



## Carpathian Convention Working Group on Forests - Work Plan 2023 – 2026 implementing the Forest Protocol and its Strategic Action Plan - FINAL

*While conducting its activities, the WG Forest shall act according to its Terms of Reference and follow the strategic objectives established therein. It will take into account and support implementation of relevant global and EU policies and processes, particularly the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, the EU forest strategy for 2030, the European Green Deal, the incoming Nature Restoration Law, and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, as well as the goals of achieving sustainably managed forests, halting and reversing land degradation and biodiversity loss of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the new post-2020 global biodiversity framework.*

Reference	Action	Timeframe	Actors	Next steps recommended by the WG Forest
<b>Actions deriving from the COP6</b>				
Decision COP6/13 para 2	<p><b>Continue working on the priority topics, such as:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>identification and protection of natural and virgin forests,</b></li> <li>- <b>promotion of close to nature forestry,</b></li> <li>- <b>forestry and climate change</b></li> </ul> <p>in order to implement the respective objectives of the Strategic Action Plan,</p>	By end of 2023	WG Forest, Parties, relevant partners Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Further strengthen cooperation on the priority topics</li> </ul>
Decision COP6/13 para 3	<p>continue cooperation and knowledge sharing with the Carpathian Convention and the WG Forest to achieve the implementation of Article 10 of the Forest Protocol with reference to the <b>finalization of the Inventory of Virgin Forests of the Carpathians</b></p>	By end of 2023	WG Forest, EEA, the European Topic Centre other relevant actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collect the missing information from Poland and Ukraine on the virgin forest identification,</li> <li>- Submit the finalized Inventory to the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee for consideration and submission to the COP7,</li> <li>- Considering the extension of the Inventory of the virgin forest in the Carpathian to other degrees of naturalness, particularly natural forests,</li> <li>- Preparing a background document for definition and criteria of natural forest in line with the Forest Protocol</li> <li>- Organizing an online meeting of the WG Forest in order to discuss the Inventory and the definition and criteria of natural forest/other degrees of naturalness</li> <li>- Consider the the importance of the primeval forest reserves, which in an adequate size can be essential for the conservation of isolated and small stands of primary and old-growth forests;</li> <li>- Harmonizing with other process on definitions and</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifying of relevant forests</li> <li>- Continue the cooperation with the EEA/ECT to finalize the Inventory and extent it to other degrees of naturalness, if possible</li> <li>- Inviting other experts to support the process</li> <li>- Explore information exchange on economic implications including questions on compensation related to the protection of the natural forests and especially virgin forests.</li> </ul>
Decision COP6/13 para 5	support the development of the <b>assessment of the impacts of climate change on the Carpathian forests and their ecosystem services</b>	By end of 2023	WG Forest, WG Climate Change Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing further feedback on the background paper/ synthesis document</li> <li>- Conducting individual consultations with relevant Parties/experts to obtain missing information.</li> <li>- November until December 2022: Drafting chapters for the assessment,</li> <li>- End of December 2022: First draft of the assessment available to be sent out to nominated experts for review</li> </ul>
Decision COP6/13 para 7	exchange information and <b>coordinate efforts to address the problem on illegal logging</b> taking into account already existing mechanisms and platforms, as appropriate.	By end of 2023	Parties, WG Forest Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Actions to be further considered</li> </ul>
<b>Further recommendations for actions by the WG Forest</b>				
DECISION COP6/8 para 3;  Strategic Action Plan – Action 14.1 and Action 14.2	<p>Consideration of the Sciecne for the Carpathians recommendation of the priority topics for WG Forest work :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Natural disturbance dynamic, including alteration of disturbance regimes and implication for habitat and ecosystem services</li> <li>- Ecological silviculture, including but not limited to close-to-nature forestry</li> <li>- Forest hydrology and relationships to flood regimes and risks</li> <li>- Improving the region's forest road network, design and engineering</li> </ul>	By end of 2026	Parties, WG Forest S4C, other relevant partners, Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify possible funding for undertaking relevant actions</li> </ul>
Strategic Action Plan – Action 9.1 and Action 9.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exchanging information and technical exchange on forest roads and skid trails</li> </ul>	By end of 2026	Parties, WG Forest S4C, other relevant partners, Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Working Group encourages bilateral and multilateral scientific and technical exchanges on the topic of forest transport infrastructure. The exchanges will focus on the</li> </ul>

				development of guidelines for forest road and skid trail planning, design, maintenance, and management in the Carpathians. The goal of the exchanges will be to transfer the best available information on the science and engineering of forest transport infrastructure, including economic, ecological, and operational considerations.
Strategic Action Plan – Action 6.5 and Action 4.2	- Assessing and improving forest connectivity and restoration	By end of 2026	Parties, WG Forest, other relevant partners, Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consideration of what silviculture structure should be restored?</li> <li>- Continue working with the EEA/ETC/DI on assessing forest connectivity and prioritisation for conservation/restoration.</li> </ul>
Strategic Action Plan – Action 3.1 and Action 3.2	- Providing support for Ukraine, particularly on forest related issues	By end of 2026	Parties, WG Forest, other relevant partners, Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exploring possibilities for providing support to Ukraine</li> </ul>