

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

**FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CARPATHIAN
INTEGRATED BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION SYSTEM**

BETWEEN

DAPHNE - INSTITUTE OF APPLIED ECOLOGY
(hereinafter referred to DAPHNE)

AND

EUROPEAN ACADEMY BOLZANO
(hereinafter referred to EURAC)

AND

SLOVAK NATIONAL FOREST CENTRE
(hereinafter referred to NFC)

AND

STATE NATURE CONSERVANCY OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
(hereinafter referred to SNCSR)

AND

THE ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION CENTRE UNEP/GRID - WARSAW
(hereinafter referred to UNEP/GRID - WARSAW)

AND

**UNEP VIENNA – INTERIM SECRETARIAT OF THE CARPATHIAN
CONVENTION**
(hereinafter referred to
UNEP Vienna - ISCC)

AND

WWF DANUBE - CARPATHIAN PROGRAMME
(hereinafter referred to WWF DCP)

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Carpathians host a unique natural and cultural diversity, exceptional at the European scale;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Framework Convention on the Protection and the Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (hereinafter referred to Carpathian Convention), signed in Kiev in May 2003 by the Carpathian countries and serviced by UNEP Vienna – Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (hereinafter referred to UNEP Vienna ISCC), represents a legal framework and a platform for cooperation in the field of sustainable development in the Carpathian mountains;

NOTING the Carpathian Convention’s Articles 4.4 on “Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity” and 12.2 on “Environmental assessment / information system, monitoring and early warning”, as well as Articles 18 on “Compatible monitoring and information systems” and 19 on “Coordinated scientific research and exchange of information” of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity to the Carpathian Convention (hereinafter referred to Biodiversity Protocol);

NOTING that the BIOREGIO Carpathians project aims at implementing the main provisions of the Carpathian Convention and of its Biodiversity Protocol and in particular at establishing a geo web referenced interactive Carpathian Joint Biodiversity Information System;

RECOGNIZING the importance of the Carpathian Biodiversity Information System (hereinafter referred to CBIS) provided by the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative (CERI), hosted by DAPHNE – Institute of Applied Ecology (Daphne), as a database for decision makers and stakeholders in the Carpathians;

RECOGNIZING the numerous activities developed by EURAC (in particular its Institute for Regional Development and Location Management and Institute for Remote Sensing) in the Carpathian Region, its close cooperation within UNEP Vienna – ISCC and its important role in data collection, analysis and visualization, in particular within the Work Package (WP 5) on ecological continuity and connectivity of the BIOREGIO Carpathians project;

RECOGNIZING the role of the Slovak National Forest Centre (NFC) in data collection and analysis, and in particular in its important contribution in the elaboration of the Carpathian Red List of Habitats within the BIOREGIO Carpathians project;

RECOGNIZING the tasks and actions undertaken by the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic (SNCSR) as a Leader of WP 3 of the BIOREGIO Carpathians project, aimed at elaborating a Carpathian Red List of Species and Habitats and a List of invasive alien species;

RECOGNIZING the role of UNEP/GRID-Warsaw as a Lead Data Centre for the Carpathians Environment Outlook (KEO) database development, data collection, processing, harmonization, integration and dissemination; and its expertise in environmental assessment, spatial and geo-information analysing and visualisation;

RECOGNIZING the numerous projects and initiatives developed by UNEP Vienna – ISCC aimed at implementing the Carpathian Convention, its fundamental role in the

establishment of a Carpathian Joint Information System as Interim Secretariat of the Convention and its partnership with relevant organizations such as the European Environment Agency;

RECOGNIZING the current actions of WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme (WWF DCP) through the Carpathian Protected Areas Clearing House Mechanism, providing comprehensive visualized and interactive information on Protected Areas (PAs) related issues for protected areas managers, policy-makers, experts and the general public, and its important role in the establishment of the Carpathian Joint Biodiversity Information System within the BIOREGIO Carpathians project;

NOTING the already ongoing cooperation among the above mentioned partners, the complementary nature of the activities developed and their relation to the main goals of the Carpathian Convention and the Biodiversity Protocol, in particular its Art. 18.2;

RECOGNIZING the important role and contributions of numerous further public institutions, national and international organizations, national, regional and local authorities relevant for establishing a comprehensive approach to knowledge management under the Carpathian Convention;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the harmonization of data is needed in order to ensure the minimum requirements for biodiversity and nature protection;

RECOGNIZING the importance to establish a common information system for decision makers with a joint effort of the relevant stakeholders in all the Carpathian countries, by sharing experiences and tools of stakeholders at different level;

INVITING all further interested institutions and organizations to join this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the establishment of a Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System (CIBIS) making accessible from one portal the information systems and data sets listed in the ANNEX I to this MoU;

The undersigned partners have reached the following understanding:

I. Duration

This MoU has permanent validity and may be periodically reviewed. It can be terminated by each Party within six months notice in writing.

II. Goals

This MoU is aimed at providing a durable basis for the collaboration among the above mentioned Partners in data collection and analysis in the field of biological and landscape diversity as well as territorial monitoring.

The Parties to this MoU (the Parties) agree to make accessible from one portal (the Carpathian Convention website - www.carpathianconvention.org) the information systems and data sets listed in ANNEX 1 in order to facilitate the access to the data and information included in these systems from potential users.

The list in ANNEX 1 can be further developed with the inclusion of additional information systems and data sets developed by one of the Parties, by more Parties together with a common effort or other institutions and organizations interested in contributing to and benefitting of the CIBIS that will sign this MoU.

The established CIBIS will strengthen the awareness of a Carpathian wide approach in scientific work that provides an important information basis for further strategic political decision making.

III. Fields of Collaboration

Collaboration will include the following issues:

- Supporting the implementation of Art. 18.2 of the Biodiversity Protocol (“The Parties shall cooperate to develop a joint information system on biological and landscape diversity in the Carpathians”) and WP 3 Act. 3.3 of the BIOREGIO Carpathians project.
- Contributing to tackle and counter the problems and challenges encountered by the whole Carpathian region, in particular the ongoing biodiversity loss due to the miss of needed information for efficient actions to face these problems.
- Reinforcing the shared experiences and practices with the Alps, Dinaric Arc, Balkans, as well as other mountain regions.
- Addressing data management and access in the Carpathian region, i.e. better access to existing primary data, better knowledge of data quality and the generation of new data in a manner that allows data sharing among researchers and/or other interested persons.

IV. Joint Activities

Parties to this Memorandum of Understanding will cooperate by, *inter alia*:

- Ensuring the web link of their respective information systems and data sets listed in ANNEX I to the Carpathian Convention website (www.carpathianconvention.org) managed by UNEP Vienna – ISCC with the support of the EURAC Expert Team in Vienna.
- Ensuring, as much as it is in their possibility, that their information systems and data sets are comparable and compatible for possible data sharing.
- Joining forces to promote research collaboration at the pan-Carpathian and EU level where possible and dissemination of scientific knowledge to policy makers and the public.
- Maintaining a regular dialogue, which includes information of and invitation to important events, associated working group sessions, jointly organized seminars and workshops in the fields of common interest.

V. Commitment

Nothing in this MoU shall create or imply a financial obligation by either party to this Memorandum.

VI. Effectiveness

The MoU will take effect at the day of the signature by each side. The MoU is open for signature by all institutions and organizations interested in contributing to and

benefitting of the CIBIS previous agreement (with unanimity) of the already existing Parties to the MoU.

Signatures

For UNEP ISCC

**Mr. Harald Egerer
Head of Office,
UNEP Vienna - ISCC**

Date:.....
Place:.....

For GRID - Warsaw

**Ms. Maria Andrzejewska
Director,
GRID – Warsaw**

Date:
Place:.....

For DAPHNE

**Mr. Ján ŠEFFER
Director,
DAPHNE**

Date:
Place:.....

For the SNCSR

Mr. Milan Boroš
Director,
State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak
Republic

Date:

Place:.....

For EURAC

Mr. Werner STUFLESSER
President,
EURAC

Date:

Place:.....

For WWF DCP

Mr. Andreas BECKMANN
Director,
WWF DCP

Date:

Place:.....

For the NFC

**Dr. Martin Moravcik
Director General
National Forest Centre Slovakia**

Date:

Place:.....

ANNEX 1

List of information systems and data sets that constitute the Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System (CIBIS):

- Carpathian Protected Areas Clearing House Mechanism (CPACHM). Responsible partner: WWF DCP. Website: <http://chm.natura2000.ro/>
- Carpathian Biodiversity Information System. Responsible partner: DAPHNE. Website: <http://www.carpates.org/cbis.html>
- “Carpathians Unite – mechanism of consultation and cooperation for implementation of the Carpathian Convention” project database. Responsible partner: UNEP GRID Warsaw. Website: <http://karpatylacza.pl/en/> (under development)
- Carpathian Red List of Species and Habitats and Carpathian List of Invasive Species. Responsible partner: SNCSR. Website: <http://www.bioregio-carpathians.eu> (under development)
- Information system on ecological connectivity in the Carpathians. Responsible partner: EURAC. Website: <http://webgis.eurac.edu/bioregio/> (under development)