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18 – 20 Feb. 2014

Original : English

FIFTH CARPATHIAN CONVENTION IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE**PROGRESS REPORT BY THE INTERIM SECRETARIAT¹****DECISION COP3/1***Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity**Article 4 of the Carpathian Convention*

Para 4. Welcomes the approval of and pledges its support to the “BIOREGIO Carpathians” project, that aims at implementing the main provisions of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity.

The implementation of the European Transnational Cooperation South East Europe **BIOREGIO Carpathians** project (www.bioregio-carpathians.eu), aimed at implementing the main provisions of the Carpathian Convention Biodiversity Protocol, is at its final stage. The project implementation is currently, after a prolongation of 6 months, in line with the approved timeframe. A respective Subsidy contract addendum was signed in May 2013. The main project results will be submitted in the coming months before the new closing date 31 June 2014. New changes occurred in the partnership of the project: the Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection of Czech Republic went from being a 20% ERDF PP to a 20% Associated Strategic Partner supported by the Secretariat. After facing difficulties regarding the pre-financing and the risk of decommitment due to the low level of expenditures of the project, the Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of Nature Conservation (20% PP2 INC PAS) withdrew from the project was replaced by UNEP/GRID-Warsaw, an environmental

¹ The Secretariat includes UNEP Vienna – ISCC and EURAC representing office Vienna (EURAC expert team – ISCC) members

information centre based in Warsaw. The LP together with the Secretariat proposed a new organisation in order to preserve and achieve the project's objective. The partnership change was officially approved in May 2013. The Secretariat co-supports UNEP/GRID – Warsaw in project implementation.

Furthermore the JTS informed the lead partner that a decommitment of funds will take place at the beginning of 2014. At this moment, it is not clear how this decommitment will take place.

The Secretariat also played an important role in the project work packages (WP) since the beginning of the project. It is responsible for WP 2 (Communication activities) and WP 7 (Intergovernmental Platform and stakeholder's involvement), assists the project lead Partner, Piatra Craiului National Park, in the management of the project and actively contributes to the other WPs. The technical project management is now being supported by Blue! advancing European projects GbR, a German project consulting company.

As WP 2 Leader, the Secretariat has delivered several outputs, such as the project communication plan and the project website, and presented the project at the SEE Annual Conference in Bologna at the end of June 2012, where BIOREGIO was one of the eight projects selected for presentation at the Conference. In April 2013, the Secretariat organized the Mid Term Conference together with the 2nd Conference of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA). Both events, with more than 130 participants, ensured a proper project promotion and constituted a significant step in improving the Carpathian protected areas management through discussions in several workshops and side-events. The next steps within WP2 will be to organize the last project partner and steering committee meeting in Vienna, Austria on the 25-26 February.2014. Another step will be to organize the Final Conference which will take place in Romania or in Vienna in the first week on June 2014. Furthermore, the Secretariat will be responsible for the preparation, layouting and printing of the final publication of the project.

As WP 7 Leader it co - organized all four stakeholder meetings in Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Serbia, had regular contacts with stakeholders and Carpathian governmental representatives, and organized the last Carpathian Convention meetings (Carpathian Convention Biodiversity and Sustainable Forest Management Working Groups, organized respectively in Vienna, Austria in March 2013 and in Rzeszow, Poland in September 2013).

The methodology of the Carpathian Red List of Species and Habitats and List of Invasive Alien Species developed within BIOREGIO Carpathians WP 3, was presented and agreed upon by all members during the **Carpathian Convention Biodiversity Working Group (WG Biodiversity)** - organized by the Secretariat and the local partner State Nature

Conservancy of Slovak Republic (SNCSR) in March 2012 in Banska Bystrica, Slovakia. Furthermore, an update on all BIOREGIO activities as well as the status of the Red List of Species was presented during the last WG Biodiversity, held on the 6 - 7 March 2013 in Vienna, Austria. The data collection for the Red List is facing important delays due to the lack of data collection from some experts and delays in the contracting of experts. The data on species and forest habitats are currently being filled in the online database and analyzed by the responsible experts. The WP3 leader is organizing the last WP3 meeting on the 29 – 30 January.2014 in Banska Bystrica, Slovakia. A draft of the Red Lists will be submitted in the beginning of February 2014.

As requested by the WG Biodiversity the Secretariat amended the Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity to reassure the general coherence of the document (see Doc. 1).

The Carpathian Countries Protected Areas Clearing House Mechanism (CCPA CHM, a GIS web based tool developed by WWF within the Protected Areas for a Living Planet project), has been further developed resulting in the Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System (CIBIS). The original CHM functions have been preserved within the CIBIS, to continue providing the information and experience exchange platform and the networking possibilities for protected area professionals, experts working on biodiversity projects and research in the Carpathian protected areas, for the business sector and for the general public. The core of the CIBIS is an interactive map with spatial related information about biodiversity and protected areas in the Carpathian Countries, including threats, tourism information, legal frameworks and other. The CIBIS is offering various tools to protected areas managers and conservationists, like the biodiversity mapping and monitoring tool linked to the GIS map in the background.

Various institutions and NGOs contributed to its development and made their valuable data sets available for its use on the platform.

The signature process of the Memorandum of Understanding between the interested organizations for the establishment of a Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System (CIBIS MoU - see Doc. 2). interlinking existing information systems and those developed under the BIOREGIO Carpathians project is still undergoing. The Secretariat is waiting for the signatures of some partners.

Together with the Midterm Conference of the BIOREGIO Carpathians project in Tatranska Javorina, Slovakia from 23 to 26 April 2013, the Secretariat co-organized the Second Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) Conference. During this Conference, various aspects of the work on protected areas, the challenges and

development opportunities were discussed between protected areas administrators, ministries representatives, researchers, experts, environmental organizations etc. Future steps in improving the Carpathian protected areas were agreed upon during various workshops and side-events. Furthermore, at the Conference the Declaration of the Second Conference of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas was elaborated (see Doc. 3)

UNEP Vienna ISCC signed a small scale agreement to establish Terms of References for the CNPA Management Unit of Civic Society OZ Pronatur from the Slovak Republic and the Association of Natural Protected Areas Administrations from Romania. Please see the Interim Reports on their current activities provided to the Secretariat – Info doc. 1 and 2.

The next **CNPA SC meeting** is organized by the Secretariat, back to back with the CCIC meeting, on 20 February 2014. The main aim of this meeting will be for the CNPA Management Unit (ANPAA, Romania and PRONATUR, Slovakia) to present the 2013 activities as well as the future activities. So far, CNPA activities have been financed through the BIOREGIO Carpathians project. The CNPA Management Unit is responsible to find new financing opportunities and establish a platform with ideas for future projects. The last CNPA SC meeting took place back to back with the WG Biodiversity in March 2013. The main outcome of this meeting was the organization of the second CNPA Conference in April 2013 and the establishment of the CNPA Management Unit. Furthermore the CNPA Medium Term Work Plan April 2013 – December 2017 was finalized (see Doc. 4)

Within the frame of WP4 "Integrated management of Carpathian natural assets and protected areas", together with the activities for CNPA, the study on Regional development opportunities as well as the strategies on common integrated management measures (CIMM) have been successfully elaborated. The CIMM is being implemented 3 pilot areas of the Carpathian region.

The Secretariat hired an external expert for the implementation of the study on financial mechanism of protected areas. This study will integrate many examples of successful financial mechanism of protected areas in the Carpathian as well as in other regions, and will serve as a comprehensive guide for stakeholders in the region.

The final version of the National Report on the Implementation of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians has been finalized during the last Biodiversity WG meeting in March 2013 held in Vienna, Austria (See Doc. 5)

CCIC:

- Recommends and submits the corrigendum to the Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity for COP4 adoption;
- Recommends and submits the final version of the format of National Report on the Implementation of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (paper version) for COP4 approval;
- Requests the Secretariat to assist SNCSR in the final elaboration of the Carpathian Red List of Species and Habitats and List of Invasive Alien Species and to the other BIOREGIO Carpathians partners for the development of the project outputs of their responsibility;
- Requests NFPs to contact BIOREGIO Carpathians project partners in their respective countries in order to ensure their commitment in fulfilling their project tasks;
- Requests the Secretariat to organize Biodiversity Working Group meeting to consolidate the outputs of the BIOREGIO Carpathians project;
- Requests the Biodiversity WG and CNPA to consider possible follow up projects/activities after the closure of BIOREGIO Carpathians project;
- Requests the Secretariat to possibly develop projects in support of the integrated implementation of the Carpathian Convention and its Protocols, for example on landscapes and ecological connectivity in the Carpathian region;
- Welcomes the proposal for a publication on endangered plants species specific for the Carpathians and requests the secretariat to cooperate with the SNCSR in its preparation;
- Reviews of draft COP4 Decisions.

Para 10. Welcomes the work and activities of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative in support of the implementation of the Biodiversity Protocol, welcomes the ongoing cooperation with the Ramsar Convention and urges Parties to take appropriate action on the effective protection and sustainable use of Carpathian wetlands.

The Secretariat had regular contacts and exchange of information with State Nature Conservancy of Slovak Republic (SNCSR), leading the **Carpathian Wetland Initiative**.

The CWI was in 2013 formally endorsed again by the Ramsar Convention Standing Committee as the Regional Initiative meeting the Operational Guidelines in the framework of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and received CHF 13,000 from the Ramsar core budget for support of its activities as proposed in the work plan (Decisions SC 46-13 and 46-23, <http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/sc/46/sc46-decisions-e.pdf>). More detailed Annual Summary Report for 2013 and Plan for 2014 was distributed for comments to all national focal points in the beginning of January 2014 and after no comments received it was sent to the Ramsar Convention Secretariat for submission to the next Ramsar Standing Committee meeting.

In 2013 the effort was concentrated to support the establishment of a Carpathian Wetland Centre in the facilities of the coordinating institution – the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic (SNC SR) in Banska Bystrica. Very good feedback was obtained from countries for CWI training activities for education specialists and teachers supported by the Ramsar Convention the Swiss Financial Mechanism and other sources. The cooperation between CWI and CNPA has been further strengthened at the 2nd CNPA Conference and included in the CNPA Medium Term Work Plan 2013-2017.

After official establishment of the Carpathian Wetland Centre (expected in the first quarter of 2014) renewed letters of support will be arranged from all Carpathian countries to confirm further interest in cooperation in this field. Written arrangements between the CWI Board, SNC SR, Ramsar Secretariat and Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention are required to be further recognized as the Ramsar Convention regional initiative.

Lack of capacity for implementation of the Ramsar Convention and CWI tasks is the main shortcoming in the Carpathian region; there is generally low feedback from Parties and overloading of participating institutions is reported. Good cooperation is mainly with the Czech Ministry of Environment and good feedback from Hungary; Ukraine was involved in fund raising activities. To improve the situation it is proposed to orient the future activities of the CWI in training and capacity building for improved implementation of the both Ramsar and Carpathian Convention in relevant fields of common interest.

The CWI has been involved in BioREGIO Carpathians project and some other relevant projects (Capacity Building Plans for Efficient Protected Area Management in Eastern Europe – PROPARK Foundation (RO) and BfN (DE)). The CWI requested further support from the Ramsar Convention core budget for the activities in 2014, but this is the last possibility and eligibility in this starting period and funding from other sources (including national funds and the Carpathian Convention budget) would be more than welcome. Efforts were made for fund raising especially in using Norway grants, including increased cooperation with other regional initiatives, like Nordic-Baltic Wetland Initiative.

CCIC:

- Recognizes the work of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative and requests the Secretariat, in cooperation with national Ramsar Convention focal points, to arrange renewed letters of support for further work of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative as the Regional Initiative of the Ramsar Convention and for implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Convention on Wetlands and UNEP Vienna - Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention of 2006;
- Supports further activities of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative and requests the Secretariat to organize a CWI meeting within the new Programme of Work 2015 - 2017;
- Reviews draft COP4 Decision.

<p>DECISION COP3/2 <i>Spatial development</i> <i>Article 5 of the Carpathian Convention</i></p>
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Para 4. Supports the implementation and calls for the further development of the Strategic Action Plan for the Carpathian Area, providing tangible benefits to the Carpathian regions, as an important contribution to the European Strategy for the Danube Region, and recommends the use of the Strategic Action Plan to be considered in discussions within existing and future European Union macroregional strategies and programmes.

Para 6. Invites the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, and the Euroregions located in the Carpathians, to support the process.

Para 7. Appreciates the support of the Association of Elected Representatives from Mountain Regions and of the Association of European Border Regions in the process and invites their further cooperation.

On 28 May 2013 the **Workshop “Towards a EU Strategy for the Carpathian Region”**, hosted by the **Committee of the Region**, Brussels, Belgium, was organized by the Secretariat in cooperation with the AEM (Association of Elected Representatives from Mountain Regions) and AEBR (Association of European Border Regions), that are important partners in the Carpathian Convention process, and with the assistance of the European Academy Bolzano (EURAC), which supports the activities of the Secretariat.

Representatives from the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions, Carpathian countries, regions, local authorities, NGOs and public associations acting in the Region participated in the Conference. The Workshop aimed at promoting the development of a EU Strategy for the Carpathian Region (Carpathian Strategy) integrating the EUSDR with those actions and projects that are a priority for the Carpathian Region but are not included in the EUSDR and linking the EUSDR with the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). Possible priority areas and actions/projects to be inserted in the Carpathian Strategy (including sustainable forest management, sustainable agriculture and rural development, cultural heritage, etc...) were discussed among the Workshop participants. On this basis the Secretariat amended the Draft working document on proposed priority areas and related actions/projects for a possible EU strategy for the Carpathian region (see Info doc. 3) . It was emphasized that EUSDR and the Carpathian Strategy processes are both very important for the Carpathian Area, also in order to promote strategic projects for the Carpathian Region in the next EU Financial Programmes. Furthermore it was considered important that all the Carpathian countries, regions and other stakeholders, will try to promote at EU level the priorities for the Carpathian Region for the next EU financial period 2014 – 2020 through available instruments, such as the Strategic Action Plan for the Carpathian Area. It was stressed that the Carpathian Strategy process and the efforts aimed at influencing the current negotiations for the next EU financial period are both very important and need an urgent action from all the stakeholders acting in the Region.

The Secretariat actively participated the in the conference entitled "**The macro-regional strategy for the Carpathian Region**", which was organized by Mr. Tomasz Poreba, Polish Member of the **European Parliament**, on 3 December 2013, in the European Parliament in Brussels. The aim of the conference was to spread and consolidate the image of the Carpathian Region at the European Union level and to further initiate the discussions on a possible Carpathian macroregional strategy. The invited guests included ministers of regional development from the seven Carpathian Convention countries as well as Austria, representatives of the Carpathian regions, experts from the European

Commission, ambassadors and members of the National Parliaments and the European Parliament. Interesting and concrete outcome of the meeting was the idea to establish an informal Carpathian Group in the European Parliament promoted by Mr. Poreba, which might be useful in terms of joint support for Carpathian issues at the EU level. See the conclusions after the conference (Info doc. 4)

During the Workshop the Secretariat delivered a presentation on the real perspective and possibilities for establishing the macroregional strategy for the Carpathians. That presentation explain, among others, that the EUSDR does not cover the whole Carpathians geographically, what is the perspective of the European Commission, and also has different priorities. Therefore, the relation of a Carpathian Strategy with the Danube Strategy needs further consideration in order to build complementarity instead of competition. The presentation is available on the Carpathian Convention website: <http://www.carpathianconvention.org/eventdetailothers/events/the-macro-regional-strategy-for-the-carpathian-region-conference.html>.

Para 5. Emphasizes the importance of full involvement of and support to this process by all relevant stakeholders, in particular the competent national authorities, regional and local authorities as well as civil society and private sector.

The Secretariat attended the **International Conference “Europe of the Carpathians”** on 23 February 2013 in Krasieczyn near Przemyśl, Poland. The Conference was organized, at the initiative of the Vice-Marshall of the Sejm, – Mr. Marek Kuchcinski, by the Sejm’s office together with the Association of the Carpathian Region.

High Level Governmental representatives and Members of Parliament of the Carpathian states as well as representative of the European Parliament, central and local governments, universities, entrepreneurs and non-governmental organisations of the Carpathian region participated in the conference.

The Conference programme was focused in particular on perspectives of strengthening parliamentary cooperation between the Carpathian and Central European states, main tasks for the parliamentarians engaged in the activities for the development of the Carpathians, among others, Carpathian Strategy (See Info doc. 5).

The Conference participants was informed that the Secretariat is organizing the Workshop on the Carpathian Strategy on 28 May 2013 in Brussels at the Committee of the Region (see para above). The meeting participants appreciated that information and expressed high interest in the participation at the Workshop.

The Secretariat attended also the next edition of the **Conference “Europe of the Carpathians”** held in Krynica - Zdroj, Poland, on 4 September 2013, within the 23rd Economic Forum in Poland. Similarly to the previous editions the Conference was organized at initiative of the Vice-Marshall of the Sejm, Mr. Kuchcinski.

The Conference was mainly focus on the motto “How can Carpathian countries make a contribution to Europe?”. One of the main objective of the Conference was to consolidate political and parliamentary cooperation of the Carpathian states. The discussions put a stress on such matters as: strengthening alliances based on the common Carpathian identity, responsible management of natural and cultural resources of the Carpathians and harmonising actions in areas of strategic importance for further development.

The invitation to the Conference was directed to the Deputy Speakers and MPs of all the Carpathian states, as well as representatives of the European Parliament and the European Commission and delegates from governments of the Carpathian states, local government bodies, universities and NGOs.

The Secretariat made an opening presentation in the session on Cultural and natural heritage of the Carpathians presenting 10 years of successes and significant achievements of the Carpathian Convention due to the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention celebrating in 2013.

One of the main outcomes of the Conference was the Carpathian Memorandum (see Info doc. 6) prepared and circulated by Poland,

During the second edition of the **Alpine – Carpathian Cooperation Forum** – organized by the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion in Poland, held in Rzeszow, Poland from 7 – 8 September 2013, the Secretariat contributed to the panel discussion concerning local and over-regional initiative of territorial cooperation for the Alps and the Carpathians.

That edition of the Forum was organized under a banner: „the Alps – the Carpathians. Mountain energy” and its main goal was to present potential and values of the Carpathian Euroregion. Panel discussions with a participation of experts from the whole Europe were a very important component of the Alpine-Carpathian Cooperation Forum. They concerned the issues of regional development, European policy, cross-border cooperation and tourism (see Info doc. 7)

The event was held within the framework of the “Alpine-Carpathian Cooperation Bridge” project supported by a grant from Switzerland through the Swiss Contribution to the enlarged European Union.

The Carpathian Convention assumed the honorary patronage of the second edition of the "Alpine-Carpathian Cooperation Forum".

CCIC:

- Supports the process towards the further development of a macroregional approach for the Carpathians, while building on synergies with other EU macroregional strategies and requests the Secretariat to assist the process;
- Requests the Parties and the Secretariat to promote the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the Carpathian Area and priority actions for the Carpathians in relevant meetings at EU level;
- Requests the Secretariat to organize a joint meeting with the Alpine Convention on exploiting synergies of overlapping macroregional strategies;
- Reviews the Draft working document on proposed priority areas and related actions/projects for a possible EU strategy for the Carpathian region;
- Reviews draft COP4 Decision.

DECISION COP3/3

*Sustainable and integrated water/river basin management
Article 6 of the Carpathian Convention*

Para 1. Welcomes the concluded mutual observership between the Danube River Protection Convention and the Carpathian Convention.

The Secretariat had regular contacts and exchange of information with International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) on the respective activities (e.g. activities related to the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region). The Secretariat is aiming to increase the cooperation and exchange of information regarding activities related to guiding principle for sustainable hydropower.

Para 3. And welcomes the Joint Declaration between the Danube River Protection Convention and the Carpathian Convention supporting the sustainable

development of the Carpathians and Tisza River Basin adopted in Uzhgorod on 11 April 2011, and encourages enhanced joint programming with International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River.

During the meeting in October 2012 the “Joint Declaration of the ICPDR Tisza Group and the Framework Convention on the Protection and the Sustainable Development of the Carpathians represented by the UNEP Vienna – Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention on the sustainable development of the Tisza River Basin” (Tisza River Basin Joint Declaration) was presented and discussed among the Tisza River Group, ICPDR and the Secretariat members (see Doc. 6)

This document of the Joint Declaration is planned to be signed in 2014. Furthermore, in 2013 an expert position has been established for the continuation of the Tisza activities, based in Hungary (National Institute for Environment).

CCIC:

- Supports the Secretariat to adopt new activities in the field of sustainable water management;
- Requests the Secretariat to seek signature of the Joint Declaration on the sustainable development of the Tisza River Basin together with ICPDR;
- Reviews draft COP4 Decision.

DECISION COP3/4

*Sustainable agriculture, rural development and forestry
Article 7 of the Carpathian Convention*

Para 2. Adopts the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians;

The **Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management** to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, adopted and signed at the Third Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (COP3, Bratislava, May 2011), entered into force for the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Romania and Ukraine on 21 October 2013, and for Hungary on 6 November 2013. After the deposit of ratification instruments by the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Ukraine and Romania, and in accordance with the provision of the Article 21 of the

Convention, the necessary number of instruments of ratification needed for the entry into force was established.

The Secretariat received the letter from his excellency Mr. Vasyl Pokotylo - Deputy Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organization in Vienna, informing about the entry into force of the Protocol as well as the updated table of signature and ratification status (see Signature and Ratification Status to the Carpathian Convention and its Protocols)

The successful entry into force of the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management to the Carpathian Convention was mentioned, among other forest related achievements and developments all over the world, in the third edition of the Regional Voices, Newsletter of the United Nations Forum on Forest Secretariat. The newsletter is available under following link: <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/files/2013/10/Regional-Voices-Issue-3.pdf>

Para 5. Welcomes the initiative of the establishment of the Carpathian Inventory of Virgin Forests;

Para 6. Requests the interim Secretariat to coordinate the preparation of a Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management, taking into account the work done under the auspices of the Working Group;

The Secretariat finalized the draft Partnership Agreement (PA) and the related Work Plan 2013 – 2015 between the Carpathian Convention and the European Environment Agency (EEA).

Follow-up of the Partnership Agreement, also according to the Joint Work Plan 2013-2015, will be a Joint Carpathian Convention and European Topic Centre on Spatial Information and Analysis (ETC - SIA) elaboration of a report on data and indicators relevant for sustainable forest management and for the elaboration of an inventory on the Carpathian forests. (Doc. 7). See DECISION COP3/8 for further information.

First concrete step for the cooperation between the Parties is the elaboration of the Terms of Reference (see Info doc. 8).

The Secretariat participated in the “Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Forest Management (WG Forest) - Workshop on Carpathian virgin forests in preparation of the Forest WG meeting of September 2013 in Poland” held in Baia Mare,

Romania, from 20 to 21 June 2013. The Workshop was organized by WWF DCP and was co-financed by IKEA.

The main objective of the Workshop was the elaboration of Criteria and indicators for selection of virgin forests in transboundary region, as called for by Article 10 of the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management to the Carpathian Convention (Forest Protocol) and as indicated in the WG ToRs. This Workshop was an intermediate step between the Forest WG meeting held in Djerdap National Park, Serbia, in April 2012, and the next Forest WG that took place in Rzeszów, Poland, from 4 to 6 September 2013, concerning the activities of the Forest WG related to virgin forests.

The WG Forest mentioned above was organized and co-financed by the Polish Ministry of the Environment. The main aim of the meeting was the further elaboration of the Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management to the Carpathian Convention (SAP Forest) – see Doc 8, which was developed mainly on the basis of the Forest Protocol and the Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity (Biodiversity Protocol). During the meeting the document was finalized and the WG Forest agreed that after the review done by the Secretariat to ensure the formal consistency to the other SAP's developed in the framework of the Convention as well as a English proofreading, the outcome of the WG Forest will be submitted by the Secretariat to the next meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee for consideration and recommendation for COP4 adoption. Recently the Secretariat has received comments to the SAP Forest from Ukraine and the Czech Republic (see Info doc. 9 and Info doc. 10).

The second outcome of the meeting was the finalization of the Criteria and indicators for selection of virgin forests in transboundary region (see Doc. 9). As well as in the case of the SAP, the Forest WG decided to submit the document to the CCIC for the further consideration.

During the meeting the Secretariat presented a possible future project “Bioenergy AC – Sharing best available technologies and promoting Partnership for sustainable biomass use for Energy between the Alps and the Carpathians”. The project was submitted in December 2011 under the 4th Call of the South East Europe Programme but the Monitoring Committee (MC) approved the application under conditions, due to the limited availability of ERDF resources at the time of the decision. Nevertheless, it was suggested to submit again the project under the new European Transnational Cooperation Danube Programme 2014-2020 (first Calls expected end 2014). For further information about the project, see DECISION COP3/5 para 3.

CCIC:

- Request the Working Group on Sustainable Forest Management to finalize the Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management to the Carpathian Convention for direct submission for consideration and adoption by COP4;
- Requests the Secretariat to produce a background document for the possible development of the protocol on sustainable agriculture to the Carpathian Convention;
- Welcomes the Partnership Agreement and the related Work Plan 2013 – 2015 between the Carpathian Convention and the European Environment Agency (EEA), and requests the Secretariat to organize the WG Forest meeting to discuss new activities deriving from the Partnership Agreement;
- Encourages the ratifications of the Forest Protocol by the Parties, which have not yet done so;
- Reviews draft COP4 Decision.

DECISION COP3/5

*Sustainable transport and infrastructure, Industry and energy
Article 8 of the Carpathian Convention, Article 10 of the Carpathian
Convention*

Para 1. Adopts the revised Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure, and calls for the development of a Protocol on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure.

Following a meeting of the **Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure Meeting** as series of meetings of the WG Transport were organized in Vienna: 26-27 February 2013, 4 to 5 June 2013 and 1 to 2 October 2013. The meetings were organized by the Secretariat in collaboration with EURAC and its Vienna Office and were technically and financially supported by the “Access2Mountain” Project. The meeting’s main purpose was to foster the further development of the draft text Protocol on Sustainable Transport and Infrastructure to the Carpathian Convention. Representatives of the Alpine Convention and its Working Group Transport provided continuously inputs to the elaboration of the draft text

Protocol. The WG members agreed to focus the scope of the Protocol on "Transport and transport- related Infrastructure" (whereas the official title of the Protocol is related solely to "Transport") Consultations between the members of the Working Group and follow-up informal meetings led to an agreed new version of the draft text Protocol. The draft text Protocol has been also shared with the Government of Ukraine, in its capacity as the Depositary to the Convention, for its final legal and editorial check (see Info doc. 11) In addition, editorial changes have been made to the text on behalf of the Secretariat. The new agreed version has been lately circulated by the Secretariats with WG members resulting in the incorporation of a last round of comments (mainly editorial) The Secretariat presents this version to the CCIC as the final version with the view of its possible consideration for adoption and signature by COP4 (see Doc. 10).

Several activities related to the implementation of the European Transnational Cooperation South East Europe **Access2Mountain project** (www.access2mountain.eu) have been developed.

The project "Access2Mountain" aims at achieving durable, environmentally friendly tourism, as well as to ensure accessibility and connection to, between and in sensitive regions of the Alps and the Carpathians. It should benefit all (potential) users. With the long-term perspective of increasing sustainable tourist mobility, railway and multimodal connections will be improved and attractive offers created via pre-investment measures, pilot activities, and investments. It is central to the project, to transfer experiences made and knowledge gained in the Alps to the South Eastern European region. In this regard, transnational cooperation in the field of sustainable regional development plays an important role. Touristic infrastructures are to be created or improved in a sustainable manner. This paves the way for achieving international environment aims and yield competitive advantage. The project will end in June 2014. One of the major components of particular interest to the Carpathian Convention is Working Package 7 that deals with policy and cooperation. EURAC together with the Secretariat is in charge of the implementation of this package. All Carpathian NFPs are observers to the project.

Besides the work on the Transport Protocol, the Secretariat continued to facilitate the exchange of experience between Alps and Carpathians in the context of the Working Group on Sustainable Transport of the Carpathian Convention, e.g. either through the presentation of Alpine Convention relevant experiences in the field and preparation of joint meetings between representatives of the Working Groups on Transport of both Conventions.

The Secretariat has actively contributed to the organization of the 9th edition of the Scientific Workshop on Mountain Mobility and Transport (SWOMM), by providing

technical support and substantive inputs to the Italian Ministry for the Environment and Sea (IMELS) the Italian Presidency of the Alpine Convention.

The Secretariat has also contributed to the elaboration of the Access2Mountain Common Charter on recommendations to European policy makers, on the basis of the results of the project.

The meeting was held on December 11th 2013 in Vienna at the Vienna International Center and was organized with the collaboration of the University of Camerino, EURAC Research, the Environmental Agency Austria and the Austrian Ministry of the Environment .

Inspired by the topics of the Access2Mountain project, the SWOMM 2013 focused on the role and the relationship between sustainable accessibility and sustainable tourism, as a mean to increase the attractiveness of mountain areas (particularly mostly isolated ones), improving the quality of life both of residents and tourists, preserving the natural habitat and cultural assets. Experts coming from research centres and involved public administrations discussed jointly about these topics and called for continuing the cooperation of the Carpathian and Alpine Convention on it.

The Secretariat further worked with its partners on the implementation of the Alpine Carpathian Corridor Project (AKK). The project (AKK Centre) received a further extension (AKK Centre Add on) until December 2013. The Secretariat took steps towards implementation of the concluded Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that established the framework for future cooperation and coordinated activities in the sector of spatial planning, transport and infrastructure, agriculture and nature protection. The MoU was signed in the frame of the International Conference on the Alpine Carpathian Corridor (AKK), organized by the Secretariat in Bratislava on 30 January 2012. In the context of the AKK Project, the Secretariat organized a meeting of the Ad Hoc AKK Memorandum of Understanding Working Group on 12 November 2013 (following a previously organized informal meeting) in Vienna to receive updates by MoU stakeholders (Ministries, motorway companies etc.) on activities and initiatives related to the implementation of the AKK MoU. (see Info doc 12).

In the meantime, the AKK Project has received attention on various levels, including the EU and the global levels. Besides its mentioning as a flagship project in the frame of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, the AKK Project has been also presented in UNEPs Annual Report 2012 as a flagship project as well as is mentioned as a flagship project in the context of the recently endorsed EU Strategy related to Green Infrastructure. AKK Project results and outcomes have been further disseminated by the Secretariat on various

occasions, including the IENE 2013 Scientific Workshop, organized 16 to 18 October 2013, in Luhačovice (Czech Republic).

The further implementation of the MoU on the AKK is important. Currently, consultations for a possible AKK sequel to be presented under the next call of the Austria-Slovakia Cross-border Programme are being held.

CCIC:

- Considers the Protocol on Sustainable Transport developed by the Working Group on WG on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure and agrees for its submission to COP4 for adoption;
- Requests the WG to continue to work on the topic “Sustainable transport and related infrastructure” depending on the funds available, aiming at a Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the Protocol, as well as cooperation with other Working Groups (i.p. Spatial Planning and Biodiversity);
- Requests the Secretariat to develop follow-up projects in the field of ecological connectivity, green infrastructure as well as European transport networks;
- Reviews draft COP4 Decision.

Para 3. Encourages future cooperation activities with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization and other relevant organizations in the field of renewable energies in the Carpathians.

The Secretariat promoted the **project “Bioenergy AC - Sharing best available technologies and promoting partnership for sustainable biomass use for energy between the Alps and the Carpathians”** under the Fourth Call of the European Transnational Cooperation South East Europe Programme on the basis of the request of the he EU Strategy for the Danube Region that calls for the reinforcement of the Carpathian Convention “to share best practices on producing and using biomass for energy purposes” and for the development of a project aimed at setting-up “a cooperation mechanism between the Alpine and Carpathian regions for the transfer of best practices, best available technologies, as well as environmental and social know-how” in the field of bioenergy.

The project Lead partner is Regione Veneto (Italy) and strives to create a powerful cooperation mechanism interlinking the Carpathian and Alpine Regions to sharing experiences and best practices concerning the sustainable production of renewable energy from biomass. The project aims at making the Carpathians a hot spot for innovative use of sustainable energy from biomass. It aims at supporting the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, the Renewable Energy DIRECTIVE 2009/28/EC, the EU Biomass Action Plan, the Green Paper on renewable sources of Energy, the Alpine Convention Energy Protocol and will be a first milestone project in contributing to implement Art. 10 - Industry and Energy - of the Carpathian Convention and Art. 14 of the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management of the Convention. Furthermore it aims at providing a platform for technology transfer and sharing of experiences between research institutes, the public sector and other relevant stakeholders of both the Alpine and the Carpathian region. It elaborates best available cost - effective technological systems and best practices and transfers them to regions / countries lacking in implementing renewable energy policies. Concerning legislation, the project tries to push the strengthening of legislation in promoting the sustainable production of renewable energy resources through good governance methods and strives to streamline policies on renewables in the target countries. It promotes the generation of concrete projects and initiatives building up technology and innovation capacity for the promotion of renewable energy sources in line with the requirements for a sustainability scheme for energy uses of biomass that take into account the need for biomass resources to be managed in a sustainable manner.

Bioenergy AC has been approved by the competent authorities but cannot be financed due to limited funds in the SEE Programme and together with the Lead Partner Regione Veneto there is the intention to present the project under the next EU Financing Period.

The Secretariat joined a partnership for developing the **project proposal "enerSKI"("Energy Efficiency, Networking and Capacity-Building for Skiing-Resorts")** that was presented under the Call 2012 of "Intelligent Energy Europe". The main objective of the project, developed under the leadership of the Energy Agency of Podravje is to increase rational use of energy and to support the use of renewable energy in ski resorts to reduce the environmental impact of winter sports activities. The project team intends to bridge the gap between the successful demonstration of innovative approaches, and its effective, broad market uptake in order to attain leverage of public- and private-sector investment, bring down costs, increase market experience and contribute to reducing the financial- and other perceived risks and barriers that hinder this type of investment. Unfortunately, the project missed the positive evaluation by one point and was not approved by the competent Programme authorities.

CCIC:

- Requests the WG to consider working on sustainable energy for example promoting sustainability criteria for energy production from and use of biomass in the Carpathians and promotion of application of the "Guiding principles on sustainable hydropower development in the Danube Basin" developed by ICPDR.

DECISION COP3/6

Sustainable tourism

Article 9 of the Carpathian Convention

Para 2. Requests the Secretariat and recommends the World Tourism Organization to continue the development of the sustainable tourism strategy with the involvement of relevant stakeholders and the support of the national tourism agencies;

A new project "Strategy for the Future Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians" has been launched. The main objective of the project is to establish the Tourism Strategy for the Carpathians, to be submitted as a draft for adoption at COP4, supporting the implementation of the Tourism Protocol.

The project, which is funded by the Advising-assistance Programme of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, will last until end of November 2014.

The main partners of the project are:

- Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE) as the main implementing organization
- CEEweb for Biodiversity (CEEweb) as the coordinating organization for NGOs
- World Wide Fund for Nature – Danube-Carpathian Programme (WWF-DCP) as the coordinating organization for the tourism business sector
- Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) with the coordinating function for the protected areas and tourism case studies
- the Secretariat as the coordinating institution for National Focal Points to the Carpathian Convention

Since 2006 the official institutions of the Carpathian Convention have been discussing the possible establishment of the Tourism Strategy for the Carpathians. At the Third Meeting of the Conference of the Parties held in Bratislava, Slovakia in 2011, the Parties

to the Convention recommended that such Strategy should reflect the content of the adopted Protocol on Sustainable Tourism. As the Strategy should be implemented by all stakeholders in the Carpathians, it was suggested that it should be easy to read, as short as possible, and reflect the current trends, demands and needs on sustainable tourism development and conservation of biodiversity.

All respective ministries of Carpathian Countries responsible for tourism issues were informed by the leading partner of the project – ETE – about the country consultations related to drafting of the Strategy for the Carpathians, which had started at the first NGO meeting held in Svaty Anton - Banská Stiavnica, Slovakia on 13 – 14 June.

During the fourth Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (WG Tourism), which took place on 21-22 October 2013 in Poiana Brasov, Romania (back-to-back to the Second European Ecotourism Conference), the draft text of the Tourism Strategy for the Carpathians was presented by the lead partner of the project (see the first draft Tourism Strategy – Info doc. 13) and then extensively discussed by the meeting participants (see the Meeting Report - Info doc. 14).

Based on the feedback received during the WG Tourism from the participants as well as on comments submitted later on by the countries experts to the Secretariat, the second draft of the Tourism Strategy was elaborated and circulated to the NFPs to the CC and WG Tourism members (see the second draft of the Tourism Strategy - Info doc. 15 and draft background information paper to the Strategy – Info doc. 16).

One of the provisions of the draft Tourism Strategy foresees an establishment of the Carpathian Coordination Centre (CCC), with the aim to coordinate the implementation of the strategy.

After circulating the second draft of the Tourism Strategy, the next round of comments from the Carpathian Countries was provided to the Secretariat. Due to the needed time for further amendments and consultations, it is suggested to extend the process of the establishing the Tourism Strategy and allow by the CCIC to provide the final version of it in a later stage. A brief timeline of next meeting explaining the different steps and deadlines until COP 4 was distributed to the NFPs and WG Tourism members (see Info doc. 17).

According to the above mentioned timeline and the offer submitted by Ukraine, the next meeting of the WG Tourism is planned to be held in May/June in Chernivtsi, Ukraine.

The Secretariat was invited by the Ministry of Sport and Tourism of Poland to participate at the First Carpathian States Tourism Forum, which will be organized on 27 - 28 May

2014 in Rzeszow, Poland. The meeting will be held together with the Fifth Innovations Forum and a common meeting of Tourism Ministers of the Carpathian Countries. The Secretariat was requested to deliver a presentation during the meeting. The information about the meeting will be circulate to the NFPs tighter with the Programme in due course.

CCIC:

- Requests the Secretariat to organize another meeting of the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism before COP4, in order to finalize the draft Strategy for direct submission for consideration and adoption by COP4.

Para 4. Adopts the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians;

The Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, adopted and signed at the Third Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (COP3, Bratislava, May 2011), entered into force on 29 April 2013. After the deposit of ratification instruments by the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary, and in accordance with the provision of the Article 21 of the Convention, the necessary number of instruments of ratification needed for the entry into force was established.

The Secretariat received the letter from his excellency Mr. Ihor Prokopchuk - Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organization in Vienna, informing about the entry into force of the Protocol as well as the updated table of signature and ratification status (see Signature and Ratification Status).

CCIC:

- Encourages the ratification of the Protocol by the Parties, which have not yet done so;
- Reviews relevant COP4 draft Decision.

DECISION COP3/7

*Cultural heritage and traditional knowledge
Article 11 of the Carpathian Convention*

Para 1. Being aware of the unique values of cultural heritage, recommends to support the creation of the Cultural Heritage Inventory and Programme of Activities;

Two meetings of the Working Group on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge – Cultural Heritage WG - (14-16 May, 2013, