

Advisory Assistance Programme for Environmental Protections in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (BHP)

of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Construction and
Nuclear Safety

Outline of the Project

Date: 28 March 2015

I. Information on the purpose of the advisory assistance

Topic:	Support for the implementation of the Carpathian Convention, the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and the Sustainable Tourism Strategy of the Carpathian Convention	
Target countries/region:	Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine/The Carpathians	
Beneficiaries:	Governments of the above mentioned States, as well as their stakeholders (NGOs, academics, tourism sector, destinations, Euroregions, local and regional authorities)	
Envisaged duration (in months):	30	
Envisaged start:	01. June 2015	
Financing plan, overview	Applicant's expenditure:	177.555 €
	Own contribution of the applicant:	23.082 €
	Grant applied for:	154.473 €

II. Applicant

Name of the organisation:	Ökologischer Tourismus in Europa (Ö.T.E.) e.V. (Ecological Tourism in Europe, ETE)
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Project partners:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (UNEP- SCC) - Association Carpathian Euroregion Poland - Network for Biodiversity (CEEweb for Biodiversity) - Tourism Institute of the University of Krakow

III. Description of the project

1. Presentation of the baseline situation and the resulting need for the advise in the target countries

At the 4th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention) in September 2014 in Mikulov (Czech Republic), the Parties adopted the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians. The elaboration of the Strategy was supported by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) with means of the Advisory Assistance Programme for Environmental Protection in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The elaboration process was coordinated by the German environmental association Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE) in cooperation with the NGO network CEEweb for Biodiversity (Budapest, Hungary), WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme (Vienna, Austria) and the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (SCC, Vienna, Austria), which is administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The Parties to the Carpathian Convention appreciated the coordination and advisory support provided to the development of the Strategy. Without such support this important milestone leading to a common approach in sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians would have taken considerably longer to be reached.

In order to continue with the development of sustainable tourism in this mountain region and not to lose the dynamic momentum, it is of great importance to monitor the implementation process and to strengthen/ support ongoing consultations in each of the Carpathian countries. It is necessary to tackle the Strategy with concrete steps and actions and lead the Carpathians to the sustainable tourism development through stable and irreversible process. All Parties to the Carpathian Convention appreciate in the decision COP4/6 of their 4th Conference the support provided by the German BMUB to the elaboration of the Strategy. This model of cooperation has brought considerable results in the implementation of the Carpathian Convention and its Protocol on Sustainable Tourism. Parties show increasing interest and dedication into the sustainable tourism development. In this multilateral context, project based funding facilitating the coordination of Parties' efforts and bringing external expertise would certainly strengthen their efforts and contribute to concrete results on the ground. Therefore, an ongoing support through the Advisory Assistance Programme would be extremely helpful. Especially also as Germany, the current Presidency of the Alpine Convention, a Convention of a mountain region, is also initiating a "Mountain Partnership for Sustainable Development between Alps and the Carpathians" and actively supports this idea already by financial contribution. In addition, Germany was also previously involved in other international processes, such as in developing the CBD guidelines for tourism and sustainable development, and therefore placing itself at the top of the most active countries in this topic.

High priority is given first to strengthen structural capacities and to further develop the conceptual framework set by the Strategy to secure the further process of sustainable tourism development in the Carpathian countries.

The participating members of the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism of the Carpathian Convention (6th CC-WGST) unanimously expressed at their last meeting (24. - 26. November

2014 in Belgrade, Serbia) their desire for further support for the implementation of the Strategy by ETE.

Based on the Rules of Procedures of the Carpathian Convention with the Conference of the Parties being held every three years (the next in 2017 in Hungary), there are only few meetings planned for the CC-WGST and therefore it is crucial to make the coordination support and external expertise available as soon as possible in order to strengthen first common steps towards the implementation of the Strategy.

2. Objectives of the project

Strengthening structures and coordinating processes for the successful implementation of the Strategy in the seven Carpathian countries through regional cooperation and a participatory process by involving the stakeholders from natural and environmental protection, as well as from tourism sector.

3. Expected Results

- The country specific and the common action plan towards the implementation of the Strategy are further detailed, including the identification of measuring methods (indicators). The implementation of key common activities is initiated. In total, 51 measures forming both action plans are detailed through a consultation process and the implementation is ongoing.
- A Carpathian Coordination Platform is established. Terms of Reference for this discussed on the 6th CC-WGST are finalized. (At the moment there is one proposal to establish the Carpathian Coordination Platform from Poland.).
- Common Carpathian online platform on sustainable tourism is designed and functional.
- Processes for better communication and information sharing on sustainable tourism in the Carpathians are developed.
- Selected results of the project (further detailed action plans and the Terms of Reference of the Carpathian Coordination Platform) are presented for approval at the 5th Conference of the Parties in mid-2017 in Budapest, Hungary.

4. Measures to achieve the project's objectives and expected results

- Further detailing and proposing concrete tasks for the implementation of the country specific and the common action plan Identification of measures (Indicators) for monitoring of the strategy's implementation (2016).
- Assisting the actors involved in setting up a Carpathian Coordination Platform for the implementation of the Strategy, including development of its job description and Terms of Reference. The preparation will take place in 2015; the first work of the Carpathian Coordination Platform will be carried out by the end of the project in 2017.
- Create a database on completed and ongoing projects on sustainable tourism in the Carpathians in order to share best practices. The first database should be completed by

end of 2016. Further consolidation of data will be done to the end of the project and made available on the common Carpathian online platform.

- Create a database of existing finance instruments available for the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians. This database will be kept up to date throughout the project duration and presented on Carpathian online platform.
- Analysis of manuals and guidelines for the components of sustainable tourism applicable in the Carpathians. For this purpose, relevant and up-to-date manuals will be reviewed throughout the project duration.

5. Risks

The implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development is a matter of seven Parties of the Carpathian Convention. It is obvious that the ideas and expectations may vary among the Parties while seeking a compromise solution, which might impact the results of the planned project.

Throughout the project duration, upcoming national elections in the project countries may cause the change in the government and political priorities and slow down the decision-making processes or weaken the active participation and involvement of the country in the implementation process.

Bonn, 28 March 2015
Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE)