

FINAL MEETING REPORT

12th Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee
18-19 November 2021
Kraków, Poland and ONLINE

18 November 2021

Opening of the 12th CCIC meeting by the Secretariat

The 12th Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (CCIC) meeting was opened by Mr. Harald Egerer, the Head of the UNEP Vienna Programme Office – Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, welcoming the participants and thanking the Polish Presidency of the Carpathian Convention for making great effort in organizing the 12th CCIC meeting in Krakow that allowed the Carpathian Community to meet physically for the first time since December 2019, as well as for combining it with an online format of the meeting as a response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Then, Mr. Harald Egerer gave the floor to Ms. Bożena Haczek, Ministry of Climate and Environment of Poland – the representative of the Polish Presidency and the Chair of the 12th CCIC meeting to deliver welcome remarks and preside the meeting.

Welcome remarks by the Polish Presidency

Ms. Bożena Haczek, Ministry of Climate and Environment of Poland, in the capacity of the Chair of the 12th CCIC meeting and on behalf of the Polish Presidency warmly welcomed the onsite and online participants of the meeting and underlined that despite the ongoing COVID pandemic, the COP decisions were being implemented. Ms. Bożena Haczek added that the CCIC meeting would also be an opportunity for face-to-face discussions and renewal of personal contacts, that we had so lacked in recent months.

Adoption of the agenda

The Agenda was adopted without any changes. No proposals were made for the agenda item 11. *Other matters*.

Report on status of ratification of the Protocols to the Carpathian Convention and the Article 12bis

Mr. Grygorii Parchuk, the Carpathian Convention National Focal Point of Ukraine, on behalf of the Depository of the Carpathian Convention - Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine – presented the report on the ratification status of the Protocols to the Carpathian Convention and the amendment to the Convention, the Art. 12bis on Climate Change. Mr. Parchuk informed about the entry into the force of the Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development to the Carpathian Convention on 01.01.2020 for the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and the Slovak Republic. Furthermore, the Protocol is in force for Romania since 18.01.2021 and, lastly, for Ukraine since 28.04.2021. Furthermore, the amendment to the Carpathian Convention – Article 12bis on Climate Change adopted at the Carpathian Convention COP5 - entered into force for Hungary, Poland, Ukraine and Romania on 5 August 2021.

[Information on the status of entry into force of protocols and Article 12bis to the Carpathian Convention are available on the Carpathian Convention website.](#)

The Chair congratulated the Parties on the progress in the ratification of the Protocols and the Article 12bis, and encouraged further efforts in this respect.

Updates from the Science for the Carpathians: Recommendations from the 5th Forum Carpaticum

Ms. Joanna Zawiejska, Chair of the Science for the Carpathians (S4C), addressed the meeting underlining the importance of the cooperation and exchange between the Carpathian Convention and the Science for the Carpathians for science based decision making and invited the meeting participants for the next Forum Carpaticum, which shall take place in Krakow in 2023.

Ms. Tamra Mitrofanenko, Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention and a member of the S4C, delivered a presentation on behalf of Ms. Joanna Zawiejska, that provided updates on the latest activities of the S4C initiative, including the organization of the Forum Carpaticum 2021, various sessions organized there with support of the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, as well as on the strengthening cooperation with the Caucasus Scientific Network

demonstrated by signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the two scientific networks that happened during the Forum Carpaticum 2021. Furthermore, a set of recommendations for the Carpathian Convention proposed by the Forum Carpaticum 2021 was presented. The recommendations are currently undergoing the last S4C internal consultation round and will be shared with the CCIC and other relevant stakeholders for commenting as soon as possible.

[The related presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website.](#)

Implementation of the Carpathian Convention: Progress Report – presentation of and discussion about ongoing and planned activities:

- General presentation on progress of work since COP6 by the Secretariat

The Secretariat delivered a general presentation on the implementation of the Carpathian Convention since the COP6 based on the [Progress Report 2021](#) that was prepared in advance to the 12th CCIC meeting. The presentation made by the Secretariat did not include the reports on progress made within the WG Biodiversity, WG Tourism and WG Climate Change while they were delivered by the respective WGs Chairs. Within its presentation, the Secretariat presented the draft 12th CCIC recommendations for consultation with the CCIC.

