGO members.

The participants of the stakeholders’ meeting were experts in different fields from Harghita County – ethnographers, architects, archeologists, micro-region managers, experts working in the civil sphere (List of Participants in Appendix No. 1). During the day the participants tried to list the most important problems of cultural heritage in the county, and to find possible solutions, “good practices” and new opportunities to address the situation.

Format of the Conference

10.00 – 11.00 Opening the Conference, welcome and introductory lecture

The Conference was opened by Angéla Ferencz, manager of the Cultural Centre of Harghita County. Following her welcome, István Sidó, the Executive Manager of the Pro Conventia Carpatica Association introduced the Association and set out the achievements of the programme so far. He briefly outlined the **11th article** of the **Carpathian Convention**, the steps to be made, and the expected results of the programme to the participants.

The lecture of Tibor Csergő, Manager of the “Tarisznyás Márton” Museum, entitled “Reconstruction of a water-mill” followed. He introduced to the listeners a programme on the study of mills, which, following a survey of the watermills and saws in the Gheorgheni Basin, resulted in the building of a new sawmill, based on an old pattern by local experts and foreign volunteers. During the reconstruction of the new sawmill they took into consideration and applied traditional methods and tools, under the supervision of local craftsmen. This lecture presented a good way of solving the problem of vanishing cultural heritage in the region.

11.00 – 14.00 Morning workshops

Following the lecture, the moderators of the two work-teams briefly outlined the agenda. The participants divided into two groups and, after a short break, the workshops started. The participants of one of the work-teams had a discussion concerning the topic “*Our built and material heritage in the Carpathians*” with the archeologist István Botár moderating it. The other workteam discussed the topic of “*Our intellectual heritage*” with the guidance of the ethnographer Zoltán Miklós.

The morning session primarily included the interpretation of the topics and notions as well as identifying problems. Both teams discussed the close connection between intellectual and material values and the still functioning traditional lifestyle. This was followed by the discussion of the problems related to heritage protection, outlining “good” and “bad” examples at the local, county and national level. The work-team discussing intellectual

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heritage had undertaken fieldwork in Harghita County before and prepared a short list of traditions, local folklore less or gradually endangered by present changes of attitude and lifestyle.

16.00 – 18.00 Afternoon workshops

The afternoon activities of the two teams slightly differed in terms of the methods they used. In the **intellectual heritage workshop**, the participants discussed the problems of support for heritage protection. It was expressed that there is no applied ethnography expert formation and no such department in the local councils in our country. Thus, the local councils cannot act on behalf of heritage protection on its merits: support can only be given to it in a very few places. A greater role should be assumed by the civil sphere in this field, but their financial possibilities are limited and they depend on applications. Finally, some successful programmes promoting heritage protection in the region were taken into account.

In the **material heritage workshop** stress was laid upon archeological and historic monument protection issues. The participants tried to outline the possible solutions. In the course of the debate it turned out that there is no information exchange among experts and institutions : communication is missing. Certain research programmes run parallelly, and are full of overlaps. It was raised that declaring an object a monument does not solve the problem and it does not mean protection to the object. It would be more efficient if the local community felt an inner urge and responsibility for protecting their own monuments. This responsibility is not undertaken by local governments and authorities either.

18.00 – 19.00 Summaries

At the end of the day the two moderators summed up the conclusions of the parallelly running workshops and presented them to the participants. Both workshops stressed the role of education in heritage protection as well as the fact that local governments, legislators and executors would also have a significant role in it.