



**CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
TO THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON THE
PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE CARPATHIANS**

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**SECOND MEETING
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Item 6 of the provisional annotated agenda

Cooperation with other conventions and international bodies

Report of the Secretariat

Summary

The present report has been prepared pursuant to Conference of the Parties decision **COP1/14** on the *Cooperation with other conventions and international bodies* and provides information on progress in the implementation of the decision.

Background

The Carpathian Convention in its negotiation phase greatly benefited from the experience of the Alpine Convention and was strongly supported by an Alpine-Carpathian partnership, as well as by the Alpine countries.

With this spirit and to underline the importance of the cooperation with other international conventions the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention decided to “welcome and encourage exchange of information and cooperation with relevant international organizations, MEAs and other entities active in the areas of focus of the Carpathian Convention” and welcomed the signature of Memoranda of Understanding with the Alpine Convention, the Central European Initiative (CEI), the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative (CERI) and the Ramsar Convention.

Moreover, the COP1 requested “the interim Secretariat to continue to prepare and conclude Memoranda of Cooperation with other interested international organizations, MEAs and other entities active in the areas of focus of the Carpathian Convention”.

Implementation

On the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding signed at the First Conference of the Parties, the Secretariats of the two conventions met twice within the year 2007 for an exchange of information and for the preparation of future joint activities. The cooperation between the two Conventions is supported by several Alpine Countries (Austria, France, Germany, Italy) at different levels. The Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) received important support from the Alpine Network of Protected Areas; the Working Group on Cultural Heritage, as well as the Working Group on Sustainable Transport received strong support from the experience of the Alpine countries. The activities are going to be further developed and the Secretariats will ensure the necessary coordination.

On the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding signed at the First Meeting of the Parties the Executive Secretariat of the Central European Initiative (CEI-ES) and the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention met on several occasions. The CEI-ES co-sponsored through EURAC the work of the Working Group on Sustainable Transport and participated to the meetings of this working group. The activities are going to be further developed and the Secretariats will ensure the necessary coordination.

The Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative actively supported the implementation of the Carpathian Convention, especially the activities undertaken under the Working Group on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity: the negotiation and finalization of the Draft Protocol on Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity; building a Carpathian Biodiversity Information System (through the BBI Matra Project) which further contributes to develop a Carpathian Ecological Network; other activities under Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) and Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI). A detailed report submitted to the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee is contained in Annex of the present report.

The fruitful collaboration between the Carpathian Convention and the Ramsar Convention based on the Memorandum of Cooperation endorsed by the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties has been carried out and further developed especially through the activities of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI), which aims to operate as a Regional Initiative within the framework of the Ramsar Convention.

Following decision COP1/14 paragraph 7, the interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Alpine Convention prepared and negotiated with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) a Memorandum of Cooperation (see Annex) which provides a useful tool of cooperation between the Conventions and underlines the importance of these regional agreements for the concrete implementation of the CBD. The interim Secretariat presented the draft Memorandum of Cooperation to the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (2-4 April 2008, Sibiu, Romania) which recommended its signature on the occasion of the Ninth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (29 May 2008, Bonn, Germany).

Mountain Partnership

Background

The Mountain Partnership is a voluntary alliance of partners dedicated to improving the lives of mountain people and protecting mountain environments around the world.

The Carpathian Declaration on the occasion of the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (11-13 December 2006, Kyiv, Ukraine) stated that the Parties to the Carpathian Convention appreciate the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions (“Mountain Partnership”) as an important platform for cooperation and experience-sharing between mountain regions of the world.

In its decision COP1/17 the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties welcomed the initiatives undertaken in regions aiming at the protection and sustainable development of trans-boundary mountain ranges and reiterated the readiness of the Carpathian Convention partners to continue to share experiences in the development of mountain related partnerships and frameworks.

Implementation

The Carpathian Convention in its negotiation phase greatly benefited from the experience of the Alpine countries and of the Alpine Convention and was strongly supported by an Alpine-Carpathian partnership. Their cooperation represented a very concrete example of partnership in mountain regions and was recognized as a model for other regions of the world during the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 when the Mountain Partnership was launched.

Since then, several activities of the Carpathian Convention are taking place in the framework of the Mountain Partnership and the Carpathian Convention’s activities were presented at several meetings in that framework as an example for other mountain regions.

Moreover, other regions of the world (e.g. the Andes and the Balkans) are considering the possibility to develop similar regional agreements or cooperation for the protection and sustainable development of their mountains and they are doing this by exchanging their experiences with the Alps and the Carpathians in the framework of the Mountain Partnership.

The United Nations Environmental Programme – Vienna Office is the hub of the Environmental Reference Centre of the Mountain Partnership Secretariat and, inter alia, effectively linked the activities of the Convention with the Mountain Partnership’s activities.

In the last years, the Alpine Convention joined itself the partnership and the first Carpathian Declaration appreciated “the International Partnership for Sustainable Development in Mountain Regions (“Mountain Partnership”) as an important platform for cooperation and experience-sharing between mountain regions of the world”.

Possible action taken by the Conference of the Parties

Decision COP2/11

Agenda item 6

Cooperation with other conventions and international bodies

The Conference of the Parties

1. welcomes the fruitful cooperation between the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention, inter alia in the fields of biodiversity, forestry, sustainable transport, cultural heritage and environmental information and recommends to enhance cooperation in the fields of public relations and joint approaches to the European Commission, to invite the full participation of the European Community in both Convention frameworks;
2. welcomes the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention, and recommends to make enhanced efforts for implementation of the programmes of work on mountain biodiversity and on protected areas;
3. appreciates the fruitful cooperation between the Executive Secretariat of the Central European Initiative (CEI) and the interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, and recommends to further enhance cooperation in development of joint projects, inter alia in the field of sustainable transport;
4. welcomes the fruitful cooperation between the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative (CERI) and the interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, and recommends enhanced cooperation in supporting the future implementation of the Biodiversity Protocol;
5. welcomes the fruitful cooperation between the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention and the interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, in particular on the Carpathian Wetlands Initiative, and calls for increased cooperation in particular concerning implementation of pilot activities for integrating land and water use in the Tisza River Basin;
6. welcomes the fruitful cooperation with UNESCO on cultural heritage and traditional knowledge, with FAO on sustainable agriculture and rural development as well as on sustainable forest management, with UNDP and ICPDR on the Tisza river GEF project, and with UNIDO on renewable energy in the Carpathians;
7. welcomes the fruitful cooperation with the Aarhus Convention, in particular concerning the implementation of the Almaty Guidelines on Promoting the Application of the Principles of the Aarhus Convention in International Forums, and request the Presidency to make a presentation on the progress made to the COP of the Aarhus Convention;
8. requests the (interim) Secretariat to continue to prepare and conclude Memoranda of Cooperation with other interested international organizations, MEAs and other entities active in the areas of focus of the Carpathian Convention;

9. requests the Presidency to notify the Mountain Partnership of the wish of the Parties to enlist the Convention as a member of the Partnership, and invites Parties to the Convention, which have not yet done so, to join the Mountain Partnership.