



FINAL MEETING REPORT

6th Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Climate Change Budapest, Hungary, 9 October 2019

All the presentations delivered during the WG Climate Change meeting are available on the Carpathian Convention website¹

The Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, with the great support of the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary and the Hungarian Meteorological Service, organized the sixth meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Climate Change, held in Budapest, Hungary on 9 October 2019.

Opening of the WG Climate Change meeting, round of introductions and adoption of the Agenda

The meeting was opened by the Head of the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, Mr. Harald Egerer giving opening remarks, followed by a welcome speech by the Vice Director of the Hungarian Meteorological Service, Mr. Mihály Szűcs, as the host of the meeting. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Sandor Szalai, Szent István University.

After a short round of introduction of the meeting participants, the Agenda was briefly presented and adopted with minor changes. The Final Agenda is annexed to the meeting report (Annex 1).

Concerning the participation of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine were present at the meeting, together with various partners and stakeholders. The full list of the meeting participants is available in the Annex 2.

Updates on the ratification process of the Article 12bis on Climate Change

The Fifth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (COP5, 2017) adopted an amendment to the Convention, the new Article 12bis on Climate Change. One purpose of the 6th WG Climate Change meeting was a discussion on the pending ratification processes. Until now only Hungary completed all internal procedures necessary for the successful ratification of the new Article 12bis. Furthermore, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine informed about advanced phases of the ratification processes in their countries. The Secretariat informed about the written update received from Romania informing that the ratification process has been initiated and is advancing without any problems.

The Secretariat encouraged the Parties to possibly accelerate the ratification processes allowing the entry into force of the Article 12bis prior to the Sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (COP6) in 2020.

Short report from the Climate Data Store training

Mr. Sandor Szalai, Szent István University, provided a brief report from the training on the Climate Data Store (CDS), part of the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) User Learning Services, which was organized for Hungary with a kind invitation extended to representatives of other Carpathian countries. The CDS training was kindly offered by Wageningen University & Research, which implements the C3S User Learning Services on behalf of

¹ <http://www.carpathianconvention.org/eventdetailwg-124/events/climate-data-store-cds-training-and-the-6th-wg-climate-change-meeting.html>

Copernicus Climate Change Services and took place before the WG Climate Change meeting, on 8 October 2019.

The [Copernicus Climate Change Service](#) supports society by providing authoritative information about the past, present and future climate in Europe and the rest of the World, while the [Climate Data Store](#) provides easy access to a wide range of climate datasets via a searchable catalogue.

The Secretariat expressed thanks to the Wageningen University & Research for providing an opportunity for the Carpathian countries to join the C3S training.

Presentation of the activities of the WG Climate Change and report from the 7th meeting of the WG on Sustainable Forest Management

The Secretariat briefly introduced the Carpathian Convention and presented the activities of the WG Climate Change, which were undertaken until present. The presentation included a short report from the Working Group on Sustainable Forest Management (Zvolen Slovakia 27-28 June 2019), which called for undertaking activities concerning the impact of climate change on the Carpathian forests, as its priority for the implementation of the [Forest Protocol](#) and its [Strategic Action Plan](#).

6th Forum Carpathicum 2020 and other S4C planned activities

Ms. Katalin Mázsa, Chair of the Science for the Carpathians Initiative (S4C), presented the recent information regarding the next Forum Carpathicum scientific conference gathering researchers from the Carpathians and beyond, that will take place in Brno, the Czech Republic on 23 -26 June 2020. The aim of the event is to establish links between S4C, local and regional authorities and various stakeholders. Ms. Mázsa informed also about the intentions to organize an Interdisciplinary Summer School for Young Scientists (starting from 2020), which shall aim at new interdisciplinary networks and initiations interdisciplinary papers.

The Secretariat asked the Chair of S4C to consider the inclusion of the climate change topic in the Forum Carpathicum programme, either in a form of a dedicated session or focus on mainstreaming climate change topic into other sessions. The consultations in this respect will be undertaken between the Secretariat and S4C in near future.

Overview of the climate change issue in the Carpathian region

Mr. Sandor Szalai, Szent István University, delivered a presentation on climate change issue in the Carpathians, providing an overview of results of the three Carpathian projects on climate change: [CARPIVIA](#) project: Carpathian integrated assessment of vulnerability to climate change and ecosystem-based adaptation measures; [CarpathCC](#) project - in-depth assessment of the vulnerability of the Carpathian region to climate change; [CARPATCLIM](#) project – Climate of the Carpathian Region.

Best practices and ideas for implementation of the Article 12bis on Climate Change

The Secretariat asked the Parties to share information on undertaken activities for implementation of the 12bis on Climate Change or any other activities relevant for climate change, which could serve as best practice or support information exchange.

Hungary:

- In October 2018, Hungary adopted its second National Climate Change Strategy for the period 2018-30, with an outlook until 2050. The Strategy contains 3 parts: the Decarbonisation Roadmap, the National Adaptation Strategy and an awareness-raising plan.

- In the National Adaptation Strategy, vulnerability assessments are supported by the National Adaptation Geo-information System (NaGIS). The identified main challenges in Hungarian mountainous and hilly areas are severe weather events and flash floods.
- Concrete measures for the climate change mitigation and adaptation action lines are being elaborated in the first Hungarian Climate Change Action Plan, to be released later this year.
- Hungary is also working on its National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) and the 2050 long term strategy.
- Climate policy making is supported by an inter-ministerial climate change working group and the Energy and Climate Policy State Secretary's scientific advisory board.
- Last year, based on the processes and products of the IPCC, the Hungarian Ministry for Innovation and Technology launched an initiative to prepare a national climate change assessment report. The report will be the product of the Hungarian scientific community. In May 2019, the scoping meeting of the report took place at University of Szeged, and the final proposal for the scope has been adopted by the inter-ministerial forum in July. The main report is expected to be finalised in 2023.
- Hungary is also working on developing a monitoring system in order to follow-up climate actions.

Poland:

Poland informed about the [Ministerial Katowice Declaration on Forests for the Climate](#) initiated by the Polish government during the COP24 climate summit. The "forest for climate" declaration, which was endorsed by 81 countries, builds on the universal understanding that forests are a key carbon dioxide sink and must be considered a major part of efforts to cap the global temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2030.

Furthermore, Poland is currently implementing a long-term project Forest Carbon Farms, which shall underline the role of forest areas in mitigating the negative effects of climate change in the context of international agreements; storage of additional organic carbon in separated parts of the forest; verification of the effectiveness of additional measures to increase CO₂ retention; creating a CO₂ absorption model by Polish forests; Introduction of the trading system for CO₂ units to the economic practice. The project sites are also located in the Carpathians.

Poland has been undergoing also a project on Small Water Retention Program in Forests of Poland.

Slovakia:

Slovakia will stop burning coal to produce electricity until the end of 2023 as well as it announces its support for EU 2050 carbon neutrality target. Following the development of the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy of the Slovak Republic, a National Adaptation Plan is being currently under elaboration, which shall serve a useful tool for mainstreaming climate change adaptation into other sectors.

Cooperation with the Alpine Climate Board

Mr. Helmut Hojesky, Chair of the Alpine Climate Board, introduced the Alpine Convention and its activities on climate change, including establishment of the Alpine Climate Board, a thematic working body of the Alpine Convention. The intervention included presentation of the structure and the activities of the Alpine Climate Board, with a special focus on development and operationalization of the Alpine Climate Target System 2050. According to the Declaration of Innsbruck: *The Alpine Conference [...] at its XV session on the 4th of April 2019 in Innsbruck [...] calls upon the Thematic Working Bodies of the Alpine Convention to contribute to the implementation of the Alpine Climate Target System 2050 in line with their respective mandates*". Mr. Hojesky stressed the willingness to extend cooperation with the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Climate Change in this respect.

Alpine Climate Target System 2050 – is it relevant for the Carpathians?

Ms. Sabine McCallum, Climate Change Expert, presented in detail the Alpine Climate Target System 2050, its overall structure, general principles and strategic targets and implementation. Concerning the relevance of the Alpine Climate Target System 2050 for the Carpathian Convention, Ms. McCallum indicated the below points:

- The Alpine Climate Target System 2050 in its roof, principles and overall strategic targets covers a general frame that is equally suited and relevant for the Carpathians
- Recommendations for sectoral targets and transversal fields of action address a broad range of mitigation and adaptation topics that are likely to represent similar themes of concern for the Carpathians
- The Alpine Climate Board (ABC) is very active and in the position to provide the necessary resources to further elaborate implementation pathways for concrete action that could be interesting for the Carpathians
- Collaboration with other mountain areas is one of the recommendations for implementing the target system -> Parties to both the Alpine and the Carpathian Convention could benefit from each other in exchanging views and approaches
- Mechanisms for collaboration and exchange will be developed with the Communication strategy -> exchange formats with e.g. the CC Working Group could be established.

Global Stocktake Under the Paris Agreement (Article 14) - introduction and relevance for the Carpathians

Ms. Sabine McCallum, Climate Change Expert, introduced the process of a comprehensive five-yearly assessment of progress on climate action – the Global Stocktake – as an essential part of the Paris Agreement. Countries are requested to put forward nationally determined contributions (NDCs) by 2020 with the expectation that the NDC enhancement process delivers greater mitigation and adaptation ambitions to keep the Paris Agreement goals within reach.

Furthermore, NDC enhancement also provides an important opportunity to make adaptation planning more robust:

- increase the visibility and profile of adaptation to achieve balance with mitigation,
- strengthen adaptation action and support,
- provide inputs to the global stocktake,
- enhance learning and understanding of adaptation needs and actions.

The Secretariat suggested that Carpathian Convention Parties could include mountainous aspects to their national reports. Further communication on mountain inputs to the Global Stocktake could be coordinated together with the Alpine Convention.

Discussion on future activities of the WG Climate Change and possible project proposals:

Assessment of the impacts of climate change on the Carpathian forests

Mr. Libor Urlich, State Nature Conservation of the Slovak Republic, made a presentation on climate change and adaptation and mitigation issues in the Carpathian forests, which was followed by a discussion on developing an assessment of the impacts of climate change on the Carpathian forests and their ecosystem services.

In this respect, the Secretariat proposed to follow currently undergoing process supporting the elaboration of the Carpathian report on large carnivores monitoring. In practice it means that each Party should nominate a contact person who would assemble information on the topic of climate change impact on the Carpathian forest in their country (10-15 pages). All the country reports will be then analysed and compiled by an expert in the field,

producing one comprehensive report for the Carpathian region. The report shall include also best practices and experiences on climate change adaptation.

The next Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (11-13 December 2019, Budapest) shall decide if and how the assessment should be developed.

Towards a Carpathian Observation and Early Warning Platform for Climate Change – presentation and discussion

Ms. Sabine McCallum, Climate Change Expert, presented the essence of a discussion paper on establishing a Carpathian Observation and Early Warning Platform for Climate Change, which has been provided as a background paper for the meeting. The discussion paper aims to provide background information on examples for climate change platforms and networks, including their activities and organizational structure and puts forward a proposal for establishing a platform for collecting, managing, sharing and disseminating information on climate change and its effects in the Carpathian region. A Carpathian observation and early warning platform could be a forum that brings together diverse actors across the Carpathian space in order to collaborate on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) priorities. Partners benefit from being part of the platform for many reasons, including opportunities for networking, collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and the accessing of funding avenues.

- The presentation highlighted selected examples for networks and platforms on climate change that could potentially be in parts interesting to consider when proceeding with the proposal for establishing a Carpathian Platform. The overall purpose and goals, including proposals for potential funding of this activity have been put forward for discussion with the Working Group, which can be summarised as follows: The title "Carpathian Observation and Early Warning Platform" was questioned to be misleading regarding the proposed objectives, which rather focus on networking and exchange than setting up a physical network of observatories in the Carpathians
- The networking component could be covered by the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Climate Change (potentially in the direction similar to the set-up of the Alpine Climate Board)
- A clear agenda for collaboration and activities would be needed to develop by the Working Group linked to setting priorities for the implementation of Article 12bis
- Proper mechanisms for exchange and collaboration with other relevant Working Groups of the Convention as well as with the Science for the Carpathians Initiative (S4C) should be established
- Financing a broader platform/network remains a challenge; however, funding mechanisms shall be further explored

Concluding the discussion, the Secretariat asked the Chair of the Working Group, Mr. Sandor Szalai, to prepare a short note for the next Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee meeting on a structured step-by-step approach for strengthening networking and collaboration on climate change in the Carpathians, including proposals for the structure, timeline, role and concrete tasks of the Working Group, in particular with regard to the implementation of Article 12bis.

Cooperation with EUSDR PA4 and PA5, ICPDR and project opportunities

Mr. Sandor Szalai, Szent István University, informed about the cooperation with International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR), especially within the Tisza Group. Based on the Joint Declaration of Cooperation ICPDR Tisza Group and the Carpathian Convention shall strengthen cooperation in areas of mutual interest. There are several topics to be considered for future common activities, such as, detection of flood formation areas, detection of flood formation areas, land use and land use changes in the mountains, runoff modelling, effects of the LUC on the streamflow and sedimentation of rivers. One topic should be commonly

agreed in near future with further plans to organize a workshop (2020) on that topic leading to development of a project proposal (2021).

Mr. Szalai gave also a short overview of the activities of the EUSDR Priority Area 4 (Water Quality) and Priority Area 5 (Environmental Risks). Ideas for activities with PA4 concern microplastic in the Carpathians, establishing biomonitoring, waste water treatment in small settlements, agricultural good practices in mountainous areas, Natural Water Retention Measures including urban water retention, flash floods or soil degradation. Ideas for cooperation with the PA5 should be further explored.

Cooperation with the Alpine Convention – experience sharing on adaptation to climate change in the Alps

Mr. Piero Di Carlo, University G.D'Annunzio in Chieti-Pescara, representative of the Alpine Convention, presented experience on adaptation to climate change in the Alps, especially focusing on a pilot project on adaptation to climate change in the Alpine villages and extension of the best practice and activities of the Alps to the Apennines mountains.

Mr. Di Carlo, highlighted the interest of his institution to collaborate with the Carpathian Convention on projects, especially related to adaptation to climate change at the local level (Budoia charter) and on network of mountain observatories on climate change.

Concerning other project ideas and topics for cooperation, the importance of mainstreaming of climate change adaptation into other sectors was stressed. Furthermore, Mr. Henk Zingstra, Zingstra Water and Ecosystems, suggested a development of a forest management toolkit for the forest managers in order to help to adopt to climate change, as a possible project proposal.

Reporting format for the comprehensive National Report on Implementation of the Carpathian Convention covering all the Protocols and other relevant sectors

The Secretariat informed about the CCIC request to discuss with every CC Working Group about a format of the comprehensive National Report on Implementation of the Carpathian Convention, which will cover all the Protocols and relevant sectors. The format shall be presented at the COP6 in 2020. The Secretariat asked what should be reported for the Article 12bis on Climate Change and what indicators will be suitable. The Secretariat, that is currently working on the reporting format, will further consult with the WG Climate Change on this topic in due course.

Summary of the meeting and next steps

The Secretariat summarised the meeting and suggested the following next steps:

- Parties shall accelerate the ratification processes of the Article 12bis prior to the Sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (COP6) in 2020.
- The Secretariat will consult with S4C inclusion of the climate change topic in the Forum Carpaticum programme, either in a form of a dedicated session or focus on mainstreaming climate change topic into other sessions.
- The Working Group should consider closer cooperation with the Alpine Climate Board, especially in regard to implementation of the Alpine Climate Target System 2050.

- The Parties are asked to consider inclusion of mountainous aspects to their national reports for Global Stocktake Under the Paris Agreement.
- The Secretariat will present the idea of developing an assessment of the impacts of climate change on the Carpathian forests and their ecosystem services to the upcoming meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee, which shall then decide on this task.
- The Hungarian Presidency will prepare a short note for the next Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee meeting on a structured step-by-step approach for strengthening networking and collaboration on climate change in the Carpathians, including proposals for the structure, timeline, role and concrete tasks of the Working Group, in particular with regard to the implementation of Article 12bis.
- The Working Group shall further consider ideas for cooperation with the EUSDR PA4 and PA5.
- The Secretariat will consult the draft reporting format of the comprehensive National Report on Implementation of the Carpathian Convention covering all the Protocols and other relevant sectors, as soon as available.
- The Secretariat will share information with the Working Group on the side event called *From Andes to Alps and other mountains: Elevating regional cooperation on monitoring and climate change adaptation* to be organized at the UNFCCC COP25 in Chile on 11 December 2019.

Other matters

The Secretariat informed about the side event called *From Andes to Alps and other mountains: Elevating regional cooperation on monitoring and climate change adaptation* to be organized at the UNFCCC COP25 in Chile on 11 December 2019 (International Mountain Day).

The side event will witness the presentation of the new IPCC Special report on oceans and cryosphere in a changing climate that has a strong focus on mountains, which is currently approved in Monaco, as well as launch of new SDC global programme on mountains and climate change adaptation. High level Representatives of mountain regions and countries are expected (Andes, Caucasus, East Africa, Himalayas, Alpine region, Carpathians) as well as keynotes by SDC, Mountain Research Initiative (IPCC Report) and UNEP (Executive Director attendance is requested). The invitation and further information will be sent to the WG Climate Change in due course.

Closing remarks and closure of the meeting

The host country, Hungary, together with the Secretariat, thanked the meeting participants for their active participation and contribution to the meeting discussion and closed the meeting.

ANNEX 1

FINAL AGENDA

6th Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on
Climate Change
Budapest, Hungary, 9 October 2019

9:00 – 17:30	Meeting venue: National Meteorological Service Kitaibel Pál u. 1, 1024 Budapest, Hungary, 1 st floor, Room 216
9:00 – 9:45	1) Opening of the WG Climate Change meeting, round of introductions and adoption of the Agenda (<i>Secretariat and the Host Country – Hungary</i>) 2) Updates on the ratification process of the Article 12bis on Climate Change (<i>updates from the Parties</i>)
09:45 – 11:00	3) Short report from the Climate Data Store training (<i>participants of the CDS training</i>) 4) Presentation of the activities of the WG Climate Change and report from the 7th meeting of the WG on Sustainable Forest Management (<i>Secretariat</i>) 5) 6th Forum Carpaticum 2020 and other S4C planned activities - (<i>presentation by Ms. Katalin Mázsza, Science for the Carpathians</i>) 6) Overview of the climate change issue in the Carpathian region (<i>Mr. Sandor Szalai, Szent István University</i>)
11:00– 11:30	Coffee break
11:30 – 12:00	7) Best practices and ideas for implementation of the Article 12bis on Climate Change (<i>All the Parties are requested to share information on undertaken activities for implementation of the 12bis on Climate Change and ideas for its future implementation</i>) 8) Cooperation with the Alpine Climate Board (<i>presentation by Mr. Helmut Hojesky, Chair of the Alpine Climate Board</i>)
12:00 – 12:20	9) Alpine Climate Target System 2050 – is it relevant for the Carpathians? (<i>Ms. Sabine McCallum, Climate Change Expert</i>)
12:20 -12:40	10) Global Stocktake Under the Paris Agreement (Article 14) - introduction and relevance for the Carpathians (<i>Ms. Sabine McCallum, Climate Change Expert</i>)
12:40 – 13:30	11) Discussion on future activities of the WG Climate Change and possible project proposals (session 1) ➤ Overview of climate change and adaptation issues in the Carpathian forests and discussion on developing an assessment of the impacts of climate change on the Carpathian forests and their ecosystem services (<i>Mr. Libor Urlich, State Nature Conservation of the Slovak Republic and the Secretariat</i>)
13:30 -14:30	Lunch break

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- 14:30 – 16:30 12) **Discussion on future activities of the WG Climate Change and possible project proposals**
(session 2)
- Towards a Carpathian Observation and Early Warning Platform for Climate Change – presentation and discussion (*Secretariat*)
 - Cooperation with EUSDR PA4 and PA5 and project opportunities (*Mr. Sandor Szalai, Szent István University*)
 - Cooperation with the Alpine Convention – experience sharing on adaptation to climate change in the Alps (*Mr. Piero Di Carlo of University G.D'Annunzio in Chieti-Pescara, Alpine Convention*)

16:30 -16:45 Coffee break

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- 16:45 – 17:15 13) **Reporting format for the comprehensive National Report on Implementation of the Carpathian Convention covering all the Protocols and other relevant sectors** (*Secretariat*)

The CCIC requested discussions with every CC Working Group on a format of the comprehensive National Report on Implementation of the Carpathian Convention, which will cover all the Protocols and relevant sectors. The format shall be presented at the COP6 in 2020. What shall be reported for the Article 12bis on Climate Change? What indicators will be suitable? The Parties are asked to contribute to the discussion with proposals.

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- 14) Summary of the meeting and next steps
- 17:15 – 17:30 15) Other matters
- 16) Closing remarks and closure of the meeting

Departures of the meeting participants
