

Meeting Report

GBF implementation in the Carpathian region

30 March 2023, 10:00 – 12:30

ONLINE MEETING

The Meeting on the GBF implementation in the Carpathian Region took place in an online format on 30 March 2023, with the purpose of providing a comprehensive overview of the activities enhancing synergies between the implementation of the CBD/GBF and the Carpathian Convention and exchanging views on the process between the CBD and the Carpathian Convention Focal Points.

It was opened by the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, represented by its Head, Mr. Harald Egerer, who invited Poland, as the Presidency of the Carpathian Convention, represented by Ms. Bożena Haczek, Ministry of Climate and Environment of Poland, to give opening remarks. Ms. Haczek stressed that the meeting was organized as a required next step for realizing the *Ministerial Declaration on Carpathian Commitments for the implementation of the new post-2020 global biodiversity framework* that was adopted in Rzeszow, Poland, on 22 November 2022. As per the adopted Ministerial Declaration, the Ministers agreed that the Carpathian Convention provides a regional mechanism for the implementation of the CBD and its global biodiversity framework, translating the global goals and targets to the regional level, and doing so the Carpathian Convention may become a model for other mountainous regions to follow.

Next, the chairing of the meeting was handed over to the Czech Republic, the Chair of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Biodiversity, represented by Ms. Eliška Rolfová, the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic.

Ms. Rolfová stressed that the discussion on the importance of the Carpathian Convention in the implementation of international commitments under the CBD and especially the new Kunming - Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework started already in 2019 and continued within the negotiations of the GBF. Now is the time to discuss concrete implementation and integration paths that are benefiting both the Carpathian Convention and the CBD.

Ms. Klaudia Kuras, Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, made the presentation of the Carpathian Convention's role and involvement in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework process, providing information on undertaken consultations, organized meetings, and prepared briefings that aimed at increasing synergies between the implementation of the Carpathian Convention and the CBD new framework and simultaneously promoting the Carpathian Convention at the global level.

National biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) session

After the CBD COP15, all the CBD Parties, including the countries of the Carpathian region, are currently at the initial stages of the implementation of the GBF, which requires the revision of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). In this respect, the Chair of the meeting invited the representatives of the Carpathian countries to share information about their national NBSAPs revision process and the current statutes, in addition to sharing information about the inclusion of regional/transboundary cooperation, mountain biodiversity, or the Carpathian Convention aspects in their NBSAPs.

CZ CBD Focal Point, Mr. Jiri Mach, Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic, and HU CBD Focal Points, Ditta Greguss, the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary, delivered detailed presentations on the NBSAPs processes in their countries, which are attached to the email/report.

The other CBD Focal Points made oral interventions. The summary of information provided on NBSAPs revisions is available in the table below for ease of reference.

Country	Current NBSAPs	Revision process	Timeframe of new NBSAPs	Reference to the Carpathian Convention or related activities
Czech Republic	<p>National Biodiversity Strategy 2016-2025.</p> <p>State Programme for Nature and Landscape Conservation 2020-2025 (serves like AP to the Strategy).</p>	<p>2023 – a comprehensive assessment of the state of biodiversity and nature.</p> <p>In the second half of 2023, the process of updating NBSAPs will begin, with the new NBSAPs expected to be approved in 2025.</p>	Until 2050	<p>The current National Biodiversity Strategy contains a specific target dedicated to International Cooperation, with the measures focused on strengthening collaboration within multilateral and regional conventions, including the Carpathian Convention.</p> <p>It is expected that such a target will be maintained and further elaborated to support not only the implementation of the commitments of the Parties, but also to support partnership and use expertise and knowledge across the region to contribute to the implementation of the GBF.</p> <p>It is also expected that all major activities and projects recently developed or being prepared under the Carpathian Convention will be properly reflected or included in the new NBSAP.</p>
Hungary	NBSAPs valid until 2020	<p>The revision process is almost finalized, awaiting approval by the Government (possibly spring 2023). The current draft of NBSAP was developed with the involvement of various stakeholders (Ministries, academia, NGOs). The national conference was organized, and the inputs were integrated into the draft NBSAP.</p> <p>The draft is based on the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 and the zero/first draft GBF.</p>	Until 2030	There is no specific mention of the Carpathian Convention or directly linked activities.
Poland	Programme of Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity, along with Action Plan for the period 2015-2020.	The preparation of the new NBSAP is in the very early stage, led by the Ministry of Climate and Environment in consultation with other relevant Ministries; the work schedule is not set yet.		<p>It is not clear at his stage how the Carpathian issues will be reflected.</p> <p>In the current NBSAP, there are general provisions related to mountain ecosystems, for example, with respect to sustainable tourism development in these areas.</p> <p>Regarding international cooperation, the current NBSAP includes measures addressing the need for</p>

				international cooperation in the field of protection and management of habitats and endangered species of regional importance.
Romania (Not present at the meeting)				
Serbia	Program for Nature Protection of the Republic of Serbia for the period of 2021 until 2023.	The revision of the NBSAP for alignment with GBF will start soon, with support from the GEF early action grant (implemented in cooperation with UNEP). This process is expected to be finalized by the end of 2023, with approval anticipated in 2024.	2024-2030	Includes provisions on need for improved international cooperation and regional cooperation.
Slovakia	National Strategy for the Protection of Biodiversity to 2020.	So far, a thorough analysis and assessment of the SK National Strategy implementation has been made, which will serve as a baseline for the new NBSAP. This should be more comprehensive and inclusive document (aligned with climate change strategy, agriculture policy etc.).		Reference to the Carpathian Convention will be added to the new NBSAP, either as a separate element under international cooperation, under specific sectors corresponding with the Carpathian Convention Protocols, or under the sector on mainstreaming.
Ukraine (Not present at the meeting)				

Carpathian Biodiversity Framework Session

Ms. Klaudia Kuras, delivered a short presentation on the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework, informing about the mandate, process, rationale, and initial structure of the document that shall support the implementation of the GBF in the Carpathian region. The Carpathian Biodiversity Framework was developed as a response to the Rzeszow Ministerial Declaration, which called for the development of a comprehensive and ambitious instrument to implement transformative actions by various stakeholders to achieve the CBD 2050 vision to live in harmony with nature in the Carpathians. In order to ensure that the new instrument provides for mainstreaming biodiversity within and across sectors, it considers provisions related to other than only biodiversity thematic areas of the Convention. The Initial Carpathian Biodiversity Framework was shared with the meeting participants before the online meeting for initial review and consultations. Full presentation is attached to the email.

The Chair of the meeting opened the floor for discussion and questions. Mr. Ján Kadlečík, Coordinator of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative, congratulated the Secretariat on the development of a very comprehensive document and informed that initial comments from the CWI were sent already with a focus on water and wetlands.

Ms. Bożena Haczek, Poland, thanked the Secretariat for the very hard work on the development of such a comprehensive document that is a solid base for discussion and further elaboration. At the same time, Ms. Haczek expressed her worries related to the short time available for negotiation of the CBF, given that its adoption is planned at the Carpathian Convention COP7, 11-13 October 2023, in Belgrade, Serbia.

Mr. Harald Egerer again underlined that the CBF should be the main outcome of the CC COP7, therefore, he kindly invited especially CC Focal Points to carefully investigate the document while consulting on the national level. The CBF should be also a useful tool to enhance the integration of the CC topics into national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

Mr. Egerer stressed that most of the proposed CBF Goals/Priority Areas are based on and derived from the already agreed language of the Carpathian Convention Protocol or other instruments, which should ease the national consultations.

Ms. Jelena Dučić, CBD Focal Point, Ministry of Environment Protection, expressed her support for the initiative and appreciation that the CBF will be adopted at COP7 in Belgrade.

