

# **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

BETWEEN

**UNEP VIENNA – INTERIM SECRETARIAT OF THE CARPATHIAN  
CONVENTION**

(hereinafter referred to  
UNEP Vienna - ISCC)

AND

**EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF BOLZANO**

(hereinafter referred to EURAC)

AND

**DAPHNE - INSTITUTE OF APPLIED ECOLOGY**

(hereinafter referred to DAPHNE)

AND

**STATE NATURE CONSERVANCY OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC**

(hereinafter referred to SNCSR)

AND

**THE ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION CENTRE GRID - WARSAW**

(hereinafter referred to GRID - WARSAW)

AND

**WWF DANUBE - CARPATHIAN PROGRAMME**

(hereinafter referred to WWF DCP)

AND

**SLOVAK NATIONAL FOREST CENTRE**

(hereinafter referred to NFC)

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Carpathians host a unique natural and cultural diversity, exceptional at the European scale;

AKNOWLEDGING that the Framework Convention on the Protection and the Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (hereinafter referred to Carpathian Convention), signed in Kiev in May 2003 by the Carpathian countries and serviced by UNEP Vienna – Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (hereinafter referred to UNEP Vienna ISCC), represents a legal framework and a platform for cooperation in the field of sustainable development in the Carpathian mountains;

NOTING the Carpathian Convention's Articles 4.4 on "Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity" and 12.2 on "Environmental assessment / information system, monitoring and early warning", as well as Articles 18 on "Compatible monitoring and information systems" and 19 on "Coordinated scientific research and exchange of information" of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity to the Carpathian Convention (hereinafter referred to Biodiversity Protocol);

NOTING that the BIOREGIO Carpathians project aims at implementing the main provisions of the Carpathian Convention and of its Biodiversity Protocol and in particular at establishing a geo web referenced interactive Carpathian Joint Biodiversity Information System;

RECOGNIZING the numerous projects and initiatives developed by UNEP Vienna – ISCC aimed at implementing the Carpathian Convention and its fundamental role in the establishment of a Carpathian Joint Information System as Interim Secretariat of the Convention;

RECOGNIZING the numerous activities developed by EURAC in the Carpathian Region, its close cooperation within UNEP Vienna – ISCC and its important role in data collection, analysis and visualization, in particular within the Work Package (WP 5) on ecological continuity and connectivity of the BIOREGIO Carpathians project;

RECOGNIZING the importance of the Carpathian Biodiversity Information System (hereinafter referred to CBIS) provided by the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative (CERI), hosted by DAPHNE – Institute of Applied Ecology (Daphne), as a database for decision makers and stakeholders in the Carpathians;

RECOGNIZING the current actions of WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme (WWF DCP) through the Carpathian Protected Areas Clearing House Mechanism, providing comprehensive visualized and interactive information on Protected Areas (PAs) related issues for protected areas managers, policy-makers, experts and the general public, and its important role in the establishment of the Carpathian Joint Biodiversity Information System within the BIOREGIO Carpathians project;

RECOGNIZING the tasks and actions undertaken by the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic (SNCSR) as a Leader of WP 3 of the BIOREGIO Carpathians project, aimed at elaborating a Carpathian Red List of Species and Habitats and a List of invasive alien species;

RECOGNIZING the role of the Slovak National Forest Centre (NFC) in data collection and analysis, and in particular in its important contribution in the elaboration of the Carpathian Red List of Habitats within the BIOREGIO Carpathians project;

RECOGNIZING the work of GRID-Warsaw in numerous projects focused on creation, modification or upgrading the environmental monitoring system in Poland, its role as a national coordinator of database creation and maintenance and responsible for all spatial information;

NOTING the already ongoing cooperation among the above mentioned partners, the complementary nature of the activities developed and their relation to the main goals of the Carpathian Convention and the Biodiversity Protocol, in particular its Art. 18.2;

RECOGNIZING the important role and contributions of numerous further public institutions, national and international organizations, national, regional and local authorities relevant for establishing a comprehensive approach to knowledge management under the Carpathian Convention;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the harmonization of data is needed in order to ensure the minimum requirements for biodiversity and nature protection;

RECOGNIZING the importance to establish a common information system for decision makers with a joint effort of the relevant stakeholders in all the Carpathian countries, by sharing experiences and tools of stakeholders at different level;

INVITING all further interested institutions and organizations to join this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System;

The undersigned partners have reached the following understanding:

I. Duration

This MoU has permanent validity and may be periodically reviewed. It can be terminated within six months notice in writing.

II. Goals

This MoU is aimed at providing a durable basis for the collaboration among the above mentioned Partners in data collection and analysis in the field of biological and landscape diversity. The Partners agree to the principle of "open source" exchange of data elaborated during projects, including new data, for the purpose of implementation of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity. It means that all of the Partners will be able to access each others databases and commit themselves to make available all improved data-sets to the referenced system. The collaboration is aimed in the long term at establishing a harmonized common database for the whole Carpathian Region in the framework of the Carpathian Convention and under the coordination of UNEP Vienna - ISCC, compiling all the existing data and including the new ones. The current websites will be connected and will have one portal giving access to all the information. It will strengthen the awareness of a Carpathian wide approach in scientific work that provides an important information basis for further strategic political decision making.

III. Fields of Collaboration

Collaboration will include the following issues :

- Supporting the implementation of Art. 18.2 of the Biodiversity Protocol ("The Parties shall cooperate to develop a joint information system on

biological and landscape diversity in the Carpathians”) and WP 3 Act. 3.3 of the BIOREGIO Carpathians project.

- Contributing to tackle and counter the problems and challenges encountered by the whole Carpathian region, in particular the ongoing biodiversity loss due to the miss of needed information for efficient actions to face these problems.
- Reinforcing the shared experiences and practices with the Alps, Dinaric Arc, Balkans, as well as other mountain regions.
- Addressing data management and access in the Carpathian region, i.e. better access to existing data, better knowledge of data quality and the generation of new data in a manner that allows data sharing among researchers and/or other interested persons.

#### IV. Joint Activities

Parties to this Memorandum of Understanding will cooperate by, *inter alia*:

- Contributing to the establishment of an interactive geo-referenced web based joint information system opened and accessible to all (Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System) in the framework of the Carpathian Convention and under the coordination of UNEP Vienna – ISCC
- Joining forces to promote research collaboration at the pan-Carpathian and EU level where possible and dissemination of scientific knowledge to policy makers and the public.
- Maintaining a regular dialogue, which includes information of and invitation to important events, associated working group sessions, jointly organized seminars and workshops in the fields of common interest.
- A note about who is going to manage the database, where will it be placed, what format will it have, etc.

#### V. Commitment

Nothing in this MoU shall create or imply a financial obligation by either party to this Memorandum.

#### VI. Effectiveness

The MoU will take effect at the day of the signature by each side. The MoU is open for signature by all interested institutions and organizations interested in contributing to and benefitting of the Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System.

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Place  
Date

For UNEP Vienna – ISCC

For EURAC

Mr. Harald EGERER  
UNEP Vienna – ISCC  
Head

Mr. Werner STUFLESSER  
EURAC  
President

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For the SNCSR

For GRID - Warsaw

Mr. Michal Adamec  
State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak  
Republic  
Director

Ms. Maria Andrzejewska  
GRID – Warsaw  
Director

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For DAPHNE

For WWF DCP

Mr. Ján ŠEFFER  
DAPHNE  
Director

Mr. Andreas BECKMANN  
WWF DCP  
Director

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