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5 – 7 Dec. 2012

Original : English

## FOURTH CARPATHIAN CONVENTION IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

### PROGRESS REPORT BY THE INTERIM SECRETARIAT<sup>1</sup>

#### DECISION COP3/1

*Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity  
Article 4 of the Carpathian Convention*

**Para 4. Welcomes the approval of and pledges its support to the “BIOREGIO Carpathians” project, that aims at implementing the main provisions of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity.**

Several activities related to the implementation of the European Transnational Cooperation South East Europe **BIOREGIO Carpathians** project ([www.bioregio-carpathians.eu](http://www.bioregio-carpathians.eu)), aimed at implementing the main provisions of the Carpathian Convention Biodiversity Protocol, have been developed despite a delay of about one year (it started in January 2012 instead of January 2011) due to the late signature of the project subsidy contract. This delay was mainly due to administrative issues related to the participation of the two 20%ERDF partners that are not part of the South East Europe Programme Area (Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection of Czech Republic and Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of Nature Conservation) and to some changes in the project partnership (replacement of the 10% PP1 State Agency for Protected Areas of Ukraine with Carpathian Biosphere Reserve and change of status of Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection of Czech Republic from 20% ERDF PP to 20% Associated Strategic Partner financed by UNEP Vienna – ISCC). Also

<sup>1</sup> The Secretariat includes UNEP Vienna – ISCC and EURAC representing office Vienna (EURAC expert team – ISCC) members

the participation of the Polish partner is under discussion because of problems related to the pre – financing and the project is at risk of decommitment due to the low level of expenditures. More active participation of some of the project partners is necessary in order to avoid or limit the decommitment of the funds. The project will end in June 2014.

The Secretariat played a very important role in the project since the beginning of the project.

The Secretariat is responsible for the WP 2 (Communication activities) and WP 7 (Intergovernmental Platform and stakeholders involvement), assisted the project lead Partner, Piatra Craiului National Park, in the management of the project and actively contribute to the other WPs.

As WP 2 Leader it has delivered several outputs, such as the project communication plan and the project website, and presented the project at the SEE Annual Conference in Bologna at the end of June 2012, where BIOREGIO was one of the eight projects selected for presentation at the Conference. In addition to this the Secretariat contributed to the elaboration of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Report (“National achievements and challenges related to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention” - document Inf.1), developed by EURAC Institute for Regional Development and Location Management. The document summarizes the main acts, initiatives and projects related to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention since 2007 and underlines what are the main achievements and challenges for the future.

As WP 7 Leader it co - organized the first stakeholders meeting in Duna Ipoly National Park together with the Park Administration and WWF DCP, had regular contacts with stakeholders and Carpathian governmental representatives, and organized the relevant Carpathian Convention meetings (Carpathian Convention Biodiversity and Sustainable Forest Management Working Groups, organized respectively in Banska Bystrica and Doni Milanovac, Serbia, in end of March and April 2012)

In particular, during the **Carpathian Convention Biodiversity Working Group (WG)**, - organized by the Secretariat and the local partner State Nature Conservancy of Slovak Republic (SNCSR) in March 2012 in Banska Bystrica, Slovakia - the proposed draft methodologies of the of the Carpathian Red List of Species and Habitats and List of Invasive Alien Species developed within BIOREGIO Carpathians WP 3 were agreed between WG members. The possible support from the WG members to the elaboration of the lists it was also agreed.

The last version of the methodologies and of the ToRs for the experts involved in the elaboration of the list are contained in the document Inf.2.

During the meeting it was also proposed by the Secretariat to elaborate a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the interested organisations for the establishment of a Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System interlinking existing information systems and those that will be developed within the BIOREGIO Carpathians project. It was agreed that initially the MoU will be signed by UNEP Vienna - ISCC, European Academy Bolzano (EURAC), DAPHNE, SNCSR, WWF DCP, GRID Warsaw, NFC, but

will be opened to other partners and its scope can be widened to other topics than biodiversity. The updated draft MoU (document Inf. 3) was circulated to the involved partners for feedbacks and the revised version of the document with the received comments will be circulated in due time.

Furthermore the representatives of the Secretariat presented the proposed draft format of the Biodiversity Protocol Implementation Report. The final version of the format – document Doc.1 - was developed on the basis of the comments and inputs provided by the WG members and other meeting participants during and after the meeting. It was agreed that an online version of the report format will be developed and will be submitted to the next Biodiversity WG meeting for discussion.

The next Biodiversity WG meeting (that will be held in the first half of 2013) should approve the final online version of the report format, to discuss the interim results of the BIOREGIO Carpathians project and possible follow – up projects to be submitted under the next EU Financial Programmes.

***CCIC decisions:***

Takes note of the draft format of the Biodiversity Protocol Implementation Report and requests the Carpathian Convention Biodiversity Working Group to further discuss the document as well;

Requests the Parties to provide comments before 31 January 2013 to the Secretariat;

Requests the Working Group to propose the report format and the reporting intervals for the consideration by the COP 4, through the CCIC;

Requests Parties, upon submission by the SNCSR of the documents agreed at the Sixth Carpathian Convention Biodiversity Working Group held in Banska Bystrica Slovakia on 26 – 27 March 2012, to provide available information to SNCSR for the elaboration of the Carpathian Red List of Species and Habitats and List of Invasive Alien Species;

Requests Parties, upon submission by the other BIOREGIO Carpathians partners of the needed documents, to provide available information to the partners for the development of the project outputs of their responsibility;

Invites Parties, if needed to contact the BIOREGIO Carpathians project partners in their respective countries in order to ensure their commitment in fulfilling their project tasks.

**Para 9. Encourages the use of the Carpathian Protected Areas Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool as useful tool to support the implementation of the Carpathian Convention Biodiversity Protocol and Carpathian Network of Protected Areas activities and Convention Biodiversity Programme of Work on Protected Areas.**

On March 2012, back to back the WG Meeting on Biodiversity, the **Carpathian Network of Protected Areas Steering Committee (CNPA SC) meeting** was organized. During the meeting the first draft of the Programme of the 2<sup>nd</sup> CNPA Conference (to be organized within BIOREGIO Carpathians WP 3 from 23 to 26 April 2012 in, Tatranská Javorina Slovakia) was discussed how CNPA SC members can contribute to the elaboration of the Common Integrated Management Measures to be elaborated under WP 4 of the BIOREGIO Carpathians project.

Furthermore the GEF Medium Size Project (MSP) “Improving the financial sustainability of the Carpathian System of Protected Areas” was presented and the meeting participants were informed about the possibility to finance within the project a group of experts from the Carpathian countries (Core Expert Group) in order to create a permanent cooperation framework on financing Protected Areas.

The Core Expert Group designed members are: Romania – Mr. Alin Birda (Maramuresului Mountains Nature Park), Slovakia – Ms. Zuzana Okanikova – (State Nature Conservancy), Hungary – Ms. Katalin Sipos (Duna Ipoly National Park). The following members have to be confirmed: Serbia – Mr. Zarko Vojanic (Ministry of Environment, Mining and Spatial Planning), Ukraine – Ms. Anastasia Drapaluk (Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine). Poland and Czech Republic have not designed their members yet.

The next **CNPA SC meeting** – organized by the Secretariat in Vienna International Centre on 5th of November 2012 - was focused mainly on the Draft Programme of the CNPA Conference, which will be organized together with the BIOREGIO Carpathians Mid Term Conference. The updated version of the Programme based on the discussion held at the meeting is contained in document Inf. 4. The meeting participants agreed that the invitation to the Conference with the Programme should be sent at the beginning of the January 2013.

The Secretariat proposed to hire a part-time consultant in order to establish and support the CNPA Unit for a temporary period. The consultant could be in Vienna or in any of the Carpathian countries. Slovakia and Romania showed their interest in making an offer. The proposal from Slovakia is contained in document Inf. 5.

Finally during the meeting the Common Integrated Management Measures (CIMM) and Regional Development Opportunities structure reports elaborated within the BIOREGIO Carpathians WP 4 were discussed by the meeting participants.

***CCIC decisions:***

Requests the BIOREGIO Carpathians project to assist the Secretariat in servicing the CNPA.

**Para 10. Welcomes the work and activities of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative in support of the implementation of the Biodiversity Protocol, welcomes the ongoing**

**cooperation with the Ramsar Convention and urges Parties to take appropriate action on the effective protection and sustainable use of Carpathian wetlands.**

The Secretariat participated in the **European Ramsar Meeting** on 27-30 September 2011 in Trnava, Slovakia, where presented the Carpathian Convention activities and in particular the BIOREGIO Carpathians project as an example of cooperation between the Carpathian Convention (CC) and the Carpathian Wetland Initiative.

Furthermore The Secretariat had regular contacts and exchange of information with State Nature Conservancy of Slovak Republic (SNCSR), leading the **Carpathian Wetland Initiative**.

**DECISION COP3/2**

*Spatial development*

*Article 5 of the Carpathian Convention*

**Para 4. Supports the implementation and calls for the further development of the Strategic Action Plan for the Carpathian Area, providing tangible benefits to the Carpathian regions, as an important contribution to the European Strategy for the Danube Region, and recommends the use of the Strategic Action Plan to be considered in discussions within existing and future European Union macroregional strategies and programmes.**

**Para 6. Invites the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, and the Euroregions located in the Carpathians, to support the process.**

**Para 7. Appreciates the support of the Association of Elected Representatives from Mountain Regions and of the Association of European Border Regions in the process and invites their further cooperation.**

The Secretariat presented the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the Carpathian Area at the **General Assembly of the European Association of Elected Representatives from Mountain Regions held in Covilha**, Portugal, in April 2012 and at the two editions of the Conference “Europe of the Carpathians” organized in Krynica, Poland (see paragraph below for further information on the two Conferences in Krynica), in order to inform the high level representatives of the EU and Carpathian national and regional authorities about the priority actions of the Carpathian Convention for discussion on next EU Financial Programmes and possible future macroregional strategies.

The SAP and the related list of priority actions for the Carpathian Convention – document Inf. 6 - were also sent to the **Joint Technical Secretariat for the South East Europe Programme** for discussion on the future European Territorial Cooperation Programme in the next EU Financial Period.

Furthermore the Secretariat made a request to the Vice – President of the **Committee of the Regions (CoR)**, Ms. Bresso, to organize a Workshop on a possible future EU macroregional Strategy for the Carpathian Region together with the Spatial Development Working Group at the CoR. The President of the CoR, Mr. Valcárcel Siso, positively replied to this request and gave the patronage to the event that will be organised next year. The intention is to present at the Workshop the SAP and the parts of the EUSDR relevant for the Carpathians as a basis for the development of a EU macro regional strategy for the Carpathian Region. The main objective would be to find support among the Carpathian regions representatives for the promotion of an Opinion of the CoR to be submitted to the European Commission supporting the development of such Strategy.

**Para 5. Emphasizes the importance of full involvement of and support to this process by all relevant stakeholders, in particular the competent national authorities, regional and local authorities as well as civil society and private sector.**

The Secretariat attended the **first edition of the Conference “Europe of the Carpathians”** organized in Krynica, Poland, on 7 – 8 September 2011, within the 21st Economic Forum in Poland. The Conference was organized at initiative of the Vice-Marshall of the Sejm (the Lower House of the Parliament of Poland), Mr. Marek Kuchcinski. The main aims of the Conference were to promote cross-border and international cooperation between European countries in mountain regions, for deepened cooperation between Carpathian states, as well as the need for this process to be properly reflected in EU policy and financial decisions.

The Secretariat made an opening presentation of the event, to present the Carpathian region, the CC as the framework for international cooperation, and the large impact this sub-regional MEA is having on macroregional strategies at the EU level.

One of the main outcomes of the Conference was the Carpathian Memorandum - document Inf. 7 - prepared and circulated by Poland, which encourages the accession of the European Union to the Carpathian Convention (DECISION COP3/10, Para. 5).

During the Conference Poland signed both the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management and on Sustainable Tourism to the Carpathian Convention.

The Secretariat participated in the **second edition of the “Europe of the Carpathians” Conference** held always in Krynica, Poland, on 05 September 2012. Similarly to the first edition the Conference was organized at initiative of the Vice-Marshall of the Sejm, Mr. Kuchcinski.

One of the main objective of the Conference was to table recommendation for improving the efficiency of European mechanisms supporting development of mountain regions, taking into account the role of new EU budget perspective for 2014 – 2020 (the Conference outcomes are contained in document Inf. 8)



The Secretariat made a speech in the session on the Carpathian Convention and sustainable development of the Carpathians presenting the main activities developed within the Convention in the last years and underlining the importance of the elaboration of a EU macroregional Strategy for the Carpathian Region and of the accession of the EU to the Convention and related activities in order to strengthen the role of the Carpathians in EU policies. Furthermore the idea of the Workshop on the Carpathian Strategy at the Committee of the Regions in Brussels was promoted.

As a follow – up of the Conference the Secretariat will send to Mr. Kuchcinski suggestions for further action on the promotion of the Carpathian Strategy process among the Carpathian Parliaments, of the EU accession to the Carpathian Convention to the Polish Permanent Representation in Brussels, and of the possible accession of Carpathian Countries not yet members of the next European Territorial Cooperation Programme for the South East Europe Area (that probably will be more linked to the EU Strategy for the Danube Region) in order to have all the Carpathian countries in such a strategic EU financial instrument.

During the **Alpine – Carpathian Cooperation Forum** – organized by the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion in Poland, in cooperation with the Association for the Development of Podkarpacie “ProCarpathia” - held in Rzeszow, Poland from 14 to 16 September 2012, the Secretariat made a statement on the importance of a possible future EU macroregional Strategy for the Carpathian Region to foster sustainable regional development. Even so the Carpathian Convention is not directly involved in the organization, it still contributed to the creation of this important event, as already in the year 2007 the Carpathian countries – in the framework of the Carpathian Convention – strongly supported the initiative to include a funding area targeting the implementation of the Carpathian Convention into the national Swiss-financed programmes in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia (the outcomes of the Forum are contained in document Inf. 9).

***CCIC decisions:***

Requests the Secretariat and the Parties, as appropriate, to promote the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the Carpathian Area adopted by COP 3 and its priority actions for the Carpathians in relevant meetings at EU and international level.

**DECISION COP3/3**

*Sustainable and integrated water/river basin management  
Article 6 of the Carpathian Convention*

**Para 1. Welcomes the concluded mutual observership between the Danube River Protection Convention and the Carpathian Convention.**

The Secretariat had regular contacts and exchange of information with ICPDR on the respective activities (e.g. activities related to the implementation of the EU Strategy for

the Danube Region) and actively participated in the **First and Third ICPDR Meeting Team of Experts on Hydropower** held in Vienna on 15 July 2012 and 9-10 October 2012 and on the **ICPDR Danube Climate Adaptation Workshop** held on 29-30 March 2012 in Munich, Germany.

**Para 3. And welcomes the Joint Declaration between the Danube River Protection Convention and the Carpathian Convention supporting the sustainable development of the Carpathians and Tisza River Basin adopted in Uzhgorod on 11 April 2011, and encourages enhanced joint programming with International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River.**

The Secretariat attended the **19th Tisza Group meeting**, organized by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) and held in Vienna International Center from 1 to 2 October 2012. During the meeting the “Joint Declaration of the ICPDR Tisza Group and the Framework Convention on the Protection and the Sustainable Development of the Carpathians represented by the UNEP Vienna –Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention on the sustainable development of the Tisza River Basin” (Tisza River Basin Joint Declaration) was presented and discussed among the Tisza River Group, ICPDR and the Secretariat members.

The updated version of the Declaration, as agreed at the meeting, was circulated to the Tisza Group members and the CC NFPs for feedbacks and a revised version of the document was elaborated (document Doc.2).

***CCIC decisions:***

Welcomes the revised version of the Tisza River Basin Joint Declaration, considers it as final, and mandates the Secretariat to sign it.

**DECISION COP3/4**

*Sustainable agriculture, rural development and forestry  
Article 7 of the Carpathian Convention*

**Para. 1. Expresses its gratitude to Parties and relevant institutions, including Forest Europe (formerly Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe) and the Padua University for their support to the development of the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, and encourages further cooperation with special regard to research activities.**

**Para 5. Welcomes the initiative of the establishment of the Carpathian Inventory of Virgin Forests.**

**Para 6. Requests the interim Secretariat to coordinate the preparation of a Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Forest**

**Management, taking into account the work done under the auspices of the Working Group.**

During the **Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Forest Management meeting** – organized by the Secretariat and local partner Djerdap National Park in Donji Milanovac, Serbia from 23 to 24 April 2012 – the draft Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management (Forest Protocol SAP) was presented by the Secretariat. Next the draft Forest Protocol SAP was discussed by the meeting participants, some changes were proposed and a new version of the document was produced and circulated for further comments. The updated version of the document with integrated the received comments (document Inf. 10) will be discussed at the next WG meeting foreseen in September 2013 in Poland.

Furthermore the participants agreed that WWF DCP will prepare draft common criteria for definition of virgin forests within the group of experts established within the BIOREGIO Carpathians WP 4 to be discussed at a next WG meeting.

Two main objectives of the next WG meeting should be to reach a final agreement by the WG members on the Forest Protocol SAP to be adopted by the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (COP 4) in 2014 and to discuss the draft common criteria for definition of virgin forests in order to plan next steps for the elaboration of a Carpathian inventory of virgin forests.

**Para 7. Adopts the revised Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development and calls for the development of a Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development.**

The Secretariat participated in the **Workshop for the creation and promotion of a Carpathian brand** for local products held in Lviv on 11 November 2011 and organized by the Swiss Federal institute for organic agriculture (FIBL). The meeting has been attended by 60 participants coming from different cities and rural areas in Ukraine along with NGOs and governmental representatives from the Ukrainian Ministry of the Environment and international development agencies based in Kiev.

The representatives of FIBL presented the results of the socio-economic survey, funded by the Swiss cooperation Agency, that had been conducted in different Carpathian areas within Ukraine. In the afternoon, three different working groups on food, non food and services took place in order to discuss a tentative list of products that would better represent the culture, traditions and expertise of local producers in the Carpathians.

In the same session, the Secretariat presented the structure and functioning of the Carpathian Convention and its possible involvement in the promotion of a local brand on the Carpathian products. Moreover, the Secretariat presented its further activities in the field of sustainable tourism and mountain management, e.g. the participation and organization of the Verbier's World Mountain Forum (9-11 December 2011).

***CCIC decisions:***

Takes note of the updated version of the Forest Protocol SAP and welcomes the initiative of WWF DCP to draft the common criteria for the definition of the Carpathian virgin forests, to be subsequently discussed by the Working Group.

**DECISION COP3/5**

*Sustainable transport and infrastructure, Industry and energy  
Article 8 of the Carpathian Convention, Article 10 of the Carpathian  
Convention*

**Para 1. Adopts the revised Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure, and calls for the development of a Protocol on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure.**

From 18 to 19 October, the **Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure Meeting** was held in Košice, Slovakia and was organized by the Secretariat within the Access2Mountain project, back to back with the project Mid Term Conference. The meeting's main purpose was to foster the development of the draft text Protocol on Sustainable Transport and Infrastructure to the Carpathian Convention. The WG members agreed to focus the scope of the Protocol on "Transport and Infrastructure" and discussed together with the other meeting participants the draft Protocol prepared by the Secretariat. The new agreed version of the document (document Inf. 11) will be circulated for further comments and discussed at the next meeting planned for early 2013. It is envisaged to have the final draft text of the Protocol by the end of 2013 and present it to the COP4 for consideration and adoption.

Several activities related to the implementation of the European Transnational Cooperation South East Europe **Access2Mountain project** ([www.access2mountain.eu](http://www.access2mountain.eu)) have been developed.

The project "Access2Mountain" aims at achieving durable, environmentally friendly tourism, as well as to ensure accessibility and connection to, between and in sensitive regions of the Alps and the Carpathians. It should benefit all (potential) users. With the long-term perspective of increasing sustainable tourist mobility, railway and multimodal connections will be improved and attractive offers created via pre-investment measures, pilot activities, and investments. It is central to the project, to transfer experiences made and knowledge gained in the Alps to the South Eastern European region. In this regard, transnational cooperation in the field of sustainable regional development plays an important role. Touristic infrastructures are to be created or improved in a sustainable manner. This paves the way for achieving international environment aims and yield competitive advantage. The project will end in June 2014.

Throughout the collaboration with EURAC, the Secretariat is directly involved in the project, mainly in Working Package 7 that focuses on the facilitation of the elaboration of the Transport Protocol. All Carpathian NFPs are observers to the project.

The representatives of the relevant Slovak and Austrian national and regional authorities as well as the leading motorway companies (ASFINAG and NDS) of both countries have signed a joint **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** which establishes the framework for future cooperation and coordinated activities in the sector of spatial planning, transport and infrastructure, agriculture and nature protection (document Inf. 12). The MoU was signed in the frame of the International Conference on the Alpine Carpathian Corridor (AKK), organized by the Secretariat in Bratislava on 30 January 2012.

The MoU has been facilitated by the Secretariat in the context of the crossborder **project Alpine Carpathian Corridor (AKK)** ([www.alpenkarpatenkorridor.at](http://www.alpenkarpatenkorridor.at)) funded under the Slovak - Austrian Crossborder Cooperation – Programme. The AKK project with the Lead Partner Government of Lower Austria - Department for Nature Protection aims to re-establish the ecological corridor between the Carpathians and the Alps in this area. In-depth research on reducing the impact of highway infrastructure for example has been conducted and results are already going to be incorporated into spatial planning instruments and investment strategies and the construction of wildlife passages. The significance and the contribution of the project has already been acknowledged at various political levels, including by the EU: for example the AKK project is seen as a flagship project of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and has received the RegioStars Awards. The project should end in December 2012, but a possible prolongation is under discussion.

#### ***CCIC decisions:***

Takes note of the results of the work of the WG on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure and appreciates the support of the Access2Mountain project;

Requests the WG on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure to focus their work until COP 4 on the elaboration of the Protocol on the topic “Sustainable transport and related infrastructure” and to encourage a wide stakeholders involvement and the adequate reflection of environmental aspects in the Protocol;

Invites Parties to nominate representatives from both environment and transport sectors to participate in the WG.

**Para 3. Encourages future cooperation activities with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization and other relevant organizations in the field of renewable energies in the Carpathians.**

The Secretariat promoted the **project “Bioenergy AC - Sharing best available technologies and promoting partnership for sustainable biomass use for energy between the Alps and the Carpathians”** under the Fourth Call of the European

Transnational Cooperation South East Europe Programme on the basis of the request of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region that calls for the reinforcement of the Carpathian Convention “to share best practices on producing and using biomass for energy purposes” and for the development of a project aimed at setting-up “ a cooperation mechanism between the Alpine and Carpathian regions for the transfer of best practices, best available technologies, as well as environmental and social know-how” in the field of bioenergy.

The project Lead partner is Regione Veneto (Italy) and strives to create a powerful cooperation mechanism interlinking the Carpathian and Alpine Regions to sharing experiences and best practices concerning the sustainable production of renewable energy from biomass. The project aims at making the Carpathians a hot spot for innovative use of sustainable energy from biomass. It aims at supporting the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, the Renewable Energy DIRECTIVE 2009/28/EC, the EU Biomass Action Plan, the Green Paper on renewable sources of Energy, the Alpine Convention Energy Protocol and will be a first milestone project in contributing to implement Art. 10 - Industry and Energy - of the Carpathian Convention and Art. 14 of the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management of the Convention. Furthermore it aims at providing a platform for technology transfer and sharing of experiences between research institutes, the public sector and other relevant stakeholders of both the Alpine and the Carpathian region. It elaborates best available cost - effective technological systems and best practices and transfers them to regions/countries lacking in implementing renewable energy policies. Concerning legislation, the project tries to push the strengthening of legislation in promoting the sustainable production of renewable energy resources through good governance methods and strives to streamline policies on renewables in the target countries. It promotes the generation of concrete projects and initiatives building up technology and innovation capacity for the promotion of renewable energy sources in line with the requirements for a sustainability scheme for energy uses of biomass that take into account the need for biomass resources to be managed in a sustainable manner.

Bioenergy AC has been approved by the competent authorities but cannot be financed due to limited funds in the SEE Programme and together with the Lead Partner Regione Veneto there is the intention to present the project under the next EU Financing Period.

The Secretariat joined a partnership for developing the **project proposal "enerSKI"("Energy Efficiency, Networking and Capacity-Building for Skiing-Resorts")** that was presented under the Call 2012 of "Intelligent Energy Europe". The main objective of the project, developed under the leadership of the Energy Agency of Podravje is to increase rational use of energy and to support the use of renewable energy in ski resorts to reduce the environmental impact of winter sports activities. The project team intends to bridge the gap between the successful demonstration of innovative approaches, and its effective, broad market uptake in order to attain leverage of public- and private-sector investment, bring down costs, increase market experience and contribute to reducing the financial- and other perceived risks and barriers that hinder this

type of investment. Unfortunately, the project missed the positive evaluation by one point and was not approved by the competent Programme authorities.

<p><b>DECISION COP3/6</b> <i>Sustainable tourism</i> <i>Article 9 of the Carpathian Convention</i></p>
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**Para 3. Welcomes the cooperation with and assistance by the UNWTO, ETE, CEEWEB, EURAC, UNEP, etc., in particular related to the development of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians and of projects aimed at its implementation**

The Secretariat participated in the development and submission of the **project “Innovations in Rural Tourism” (InRuTou)** in February 2012, which is co-financed by the European Commission.

The project will begin in February 2013 and will run until November 2015. Several Carpathian Convention partners are participating in the project: National Association for Mountains Rural Development (Romania), Ekopsychology Society (Poland) and Information Center “Green Dossier” (Ukraine).

The project aims, through developing and testing a set of electronic tools and innovative models at:

- 1) facilitating the development of sustainable tourism in rural mountainous areas, by fostering a community consultation process, and
- 2) training selected opinion leaders to act as multipliers in enhancing community tourism planning, via training existing and new local tourism operators, with various degrees of experience, professional and educational background.

The Secretariat responsibilities include promoting the project results in the Carpathian Region, organizing a networking event in Vienna, producing the project transferability manual in several languages, including Polish and Romanian, and the Final Project Publication.

Furthermore the Secretariat had regular contacts with **UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) and CEEweb** on the development of the Carpathian Tourism Strategy and other projects/initiatives related to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention Sustainable Tourism Protocol. In this regard a statement on the Carpathian Tourism Strategy addressed to the CCIC members by the CEEweb Sustainable Tourism Working Group is contained in document Inf. 13.

***CCIC decisions:***

Requests the Secretariat, subject to allocation of external funds for the project “Development of the Strategy for the future sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians”, to coordinate and facilitate actions necessary to implement the project.

**DECISION COP3/7**

*Cultural heritage and traditional knowledge  
Article 11 of the Carpathian Convention*

**Para 1. Being aware of the unique values of cultural heritage , recommends to support the creation of the Cultural Heritage Inventory and Programme of Activities.**

The Secretariat has regular contacts with UNEP/GRID-Warsaw, the Lead Partner of the “Carpathian Unite – mechanism of consultation and cooperation for implementation of the Carpathian Convention” project supported by a grant from Switzerland through the Swiss contribution to the enlarged European Union. The project aims at implementing the Carpathian Convention and its thematic Protocols in Poland. In addition to this, one of the activities implemented under the project is the elaboration of a proposal for a **Carpathian Convention Protocol on Cultural Heritage** to be submitted to COP4. At the moment, upon the completion of regional stakeholder consultations carried out by the project partner - Ekopsychologia Association, of the first draft prepared by UNEP/GRID-Warsaw, internal negotiations are ongoing on the Polish side for the finalization of the proposal of a draft Protocol for consideration and further elaboration by the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge. For this purpose, the “Carpathians Unite” project offered to support the organization of a meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge, preliminarily planned for 14 – 16 May 2013 in the Polish part of the Carpathians.

The Secretariat actively participated in the “Carpathians Unite” Project Steering Committee meeting held on 28 September 2012 in Zakopane, Poland.

***CCIC decisions:***

Takes note of the progress in the implementation of Article 11, as well as present and planned activities.

**DECISION COP3/8**

*Environmental assessment/information system, monitoring and early  
warning  
Article 12 of the Carpathian Convention*



**Para 1. Supports the establishment of a joint biodiversity information system for the Carpathians under the Carpathian Convention, and requests the Secretariat to coordinate this process.**

As indicated above (Decision COP3/1, Para. 4) the Secretariat is coordinating the development of a MoU between European Academy Bolzano (EURAC), DAPHNE, SNCSR, WWF DCP, GRID Warsaw, NFC for the development of a **Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System**.

In addition to this, at the invitation of the **European Environment Agency (EEA)**, the Secretariat and Science for the Carpathians Initiative (S4C) representatives met EEA representatives at its headquarters in Copenhagen on 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2012 in order to discuss possibilities to enhance network-enabled knowledge management in support of the Carpathian Convention information system, and related cooperation between mentioned above partners. The cooperation between partners might include areas such as: data flow between EEA and Carpathian Convention, for instance inclusion of Carpathians into EEA reports etc.; indicators (harmonized with other mountain regions); cooperation with EIONET Focal Points; long term idea of a European mountain network; support by EEA topic centers e.g. in the field of BD reporting (reporting template etc) and/or Green Infrastructure in the Carpathians.

Follow – up of the meeting will be the elaboration of a Memorandum of Cooperation between EEA and CC with a contribution of S4C which will be submitted to the Bureau of the Carpathian Convention for approval (the draft meeting report is contained in document Inf.14).

***CCIC decisions:***

Invites the Parties to engage respective EIONET Focal Points in the implementation of Art. 12 of the Carpathian Convention;

Welcomes the idea of cooperation and invites the Secretariat to prepare, in consultation with the CCIC, a draft MoU on cooperation with the EEA on the implementation of the Carpathian Convention and to submit the draft to the Bureau for approval.

**Para 2. Welcomes the outcomes of Forum Carpaticum 2010 and the preparation for Forum Carpaticum 2012, recognizes the Science for the Carpathians Network as an important basis for policy making in the Carpathians, and requests the Secretariat to further develop modalities for cooperation.**

The Secretariat actively contributed together with S4C to the organization and implementation of **Forum Carpaticum 2012** - From data to knowledge, from knowledge to action – held in Stara Lesna, Slovakia from 30 to 31 of May 2012.

This year's edition of the Forum Carpaticum received well over 200 abstracts. The programme was very rich, with a opening address on benefits of “network enabled research” and open data principles in comparison with more traditional approaches.

The main objectives of the Conference were: to support scientifically actions leading towards sustainability in the Carpathian region; to increase the visibility of the Carpathian region in the global change research agendas; to link research and practice in the field of coupled human-environmental systems in mountain regions; and to – thereby - generate value for the Carpathian mountain region.

The Secretariat delivered opening speeches, organized and moderated a Workshop on the Carpathian Convention, and actively contributed to the Conference discussion (the Conference report is contained in document Inf. 15).

One of the institutional highlights of this Forum Carpaticum was the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Carpathian Convention and the S4C (document Inf. 16). It was signed during the Scientific Steering Committee Meeting to which the Secretariat is regularly invited as an observer.

A concrete and relevant follow – up of the Forum Carpaticum was the development and submission of the **project “LANDOBE – M: Landscape observatories for European mountain regions: from open data to benefits for citizens”** under the EU FP 7 Programme, Theme 6 Environment. The original project idea was already discussed at the Forum Carpaticum and after was further developed by the Jagiellonian University, member of S4C and Lead Partner of the project proposal.

The Secretariat is partner in the project proposal together with other members of the S4C and organizations/institutions from other mountain regions (Alps, Pyrenees, etc...) and contributed to its development.

The project aims at: elaborating the vision of multifunctional landscape observatories, embedded in the needs and requirements of various stakeholders; implementing them in selected European mountain regions, and testing their usefulness for science, practice and citizens. A case – study on the Carpathian region will be developed within the project and it will be a very important contribution to the development of an integrated Carpathian information system.

The first project application has been submitted to the competent authorities and if it will be approved a second more detailed application has to be submitted for final approval in the end of February 2013.

**Para 3. Welcomes the European Union Research Programme on Climate Change in the Carpathians and supports the coordination of the Carpathian Convention activities and the Science for the Carpathians as foreseen for this Programme through the Secretariat.**

The Secretariat has regular contacts with Science for Carpathians Initiative concerning the activities related to the climate change sector. In particular a S4C representative participated in the First Climate Change Working Group Meeting in Brussels in February

2012 (see DECISION COP3/15 Para. 1 and 3) and actively contributed to the meeting discussion and outcomes.

***CCIC decisions:***

Welcomes the signature of the MoU between the Carpathian Convention and Science for Carpathians Initiative;

Welcomes the development of the “LANDOBE – M: Landscape observatories for European mountain regions: from open data to benefits for citizens” project proposal, prepared under the leadership of the Jagiellonian University;

Requests the Secretariat to circulate the project proposal to the Parties in order to collect their comments;

Requests the Parties to support the further development of the project and its possible approval by the FP7 Programme, as appropriate, through the respective FP7 – Environment National Contact Points.

**DECISION COP3/9**

*Awareness raising, education and public participation*

*Article 13 of the Carpathian Convention*

**Para 2. Decides to actively support the expansion of the Tool Kit to other countries, and supports cooperation with other partners and other mountain regions in Education for Sustainable Development, such as the Alps, the Balkans and the Caucasus.**

The Secretariat has become partner in the **Regional Center of Expertise (RCE)** in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in 2011. RCE was presented at the ESD side-event at COP 3.

The role of the Secretariat is to promote exchange of expertise between the Vienna ESD community and the Carpathian region. The group is developing a website ([http://www.filmtipps.at/rce2/?page\\_id=99](http://www.filmtipps.at/rce2/?page_id=99) ) and held several meetings discussing directions and future activities.

The Secretariat has proposed the RCE partners to cooperate in the final conference of the Big Foot project in May-June 2013, in order to broaden its impact, which the RCE accepted.

**Para 3. Requests the Secretariat, in consultation with Parties, Northern Alliance for Sustainability and other stakeholders, to explore possibilities for the further development and finalization of the Public Participation Strategy.**

The Secretariat is participating as a partner in the EU Lifelong Learning project “**Big Foot. Crossing Generations, Crossing Mountains,**” which aims at approaching sustainable development of rural mountainous regions through intergenerational learning. The project is rooted in the participatory process in the three case-study areas in Kalambaka, (Greece), Berkovitsa (Bulgaria) and Gubbio (Italy).

The Secretariat is the only Carpathian Convention – affiliated partner in the project. Thus, one of its roles in the project is to disseminate the project results to the Carpathian countries. Concretely, since May 2011, the Secretariat has participated in several project meetings, developed the project graphic identity, logo, the website (<http://www.bigfoot-project.eu/home.html> ) and Facebook page, and is working on the Transferability Tool Kit and the Internet Community Development Platform, which will connect Big Foot with the Carpathian Convention community electronically, and will include links to already developed tools, such as the Move4Nature Tool Kit, the Cultural Heritage Inventory, etc.

The Secretariat would like to promote a link between the Big Foot project and the Carpathian Protected areas, and thus it has been proposed to the CNPA steering committee that the project is be presented at one of the BIOREGIO Carpathians stakeholders meetings and the CNPA Conference.

Due to initial administrative setbacks of the lead partner, Municipality of Gubbio, the project has been extended until end of June 2013. The final conference of the project will be organized by the Secretariat in Vienna in the end of May/June 2013, and will be open to the Carpathian community participation.

***CCIC decisions:***

Takes note of the progress in the implementation of Article 13, as well as present and planned activities.

**DECISION COP3/10**

*Cooperation with the European Union*

**Para 1. Welcomes the European Commission Communication on the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) and the accompanying Plan of Action, in particular its references to the Carpathian region and to the Carpathian Convention, as well as the included priority issues and flagship projects relevant for the Carpathian region. Reiterates the importance of the Carpathian region as the area relevant both for the Baltic and the Danube macroregional strategies and underlines the need to reflect this in the implementation of the EUSDR as well as in future activities related to the development of the EU macroregional approach.**

**Para 3. Invites the Parties to further solicit support from European Territorial Cooperation funds, SDC cohesion funds, Norwegian fund, LIFE, European**

**Neighbourhood and partnership Instrument and Instrument for pre Accession Assistance, and requests the Secretariat to ensure coordination in project development and implementation.**

**Paara 4. Calls upon Parties, supported by the Secretariat, to cooperate with European Union bodies in further promoting the “Carpathian Space” concept in the context of existing or planned European Union cooperation programmes (e.g. such as under the European Union Territorial Cooperation budget for 2014-2020.**

On 20th of June 2011 the **Kick Off Meeting of the Steering Group of the Pillar 2 - Priority Area 6 “Preserving Biodiversity, Landscapes and the Quality of Air and Soil” of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR PA 6 SG)** was held in Munich, Germany. Throughout the meeting the members of the Steering Group agreed by consensus to accept the Carpathian Convention as permanent observer for its important role in the implementation of the Strategy, in particular in the field of biodiversity (the meeting report is contained in document Inf.18).

The Secretariat participated at the **second meeting of the EUSDR PA 6 SG**, which was held in Zagreb, Croatia from 24 to 25 of October 2011.

During the meeting it was agreed that the Secretariat will contribute in particular in the implementation of Action 9 of PA6 and will contribute the EUSDR PA 6 projects database. The Secretariat actively contributed to the meeting discussion and presented to the PA 6 coordinators the SEE Bioenergy AC project proposal for possible support from the SG members (the meeting report is contained in document Inf.19).

The Secretariat attended the **EUSDR Pillar 2 Annual Stakeholders Seminar**, held on 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2012 in Budapest, Hungary, and which was organized by the European Commission – DG REGIO, the Government of Hungary and the EUSDR Pillar 2 coordinators.

The participation of the Secretariat was focused mostly on the promotion of Carpathian Convention activities related to the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and on establishing contacts with European Commission – DG REGIO and other relevant stakeholders.

The main outcomes of the discussion with the PA 6 coordinator were the following :

- Possibility to obtain financial support from the EUSDR for organization of meetings related to the preparation of projects related to the Strategy (according to the eligibility criteria established by the PA 6 Steering Committee)
- Possibility to request the label of the EUSDR for the BIOREGIO Carpathians project in order to strengthen the visibility of the project and to further increase the support from the European Commission according to the procedure established by the PA 6 Steering Committee
- Possibility to send to PA 6 Coordinators the identified priority actions for the Carpathians included in the Strategic Action Plan of the Carpathian Area for discussion with the European Commission related to the development of the

next EU Financial Programming Period in which the EUSDR PAs coordinators are involved.

Furthermore the Secretariat representative informed the EUSDR contact person of the European Commission – DG REGIO on the intention of promoting a EU macroregional Strategy for the Carpathian Region “bridging” the Danube and Baltic Strategies and “completing” the Danube Strategy with those priority actions for the Carpathians that are not included in the already existing Strategies. The Secretariat underlined also the importance of the participation of Poland (in particular of the Polish Carpathians) in the possible future European Territorial Cooperation Programme for South East Europe (possible Danube Programme) in order to have all the Carpathian countries in the Programme. The participation of all the Carpathian countries in the Programme would help to avoid all the administrative problems encountered in the ongoing projects for the participation of countries such as Czech Republic and Poland that are not part of the South East Europe Programme area.

The Secretariat had also regular contacts with the **European Commission – DG Regional Policy** on the contribution of the Carpathian Convention to the EU Strategy of the Danube Region, on the possible future Carpathian Strategy and on the next European Territorial Cooperation Programmes.

Finally the Secretariat enjoys the financial support of the **European Commission – DG Environment** for the activities related to the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change through the CARPIVIA project and has regular contacts with the European Commission contact point for CARPIVIA (for further information on the Secretariat activities in the climate change sector see below DECISION COP 3/15).

#### ***CCIC decisions:***

Requests the Secretariat and the Parties to promote a EU macroregional strategy for the Carpathian region “bridging” the EU Danube and Baltic Strategies and “completing” the Danube Strategy with those priority actions for the Carpathians that are not included in the already existing Strategies;

Encourages the participation of all Carpathian countries in the future European Territorial Cooperation Programme for South East Europe (possible Danube Programme).

**Para 5. Invites the European Union to become a Party to the Carpathian Convention and requests the Hungarian and forthcoming Polish EU Presidency to make efforts to promote accession of the European Union to the Carpathian Convention.**

The Polish Presidency of the EU provided a **note on the possible accession of the EU to the Carpathian Convention (document Inf. 20) at the EU Environment Council meeting on 19 December 2011**. In the note it was emphasized that the first symbolic step acknowledging the engagement of EU policy in the Carpathian region, should be the EU's accession to the Carpathian Convention.

The request is still under consideration of the European Commission – DG Environment and the Secretariat has contacts with the Slovak and Polish Governments and Permanent Representations in Brussels on this issue.

***CCIC decisions:***

Requests the Secretariat and the Parties to maintain and, if possible, to increase their efforts aimed at the accession of the EU to the Carpathian Convention, inter alia through the respective Permanent Representations, Permanent Missions and members of the European Parliament;

Requests the Slovak Presidency of the Carpathian Convention to liaise with the upcoming Irish Presidency of the EU Council on the possible decision of the Council regarding the accession of the EU to the Carpathian Convention.

**DECISION COP3/11**

*Cooperation with the Alpine Convention*

**Para 1. Welcomes the cooperation with the Alpine Convention in the framework of the concluded Memorandum of Understanding, and requests the Secretariat to continue to strengthen the cooperation with the Alpine Convention in the fields such as institutional cooperation, the exchange of information and experience, the development and implementation of common projects, the collaboration on the implementation of the Conventions and their respective Programmes of Work, the implementation of the Convention Biodiversity Programmes of Work on Protected Areas and Mountain Biodiversity and the collaboration in the field of protected areas networks in the Alps and the Carpathians.**

The Secretariat attended also the second and third edition of the **International exchange meeting on ecological networks between the Alps and the Carpathians** held respectively from 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2011 in Făgăras mountains - Sibiu, Romania, and on 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2012 in Vienna, Austria.

Several stakeholders from the Carpathians and the Alps have participated in the two meetings, that were organized by ALPARC (Alpine Network of Protected Areas). In particular in the two meetings the possible cooperation and interaction between the BIOREGIO Carpathians and the European Transnational Alpine Space ECONNECT project, aimed at strengthening ecological connectivity in the Alps, were discussed.

The Secretariat presented the BIOREGIO Carpathians and AKK projects and actively contributed to the meeting discussion.

The Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention (PSAC) and the Secretariat participated jointly as expert in the **European Commission Working Group on Green**

**Infrastructure**, aimed at providing inputs for the possible elaboration of a future EU Strategy on Green Infrastructure. The Secretariat provided inputs to the development of the reports that will be the basis for the elaboration of the Strategy and participated in the last of the three meetings of the Working Group held in Brussels on 06 September 2011 (the first two meetings were attended by the Alpine Convention representative). In the last meeting the Secretariat representative presented the main activities related to Green Infrastructure and ecological corridors developed within the Carpathian Convention and actively contributed to the meeting discussion.

The Secretariat participated as observer at the **XIIth Alpine Conference** organized under the Swiss Presidency in Poschiavo, Switzerland, on 7 September 2012 and delivered a speech on present and future cooperation between the Alpine and the Carpathian Convention.

Furthermore the PSAC and the Secretariat cooperated in the development of common articles and publications such as the **Article “Sustainable mountains – the Alps and the UN”** to be published within the publication “Multi – level governance in the Alps” of the Institute for Federalism of Innsbruck, Austria. In the Article the strong link and cooperation between the Alpine and the Carpathian Convention is underlined.

Finally the Alpine and the Carpathian Convention Secretariats have strongly cooperated in the **Rio + 20** Conference negotiation process related to the development of the outcome document “The Future We Want”, for the part related to mountain areas, and in the organization of joint side events at the Conference. Further information on the activities of the Secretariat on Rio + 20 are included in the section below (DECISION COP3/12, Para. 2 ).

***CCIC decisions:***

Welcomes the Secretariat activities in enhancing cooperation between the Carpathian Convention and the Alpine Convention;

Requests the Secretariat to liaise with the Alpine Convention Secretariat and Presidency concerning potential support from the Parties of the Alpine Convention to the accession of the EU to the Carpathian Convention.

**DECISION COP3/12**

*On Cooperation with other conventions and international bodies*

**Para. 2 Welcomes and supports further specific cooperation with International Conventions and international bodies, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Ramsar Convention, the Aarhus Convention, the European Landscape Convention, the Council of Europe, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations Development**



**Programme, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the European Space Agency, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, the Central European Initiative and the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative, the REC, UNEP.**

Following a long-term process with the involvement of the global mountain community, mountains have been finally included in the **Rio+20 Conference outcome “The Future We Want”** (document Inf. 21). Containing a specific section on mountains (Articles 210, 211, 212), it provides a mandate for future action and concrete activities in the field of sustainable development in mountain areas at the global level, while emphasizing the importance of regional cooperation in mountain regions. The support of the PSAC, the Secretariat and the European Commission, were instrumental for achieving this success. In particular within this process the PSAC and the Secretariat organized a side event at Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations on 27 April 2012 in order to inform Member States on progress made regarding the contributions of regional governance mechanisms for mountain regions to the Rio +20 process.

UNEP through the Secretariat further provided substantive input to the **Mountain Pavilion**, that was organized under the leadership of the Government of Peru at the Rio + 20 Conference from 11 to 22 June 2012, with the organization of several side events (the programmes are contained in document Inf. 22) under the theme “investment”, of which UNEP was the coordinator. During these events the Carpathian Convention was presented as a best-practice example in the field of regional cooperation. The HE Peter Ziga, Minister of Environment of Slovakia, as current Presidency of the CC participated to the high-level event "Regional cooperation in mountains: From Rio to Rio and beyond" co-organised with the PSAC and other organizations.

Other organizations involved in the side events held at the Mountain Pavilion at the Rio + 20 Conference were: the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Consorcio para el Desarrollo Sostenible de la Ecorregion Andina (CONDESAN), The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), UNEP GRID Network, the Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Furthermore **relevant documents and publications** have been developed for the Rio + 20 Conference, such as the “Policy Brief on Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe” (document Inf. 23) and the “Report on Sustainable Mountain Development in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, From Rio to Rio + 20 and beyond” (document Inf. 24).

Finally the Secretariat participated in the **Third Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership**, held within the Rio + 20 Conference on 15 June 2012. During the meeting the future of the Partnership was discussed by its members and the Secretariat stressed the importance of the regional cooperation processes such as the Alpine and the Carpathian Convention and the important role of the Secretariat as Central Eastern

Europe (CEE) Hub of the Partnership. A new Mountain Partnership (MP) Strategy, including an option of financing through membership fees, is under discussion.

At the moment the Mountain Partnership is under reorganization and future participation and role of the Secretariat in the Partnership has to be further discussed with Carpathian Convention National Focal Points.

***CCIC decisions:***

Welcomes the Secretariat activities related to the Rio + 20 process;

Requests the Presidency, in cooperation with the Secretariat, to address a letter to the Mountain Partnership (MP) Central Hub at FAO in Rome, expressing concerns regarding the idea of membership fees, emphasizing the need for a transparent process of developing the new MP Strategy, and requesting the strengthening of the Central and Eastern Europe Hub of the MP.

**DECISION COP3/13**

*Programme of work and budget of the Carpathian Convention*

See “Updated list of Carpathian Convention meetings” (document Inf. 25).

***CCIC decisions:***

Supports to the proposed dates and locations of the next Carpathian Convention meetings.

**DECISION COP3/14**

*Administration and financial management of the Framework Convention  
on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians  
(Carpathian Convention) and its Protocols*

See the ToRs of the Trust Fund of the Carpathian Convention (document Inf. 26).

See the Memo on the Trust Fund of the Carpathian Convention (document Inf. 27).

***CCIC decisions:***

Requests the Secretariat to prepare an evaluation of the functions and responsibilities of the Bureau and subsidiary bodies of the Convention and to present its results, together with any relevant proposals for decisions, to the next meeting of the CCIC.

## DECISION COP3/15

### *Climate change*

**Para 1. Having considered the request by the European Commission – DG Environment to consult with the Parties and Observers of the Carpathian Convention a possible proposal for the establishment of a Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change under the Carpathian Convention supported by the project CARPIVIA (Carpathian integrated assessment of vulnerability to climate change and ecosystem-based adaptation measures, [www.carpivia.eu](http://www.carpivia.eu)) that is funded by the European Commission under the above mentioned preparatory action.**

**Para 3. Decides to establish a Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change and adopts its Terms of Reference (UNEP/CC/COP3/DOC12).**

The **First Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change (CC WG Climate Change)** was organized by the Secretariat together with the CARPIVIA project lead partner, Alterra Wageningen University, on 6 and 7 of February 2012 in Brussels, Belgium within the CARPIVIA project. The representatives of the Contracting Parties, as well as officials of the European Commission, the European Parliament, representatives of ICPDR and the projects CARPIVIA and CarpathCC participated in the meeting.

At the meeting the main tasks of the WG were agreed:

- The elaboration of a Climate Change Adaptation Strategic Agenda to be adopted at the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (COP 4) in 2014. The document should include a list of recommendations on adaptation to climate change in the Carpathians, divided in different sectors (according to the different Carpathian Convention WGs) and addressed to different levels (EU, national Governments, Regions etc...) that should be considered in different policy and financial instruments, in particular in the new EU Funding Programmes 2014 - 2020.
- Web based information system on adaptation to climate change in the Carpathians (Carpathian climate change information system) to be developed within CARPIVIA project and further discussed by the WG members.
- Possible elaboration of a communication strategy within the CARPIVIA and CarpathCC projects that will include several actions to be undertaken in order to facilitate the dissemination of relevant information on adaptation to climate change to stakeholders.

The **Second Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change** was organized by the Secretariat together with the CARPATCLIM project coordinator on 24th of October 2012 in Eger, Hungary. The meeting was organized with the financial support of the CARPATCLIM project back to back with the

Workshop on sharing of experiences on adaptation to climate change in mountain areas (see below).

Throughout the meeting the draft Strategic Agenda and the related Matrix (document Inf. 28) developed by a consultant hired within the CARPIVIA project, was presented by the CARPIVIA lead partner. The document was discussed and modified according to the comments and remarks made by the Working Group members and the other meeting participants.

In general the document was accepted and it was agreed that further specific inputs and remarks will be sent by the meeting participants to the Secretariat, which will integrate the inputs received and will circulate the updated document to the Working Group members and the meeting participants for possible further general remarks. The updated version of the Strategic Agenda will be submitted to the next WG meeting, planned for autumn of next year, for final approval.

Furthermore the CARPIVIA lead partner presented the pilot version of the Carpathian climate change information system. The Secretariat stated that will present a proposal for the management of the Carpathian climate change information system after the end of the CARPIVIA project, at least for a temporary period.

Concerning the communication activities it was proposed by the CARPIVIA lead partner to produce a booklet on climate change in the Carpathians collecting the results of CARPATCLIM, CARPIVIA and CarpathCC projects. The proposal was accepted by the meeting participants and it was agreed that ZOI Environment Network will submit a content and financial proposal to the three projects lead partners for the elaboration of the booklet. The meeting participants agreed also on the importance to elaborate a standard joint presentation of the tree project to be presented in the events/initiatives relevant for adaptation of climate change in mountain areas.

As indicated above the **Workshop on sharing of experiences on adaptation to climate change in mountain areas** was held back to back with the Second CC WG Climate Change Meeting on 23 October 2012 at the same meeting venue. Representatives of organizations and institutions from the Alps, Carpathians, Pyrenees, Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia were present at the meeting and the Secretariat pointed out the uniqueness of such a group of people representing so many different mountain areas.

Representatives of each above mentioned mountain regions presented projects and initiatives in the field of climate change and climate change adaptation and participated in the Round Table “Sharing of experiences on adaptation to climate change strategies and initiatives in mountain areas”. During the Round Table were discussed the following: the interlinkages and consistency between the strategies and projects presented (and also between other similar strategies and projects developed by other organisations/institutions) and identification of areas of mutual support and conflict; priority actions to be included in ongoing and future adaptation strategies and projects in

mountain areas; identification of possible synergies for the development of future follow – up projects; benefits of enhanced regional and interregional cooperation.

Concerning the next steps:

- the Secretariat offered to build an informal network on climate change adaptation in mountain areas through UNEP ROE website run by the Carpathian Convention, e.g. provide information on mountain initiatives in Doha 26.11.2012-7.12.2012;
- the CARPIVIA lead partner offered to include projects results and case studies of other mountain regions in the Carpathian climate change information system developed within CARPIVIA project and the European Climate Adaptation Platform managed by the European Environment Agency (EEA). Furthermore it offered to prepare a paper on processes related to climate change adaptation in mountain areas (to be further discussed);
- the representative from Georgia offered to facilitate experiences sharing through the new website (still under development) of the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia;
- the representative of REC offered to host/help to organize training for climate change negotiators managed in the framework of the UNFCCC process;
- the representative of Serbia proposed to use a social network tool in order to have a dynamic way of coordinating the flow of information within the group of participants in the Eger Workshop (“Eger Group”) and make them available also for the interested public with a limited resources investment (e.g. a common Facebook page).

## **Para 2. Emphasizing the importance of climate change and its impact for the implementation of the Carpathian Convention.**

The Secretariat is partner in the European Transnational Cooperation Alpine Space “**ALPSTAR – Towards carbon neutral Alps**” project ([www.alpstar-project.eu](http://www.alpstar-project.eu)).

The project is addressing the need for well-directed and cross-cutting action to effectively manage climate change and reduction of climate-damaging emissions in the Alpine region, which was expressed in the Action Plan on Climate Change in the Alps approved within the frame of the Alpine Convention during the 10<sup>th</sup> Alpine Conference. Furthermore, ALPSTAR encourages the capitalization, diffusion and implementation of proven good practice measures in reduction of climate change on regional and local level.

The Secretariat provides input for agreement on common methodology and common criteria and standards on what is considered as a good practice in strategies, action plans and measures toward carbon neutrality. In addition, the Secretariat transfers project results and outcomes to stakeholders in different Alpine and other towns and stakeholders from Carpathian Convention and Dinaric Arc Initiative through its well established channels and guarantees an adequate media coverage of the project through the organization and support of the Mid-Term and Final Conference. Finally, the Secretariat is committed to supporting the establishment of the Policy Board which will gather

together experts in the field of climate change adaptation to elaborate recommendations on climate change strategies.

The project will end in end of March 2014

The Secretariat is also partner in the European Transnational Alpine Space “**C3ALPS-Capitalising climate change knowledge**” project (<http://www.c3alps.eu> ).

The project is a transnational capitalisation project. Building on the results of previous projects and initiatives on adaptation to climate change in the Alps, C3-Alps seeks to synthesize, transfer, and implement in policy and practice the best available adaptation knowledge. By applying a knowledge transfer concept driven by the information and communication needs of target groups, the project optimizes the usability of available knowledge resources in an attempt to bridge the gap between the generation of adaptation knowledge and its application in real-world decision-making.

In the frame of the project, the Secretariat is communicating the project results and sharing outcomes with ministries, international governmental organizations, international non-governmental organizations, EU institutions, UN agencies, etc. and expert communities on the international level. Furthermore, the Secretariat is engaged in involving and financing experts from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) providing a scientific perspective on the project results.

The project will end in end of December 2014.

***CCIC decisions:***

Takes note of the progress in the implementation of Decision COP3/15, as well as present and planned activities.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>DECISION COP3/16</b></p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Location of Permanent Secretariat</i></p>
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See final report of the First Meeting of the Bureau of COP 3, organized by the Secretariat together with the Ministry of the Environment of Slovak Republic in Bratislava, Slovakia, on 28 -29 November 2011 (document Inf. 29).

See updated version of the Permanent Secretariat criteria with comments of Czech Republic (document Inf. 30) and final version of the document (document Doc. 3).

See presentation on Permanent Secretariat offers and costs related to the Secretariat in Vienna, Geneva and the received offers locations (document Inf. 31).

***CCIC decisions:***

Requests the Secretariat to prepare a more detailed information document on Permanent Secretariat costs depending on offered locations (not limited to staff costs, comparing the current Interim Secretariat costs and elaborating options of staffing);

Requests the Secretariat to prepare a comparison of the Parties offers on the location of the Permanent Secretariat by 31 January 2013, using the draft of the selection criteria (Doc.3) considered by the Fourth CCIC Meeting;

Requests the offering Parties, upon receipt of the draft comparison from the Secretariat, to amend and complement the information related to their respective offers by 31 May 2013;

Invites Parties, which have not yet presented an offer, to submit, if interested, their offers, using the draft selection criteria, by 31 May 2013;

Encourages Parties to limit their offers to one location per Party;

Requests the Secretariat to finalize the comparison of the offers received and to distribute it to the Parties by 31 July 2013, for the consideration at the next meeting of the CCIC.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AEA .....	Austrian Environment Agency
AEM.....	European Association of Elected Representative from Mountain Regions
AKK.....	Alpine Carpathian Corridor
ALPARC.....	Alpine Network of Protected Areas
ASFINAG .....	Autobahnen-und Schnellstraßen-Finanzierungs Aktiengesellschaft
BD.....	Carpathian Convention Biodiversity Protocol
BIOREGIO Carpathians .....	Integrated management of biological and landscape diversity for sustainable regional development and ecological connectivity in the Carpathian
CADSES .....	Central, Adriatic, Danubian and South-Eastern European Space
CARPATCLIM.....	Climate of the Carpathian Region
CarpathCC.....	Climate Change in the Carpathian Region
CARPIVIA.....	Carpathian Integrated Assessment of Vulnerability to Climate Change and Ecosystem – Based Adaptation Measures
CC .....	Carpathian Convention
CCIC.....	Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee
CC WG Climate Change.....	Carpathian Convention Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change
CEE.....	Central East Europe
CNPA.....	Carpathian Network of Protected Areas
CONDESAN .....	Consorcio para el Desarrollo Sostenible de al Ecorregion Andina
COP3.....	Third Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention
COP4.....	Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention
CoR .....	Committee of the Regions
DAHNE .....	Institute for Applied Ecology
DEWA.....	The Division of Early Warning and Assessment
EEA.....	European Environment Agency



EIONET .....	European Environment Information And Observation Network
enerSKI .....	Energy Efficiency, Networking and Capacity- Building for Skiing-Resorts
ERDF .....	European Regional Development Fund
ESD .....	Education for Sustainable Development Programme
EU .....	European Union
EURAC .....	European Academy Bolzano
EUSDR .....	European Union Strategy for Danube Region
EUSDR PA 6 SG .....	EU Strategy for the Danube Region – Pillar 2 – Priority Area 6 Steering Group
FAO .....	Food and Agriculture Organization
Forest Protocol SAP .....	Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the Forest Protocol
GEF .....	Global Environment Facility
ICIMOD .....	The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
ICPDR .....	International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River
ISCC .....	Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention
InRuTou .....	Innovations in Rural Tourism
MEAs .....	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MoU .....	Memorandum of Understanding
MSP .....	Medium Size Project
NFPs .....	National Focal Points
NFC .....	National Forest Center
PSAC .....	Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention
PA .....	Priority Area
REC .....	Regional Environmental Center
RCE .....	Regional Centre of Expertise
SAP .....	Strategic Action Plan
SC .....	Steering Committee
SDC .....	The Swiss Agency for Development and Sustainable Cooperation
SEE .....	South East Europe
SG .....	Steering Group
SNCSR .....	State Natural Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
S4C .....	Science for the Carpathians Initiative
TORs .....	Terms of Reference
UNEP .....	United Nations Environment Programme
ROE .....	Regional Office for Europe
UNOOSA .....	The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs
UNWTO .....	United Nations World Tourism Organization
VITUKI .....	Environmental and Water Management Research Institute

WG..... Working Group  
WP..... Working Package  
WWF DCP ..... WWF Danube Carpathian Programme