



PRESS RELEASE

Carpathian Convention signs Tourism Protocol based on CBD Guidelines, Ramsar Convention involved in similar effort

Montreal, 28 June 2011 – On 27 May 2011, the seven Parties to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine) signed a protocol on sustainable tourism in Bratislava, Slovakia, that uses as its basis the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development.

Article 26 of The Forestry Protocol under the Carpathian Convention promotes the integration of the CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development in the development or review of their strategies and plans for tourism development in the Carpathians, and other related sectoral strategies, with the objective to plan, develop and manage tourism activities in an ecological, economic and socially sustainable manner.

Setting an example that can leverage other multilateral and regional agreements, Parties to the Carpathian Convention committed themselves to promoting synergies relevant to the CBD Guidelines with the Aarhus Convention, the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on Migratory Species, the World Heritage Convention, the United Nations Framework Convention to Combat Climate Change, the European Landscape Convention, and others.

Similarly, the Ramsar Convention plans to examine a draft resolution on tourism and wetlands at the next meeting of its Conference of the Parties, to be held in Bucharest in June 2012. Tourism was chosen by the Ramsar Convention as the theme for the 2012 World Wetlands Day on 2 February 2012. Again working with the CBD Secretariat, IUCN, WWF and United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Ramsar's Scientific and Technical Review Panel is addressing tourism issues for wetlands based on the experience of the CBD Guidelines, and is jointly preparing communication materials and technical brochures for the World Wetlands Day campaign on sustainable tourism.

In preparatory documents, Ramsar's Scientific and Technical Review Panel highlights the particular value and importance of Ramsar Sites as internationally important tourism attractions, recognizes the value of wetland tourism in conservation and wise use of wetlands, calls attention to the impacts of national tourism policies and plans on wetland ecosystem services as well as those of wetland-related tourism infrastructure and activities on wetlands, and commits to building on the examples of the CBD guidelines and involve other Conventions.

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, sent a congratulatory letter to the President of the Carpathian Conference of the Parties, Slovak Minister of Environment, Mr. Jozsef Nagy, and to Mr. Harald Egerer, Interim Secretary of the Vienna office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

In his letter, Mr. Djoghlaif stated:

“Given the scenic, natural and cultural diversity in the Carpathians, tourism is a key element for its sustainable development, and a force for the preservation of its natural and cultural heritage for future generations, as recognized by Article 9 of your Convention. The Secretariat of the CBD is very pleased to learn that a sister convention has developed and adopted such a protocol based on the experience of the CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development, and supported, as was the CBD, by the UNWTO as the reference United Nations organization on this topic.

“I invite the Parties to the Carpathian Convention, and all Parties to the CBD, to highlight the recently adopted Protocol at upcoming meetings of the CBD, and also invite them to report on synergies and the joint application of both multilateral environmental agreements’ (MEAs) policy tools. I also commend the Parties to the Ramsar Convention, with the support of UNWTO and the SCBD, and now with the support of the Carpathian Convention, for their efforts to guide and to collaborate so that lessons learned and experiences benefit our Parties.”

Other multilateral environmental agreements, such as the World Heritage Convention, have already developed, in collaboration with UNWTO, UNEP and the CBD Secretariat, guidelines and capacity-building activities on tourism in and around sites listed by the Convention.

Notes for Editors

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 193 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is a subsidiary agreement to the Convention. It seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 160 countries plus the European Union have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Secretariat of the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol is located in Montreal. For more information visit: www.cbd.int.

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