Ms. Eliška Rolfová representing the Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic, stressed that the CBF could be a useful document for communicating the objectives and achievements of the Carpathian Convention at the European and global fora. She noted the time pressures for the negotiation of the documents; however, given the fact that most of the CBF text refers to already agreed CC provisions, the consultations should not be burdensome. Ms. Rolfová underlined the importance of presenting the contribution of the Carpathian Convention to the GBF implementation, as one of the most relevant elements of the CBF, presenting the interlinks between the CC and CBD.

The Chair of the meeting thanked the Secretariat again for preparing the initial draft CBF and for organizing the online meeting that allowed for the exchange of views between the CBD and CC Focal Points. Ms. Rolfová, thanked the meeting participants for their active participation and important contributions to the meeting discussions.

The Secretariat also thanks for the constructive exchange and asked for continuing the discussion on integrating the Carpathian Convention into NBSAPs.

The following next steps were proposed:

- Written comments to the initial draft of the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework to be provided by 21 April 2023,
- The second draft based on the comments received, will be circulated in early May, including to other Carpathian Convention Working Groups to receive comprehensive feedback,
- The next consultation round on the draft will take place at the 14th Carpathian Convention Working Group Biodiversity meeting, to be held on 22-24 May 2023 in Vsetin, Czech Republic,
- The next draft prepared based on the consultation will be circulated to the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee for its consideration,
- CCIC will further consider and provide recommendations on the CBF document at its 14th meeting in Poland on 14-16 June 2023,
- The agreed Carpathian Biodiversity Framework should be considered by the Carpathian Convention COP7 in October 2023, Belgrade, Serbia.

The meeting was closed by the Chair and the Secretariat.

List of registered participants

Country	Name	Organization	Position
Czech Republic	Mr. Jiri Mach	Ministry of Environment	Head of Unit
Czech Republic	Mr. Jan Brojac	Ministry of Environment	Senior Officer
Czech Republic	Ms. Eliška Rolfová	Ministry of Environment	Carpathian Convention NFP
Hungary	Ms. Ditta Greguss	Ministry of Agriculture	biodiversity policy advisor
Poland	Ms. Gabriela Szuba	Ministry of Climate and Environment	Counselor
Poland	Ms. Dagmara Tkaczyk	Ministry of Climate and Environment	Senior Specialist
Poland	Ms. Bożena Anna Haczek	Ministry of Climate and Environment	Head of Unit
Serbia	Ms. Aleksandra Doslic	Ministry of Environmental Protection	Head of Department for Protected Areas, Geodiversity and Ecological Network
Serbia	Ms. Jelena Dučić	Ministry of Environmental Protection	Head of Department for Biodiversity
Slovakia	Ms. Eva Viestova	Ministry of Environment	CBD national focal point
Slovakia	Mr. Lukáš Záhorec	State Nature Conservancy	Coordinator for International Conventions
Slovakia	Ms. Michaela Mrazova	State Nature Conservancy	Coordinator of International Protected Areas
Slovakia	Ms. Andrea Lesova	State Nature Conservancy	Zoologist
Slovakia	Mr. Ján Kadlečík	Carpathian Wetland Initiative	coordinator
Slovakia	Ms. Zlatica Csontos Simonakova	Ministry of Environment	Carpathian Convention NFP
Slovakia	Mr. Libor Ulrych	State Nature Conservancy	botanist
Slovakia	Ms. Natália Kubicová	State Nature Conservancy	Coordinator of International Treaties
Slovakia	Mr. Ivan Koubek	State Nature Conservancy	Coordinator of International Treaties
Ukraine	Ms. Olesya Petrovych	WWF-Ukraine	Conservation manager
Austria	Mr. Harald Egerer	Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention	Head
Austria	Ms. Klaudia Kuras	Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention	Coordinator
Austria	Mr. Eleonora Musco	Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention/Eurac	Policy and project expert