



Assumptions for the Work Plan

Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform 2021 - 2023

(based on the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Carpathian Convention and the Strategy for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians)

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1. Introduction

The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention) unites 7 Carpathian countries of Central and Eastern Europe: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine, in a lasting partnership, providing a transnational framework for cooperation and multisectoral policy integration. The Carpathian Convention was signed in 2003 and ratified in 2006 by all the Parties and is the second sub-regional treaty-based system for the protection and sustainable development of a mountain region worldwide, the first being the Alpine Convention.

The Convention is an open forum for discussion and a platform for the development and implementation of transnational strategies, programmes and projects for the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathian mountain region. Its vision is to implement comprehensive policy and enhance cooperation to ensure this development.

The main objective of the Convention is to improve living conditions of the Carpathian inhabitants, strengthen local communities and economies, while protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the region. In order to address various needs and challenges of the Carpathian region, thematic protocols to the Convention have been successively developed, which specify the Convention provisions in relation to particular areas and provide particular substantive obligation, e.g., in promoting sustainable tourism.

Within this area, measures are taken to promote sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians, based on the unique natural, landscape and cultural values, for the benefit of local communities and as well as for strengthening regional and international cooperation, including cross-border cooperation.

As part of the cooperation network of public, private and non-governmental partners for providing support in the implementation of the Carpathian Convention Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and Strategy for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians, the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform (CSTP) and its centres were created by some of the Parties. The Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform - Centre Poland (CSTP – Centre Poland) is run by the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion Poland, while CSTP – Centre Romania is run by the Brasov County Council. The CSTP is open for other Parties to join with establishing national CSTP Centres.

The 6th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention, made several decisions relevant for the sustainable tourism in the Carpathians, including giving the chairmanship of the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism of the Carpathian Convention to Poland for the period of 2020-2023 and passing on the rotating coordination of the CSTP from CSTP- Centre RO to CSTP - Centre PL, which will give substantial support to Poland – the Chair of the WG on Sustainable Tourism.

Coordination of the CSTP by the CSTP - Centre PL/Carpathian Euroregion will allow for even more effective actions to create the Carpathians a tourist destination of global importance. The CSTP's activities are consistent with the mission of the Carpathian Brand CARPATHIA implemented by the Euroregion.

On 27th of February 2021, during the Conference of the "Europe of the Carpathians", a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the CSTP - Centre PL/Carpathian Euroregion - Poland and the

Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention for the coordination of sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians. The signing of the MoC with the CSTP - Centre RO/Brasov County Council will follow in due course.

2. Problem analysis

The basic problems in implementing the vision of the socio-economic development of the Carpathians through the implementation of the Strategy for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians are lack of an effective cooperation network of institutions - potential partners, low institutional potential of individual actors in the process, with scarce coordination function at the forefront, and unstable or inadequate sources for financing activities in this regard. Therefore, the mission of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform – Centre Poland will be **"Coordination of activities of partners from the public, private and non-governmental sectors to implement the Strategy for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians."**

The Strategy for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians, adopted by acclamation by the Parties to the Carpathian Convention at its 4th Meeting (COP4, 2014), assumes extensive cooperation between the tourism sector units of all Carpathian countries for the implementation of the tasks set out in the Strategy. In order to create a network of partners and ensure the implementation of their tasks resulting from the Strategy, it is necessary to create an effective centre for coordinating the activities of partners.

To create the platform, the CSTP - Centre PL/Carpathian Euroregion will use its institutional potential, over 28 years of experience in international cooperation in the Carpathians, its cooperation network (about 1000 entities from the Carpathian area) and professional experience in the development and management of international strategies, programmes and projects.

3. General assumptions - challenges

- Cooperation at the international level within the CSTP was very limited, there are no links between the individual nodes of the CSTP structure. Additionally, it is incomplete.
- Redefine the goals of CSTP and design architecture of the cooperation system based on the participants / partners determined to cooperate.
- Programme of institutionalization and professionalization of the CSTP should be prepared with options of operation financing models.
- CSTP customers should be strictly identified and offered services corresponding to their needs
- Apply the principle of concentration - identify and focus efforts on up to three goals and priorities.
- Provide effective lobbying and promotion of CSTP activities.

4. Mission and aim

*The **mission** of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform - Centre Poland is: **Creating the Carpathians a global destination for sustainable tourism***

*The **aim** of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform - Centre Poland is:*

Creating an effective Cooperation System within CSTP, capable of coordinating activities of entities involved in the implementation of the CC Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and the Strategy for sustainable

5. CSTP background

The CSTP shall be considered as a cooperation framework of interested Parties representant by officially designated national entities (CSTP Centres) that is created to assist the seven Carpathian Parties (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine) and its stakeholders in implementing the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism, adopted in May 2011 at COP3, and its Strategy for the Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians, adopted in September 2014 at COP4.

The CSTP Centres works closely with the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convnetion in the frame of Memorandum of Cooperation that sets, among others, objectives and scope of cooperation. Principles of project planning and management and coordination systems among CSTP Centers should be defined. In its daily operations, the CSTP should function on the basis of the competences granted to each of the existing Centres. Scopes for each Centre will be awarded after the institutional and financial audit and examination of the level of experience and organizational capacity. The audit will ensure a balance between the institution's potential and the tasks performed for the CSTP. Each year, the CSTP prepares a Work Plan according to which the tasks related to the Strategy will be carried out. Actions will be selected from Joint and National Action Plans for Parties to the Carpathian Convention. It is proposed to use the PRINCE 2 methodology and general principles used in BMP systems in the work of the Platform. The CSTP-Centre PL/Carpathian Euroregion will provide technical support and make available its ICT tools for building the CSTP's information network.

The CSTP does not have legal personality, so it will not be able to apply as an entity for external grants and funding. Therefore, managing authorities (CSTP Centres) will act on behalf of and for the CSTP within their financial and organizational capabilities. The CSTP's functional minimum should be determined, its costs should be estimated and the CSTP's partners should be obliged to provide funds. The Work Plan established for the CSTP should be implemented through external projects in a properly configured international partnership that guarantees institutional and financial stability of the implemented projects.

6. Cooperation system

The CSTP implements common and national tasks resulting from the Strategy for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians.

The CSTP's Work Plan should take into account three basic elements:

1. Provisions of the Strategy for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians with Joint and National Action Plans for the Carpathian Convention Parties and the Carpathian countries in its scope

2. A mechanism for identifying, recruiting and coordinating of partners with an appropriate potential within a specialized cooperation network

3. An effective system for the preparation and management of development programmes and projects based on the Strategy for sustainable tourism development of the Carpathians

The key condition for the success of the venture is the appropriate division of competences within the consortium initiating and managing the CSTP.

Interested tourism sector entities will operate under the CSTP on a voluntary basis. They will be able to implement projects as partners or apply for the EU projects on their own. In this regard, they will be endorsed by the CSTP and the Parties to the Carpathian Convention, after relevant consultations.

7. Proposed priorities until 2023

I. **Institution building** – revitalization of the cooperation system within CSTP. In the n+3 perspective, there is a professional, complete CSTP Cooperation System, capable of autonomous operation and coordination in real time, and not in the project cycles of development processes in sustainable tourism in the Carpathians. This thematic category also includes the task of reactivating the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism.

II. **Carpathian Tourism Observatory** – creation of the Carpathian Centre and Information System for the tourism sector. In the n+3 perspective, there is a professional institution managing the information necessary to coordinate the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians. It runs websites, analyses and manages information in terms of the client of sustainable tourism (tourist) and the institutional client participating in the development policy.

III. **Carpathian Culture** – creating a product offer based on the cultural resources of the Carpathians as part of the Carpathian Brand addressed to "premium" customers in sustainable manner. On foreign markets and the internal market (the Carpathian area) in the n+3 perspective, there are offers and packages of tourism based on cultural

resources of the Carpathians along with the functioning professional business structures responsible for their development with due consideration of principles of sustainable tourism development.

Stages

Year n+1 (2021)

Tasks: audit, verification of stakeholders, restart of the Working Group, identification of key strategic partners of the CSTP, development of new architecture and functionality of the cooperation system within CSTP, preparation of assumptions for projects in each of the priorities, establishment of partnerships.

Year n+2 (2022)

Tasks: Restarting the CSTP Cooperation System, implementation of key projects in priority areas, on-going coordination stakeholder recruitment. Activity monitoring.

Year n+3 (2023)

Tasks: Implementation of key projects, generation of new related projects, planning the next development period, incorporating new fields of cooperation and development, monitoring.

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