[The related presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website.](#)

- Report by the WG Biodiversity Chair

Ms. Eliška Rolfová, Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, in the capacity of the WG Biodiversity Chair delivered a short presentation on the main activities undertaken by the WG Biodiversity in 2021, including mainly the activities related to the implementation of the [International Action Plan on conservation of large carnivores and ensuring ecological connectivity in the Carpathians](#), and cooperation and contribution to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework process. Ms. Rolfová informed as well about the updating of the Terms of Reference of the WG Biodiversity and agreeing on the WG Biodiversity Work Plan 2021- 2023. Lastly, Ms. Rolfová informed about the plans to organize the 13th WG Biodiversity meeting on 22 March 2022 in Wieliczka, Poland, back to back to the Centralparks Final Conference.

[The related presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website.](#)

- Short introduction to the idea of developing a declaration on ecological connectivity

Ms. Hildegard Meyer, WWF CEE, shortly presented an idea of developing a joint declaration between the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) and the Carpathian Convention on ecological connectivity for the recognition of the EUSDR Annual Forum 2022 under the EUSDR Presidency of Ukraine. Ms. Meyer invited the Carpathian Parties and the stakeholders for collaboration in this respect.

- Report by CNPA Steering Committee Chair and a presentation of the Centralparks project

Mr. Mircea Verghelet, Director of the Piatra Craiului NP in Romania, in the capacity of the Chair of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) delivered a presentation on the latest activities of the CNPA, especially on the organization of the 3rd CNPA conference that took place on 29 September 2021 in Visegrad, Hungary in cooperation with various partners and projects.

Furthermore, Mr. Isidoro De Bortoli, EURAC Research, in the capacity of the Centralparks Project Manager, presented the current status of implementation of the [Centralparks project](#), paying special attention to the documents produced by the project that are seeking endorsement by the COP7, including:

- *Strategy for local sustainable tourism development based on natural and cultural heritage of the Carpathians:* [Full document](#) | [Factsheet](#)
- *Carpathian strategy for enhancing biodiversity and landscape conservation outside and inside protected areas:* [Full document](#) | [Factsheet](#)

Mr. Ján Kadlečík, State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic, as the Centralparks project partner, presented the Carpathian Ecosystem Services Toolkit (CEST), which is currently being finalized under the Centralparks project. CEST will be shared with the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Biodiversity and other stakeholders as soon as available.

Mr. Isidoro De Bortoli invited the meeting participants to attend the Centralparks Final Conference to be held in Wieliczka, Poland on 23-24 March 2022. More information about the meeting will be share soon.

The related presentations are available on the Carpathian Convention website: [CNPA presentation/ Centralparks project presentation](#) / [CEST presentation](#)

- **Report by the Carpathian Wetland Initiative Coordinator**

Mr. Ján Kadlečík, in the capacity of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI) Coordinator, delivered a presentation on latest activities of the CWI, including the training course on wetlands restoration in cooperation with Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic that was held on 18-22 October 2021 in Šumava NP, Slavkovský les PLA and Krušné Hory in the Czech Republic. Next year, another training should take place also in one of the Carpathian countries. He highlighted voluntary contributions provided by the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary and the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic to the work of the CWI in 2021 and invited other partners to support the CWI work financially or in-kind.

The related presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website: [CWI presentation](#).

After all the interventions, the Secretariat presented the draft 12th CCIC recommendations related to the WG Biodiversity and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework for consultation with the CCIC.

- **Report by the WG Tourism Chair**

Mr. Dawid Lasek, Secretary General of the Association Carpathian Euroregion – Poland, in the capacity of the Coordinator of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform (CSTP) and the Co-Chair of WG Tourism, delivered a presentation on the latest activities of the WG Tourism and the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform, including the priorities of the CSTP until 2023 and various projects that are being implemented under the umbrella of the CSTP.

[The related presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website.](#)

Mr. Walentyn Woloszyn informed that his comments were not included in the revised version of the CSTP Work Plan 2021-2023. The Secretariat asked for resending the comments in writing for consideration.

After all the interventions, the Secretariat presented the draft 12th CCIC recommendations related to the WG Tourism for consultation with the CCIC.

- **Report by the WG Climate Change Chair**

Mr. Sandor Szalai, associate professor at the Szent István University, in the capacity of the Chair of the WG Climate Change, presented the activities of the WG Climate Change in 2021, especially regarding the development of the *Assessment of the impacts of climate change on the Carpathian forests and their ecosystem services* outlining the current process and the next steps. Mr. Sandor Szalai informed as well about the prepared WG Climate Change Work Plan 2021-2023 calling for its implementation.

[The related presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website.](#)

After the presentation, Mr. Sandor Szalai presented the draft 12th CCIC recommendations related to the WG Climate Change for consultation with the CCIC.

- **Presentation of the project “Strengthening the ESD network in the Carpathian Convention via science-policy-practice interface” and discussion on project implementation**

Ms. Tamara Mitrofanenko, the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, delivered a presentation outlining the project “Strengthening the ESD network in the Carpathian Convention via science-policy-practice interface” that is funded by the German Federal Environment Ministry’s Advisory Assistance Programme (AAP) for environmental

protection in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and other countries neighbouring the European Union. Ms. Mitrofanenko outlined the ongoing activities of the project and drew attention to the project's next steps, including organization of the 2nd Carpathian ESD Seminar that should take place in Poland in 2022.

Ms. Tamara Mitrofanenko made also a short introduction to the Workshop on strengthening networks within the Carpathian Convention that is scheduled at the second day of the 12th CCIC meeting, which is related to the project.

[The related presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website.](#)

After the presentation, the Secretariat presented the draft 12th CCIC recommendations related to the DECISION COP6/19 Awareness raising, education and public participation/ESD activities for consultation with the CCIC.

Joint Session of the Carpathian Convention and the Centrum GRID/Warsaw

The Joint session was organized by the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention and the Centrum GRID/Warsaw with support of the project *LIFE Green-Go! Local initiatives for deployment of green infrastructure within Natura 2000 sites in the Carpathians* implemented by the Centrum GRID/Warsaw.

The aim of the joint session was a review of current Carpathian projects and initiatives dedicated to the enhancement of biodiversity, ecological connectivity, traditional land use, spatial management and sustainable local development. The review was followed by discussions in a breakout groups seeking synergies and potential for further application, replication and transfer of results and outputs, developed solutions, and best practices – in the trans-national context of the whole Carpathians, thus contributing to the effective implementation of the Carpathian Convention.

The project presented during the sessions:

- LIFE Green-Go! Local initiatives for deployment of green infrastructure within Natura 2000 sites in the Carpathians, presented by Mr. Piotr Mikołajczyk, Centrum GRID/Warsaw, co-funded by LIFE16 GIE/PL/000648 – [presentation](#)
- brief review of other selected Carpathian initiatives implemented by UNEP/GRID-Warsaw Centre under the common “Carpathians Unite” mission;
- Comprehensive presentation of related TRANSGREEN, ConnectGREEN, SaveGREEN projects – presented by Ms. Hildegard Meyer, WWF CEE, co-financed within INTERREG Danube Transnational Programme – [presentation](#)
- Centralparks project – presented by Isidoro de Bortoli, Eurac Research, co-financed within INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE Programme – [presentation](#).

The results of the joint session and its discussions will be made available on the Carpathian Convention website in due course.

19 November 2021

Opening of the DAY 2 by the Polish Presidency

Ms. Bożena Haczek, the Chair of the 12th CCIC meeting opened the second day of the meeting giving a short overview of the meeting proceedings and outlining the remaining agenda items.

Updates on the process of the Carpathian Strategy development

Mr. Władysław Ortyl, the Marshal of the Podkarpackie Region, Poland, Chairman of the Interregional Group Carpathians in the European Committee of the Regions, delivered a presentation on the importance of the Carpathian Strategy from the macroregional and the European Committee of the Regions perspective. Mr. Ortyl underlined that the EU ratification of the Carpathian Convention is a prerequisite for better recognition of the Carpathian region within the EU, including in terms of relevant strategic instruments such as the macroregional strategy for the Carpathians.

[The related presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website.](#)

Ms. Kinga Stańczuk-Olejniak, the Ministry of the Development Funds and Regional Policy of Poland, delivered a presentation on the latest updates regarding the development of the Carpathian Strategy. Ms. Stańczuk-Olejniak

presented as well an analysis of selected economic, social and spatial conditions of the development of the Carpathian Macro-region - [see the executive summary of the study](#), and the results of a survey commissioned by the Ministry of the Development Funds and Regional Policy of Poland regarding of actions/projects of the Carpathian Strategy based on the results of the Carpathians 2020 Diagnosis, EU Strategy for the Alpine Region and analysis of stakeholder needs – [see the executive summary of the results](#).

[The related presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website.](#)

Mr. Tomasz Zjawiony and Mr. Stanislav Kučírek representing the Slovak-Polish Chamber of Commerce made an intervention on the initiative to support the Carpathian Convention and the Integrated Strategies for Cross-Border Carpathian Subregions by elevating the Carpathian Convention to the status of the EU Carpathian Strategy. This initiative by the Polish and Slovak Chamber of Commerce suggests actions at the national level of the Contracting Parties - coordination of the proposals by Prime Ministers or Deputy Prime Ministers for Economy, due to the cross-sectional, interdisciplinary and international nature of the issues concerning the border regions of signatory states, and at the regional level of the Contracting Parties - preparation and implementation of joint Integrated Territorial Strategies for the protection and sustainable development of all cross-border sub-regions involved.

The representatives of Slovak-Polish Chamber of Commerce informed about plans of reaching out to the Chambers of Commerce of all the Carpathian Convention Contracting Parties, including through the EUROCHAMBERS.

[The related presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website.](#)

Workshop on strengthening networks within the Carpathian Convention

The workshop on strengthening networks within the Carpathian Convention was organized by the Secretariat with the support of the “Strengthening the ESD network in the Carpathian Convention via science-policy-practice interface” that is funded by the German Federal Environment Ministry’s Advisory Assistance Programme (AAP) for environmental protection in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and other countries neighbouring the European Union. The workshop was moderated by Dr. Marta Vetier, who kick started the workshop by presenting an overview of findings of the Carpathian network analysis (including CNPA, S4C, CWI). The presentation was followed by a moderated discussion and inputs from the CCIC about how the networks under the umbrella of the Carpathian Convention can be strengthened and better connected to the Convention, as well as identifying lessons learned for the Carpathian ESD Network. The results and recommendations of the workshop will be circulated in due course to the meeting participants.

[The related presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website.](#)

Updates on location and date of the CC COP7

Mr. Ivan Svetozarević, on behalf of Ms. Aleksandra Došlić, Ministry of Environmental Protection of Serbia, reiterated the offer for hosting the Carpathian Convention COP7 in Serbia in the second half of the 2023.

Presentation of the Carpathian Convention website

Ms. Klaudia Kuraś, Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, shortly presented a draft of the Carpathian Convention new website. The Secretariat has been working on modernizing the Carpathian Convention website, which shall help in reorganizing and updating the content of the website and providing a fresh and user-friendly interface. The new website shall be launched in 2022.

Any Other Business

No topics were raised under Any Other Business.

Conclusions

The Chair, Ms. Bożena Haczek, thank all the meeting participants for their contributions to the meeting deliberations and constructive spirit demonstrated within the last two day of the meeting, especially on agreeing to the strategic next steps for the Carpathian Convention, including the development of the Carpathian Vision 2050.

The Chair informed that the Secretariat will revise the 12th CCIC recommendations taking into account the comments received and the meeting discussions. The revised 12th CCIC recommendations will be sent to the CCIC for comments.

The Polish Presidency will discuss with the Secretariat the timeline for meetings and other activities, including projects in 2022 and will update the Parties and Observers in this respect in due course.

The Chair underlined the usefulness and relevance of having a side meetings, such as the CNPA Steering Committee meeting, the Join Session on the Carpathian projects or workshop on the Carpathian networks, within the CCIC meetings, and recommended this model for the future meetings.

In addition, the Secretariat, underlined the importance of monitoring the parallel processes that are happening in the region, including the development of the Carpathian Strategy or the initiative presented by the Slovak – Polish Chamber of Commerce, especially if the processes can be mutually supportive.

Closure of the 12th CCIC meeting

The Chair announced the 12th meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee closed.

*The Workshop constitutes part of the project *Carpathian ESD: Strengthening the ESD network in the Carpathian Convention via science-policy-practice interface*, and is funded by the German Federal Environment Ministry's Advisory Assistance Programme (AAP) for environmental protection in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and other countries neighbouring the European Union. It is supervised by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and by the German Environment Agency.

The S4C engagement is co-financed by the Governments of Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia through Visegrad Grants from International Visegrad Fund. The mission of the fund is to advance ideas for sustainable regional cooperation in Central Europe

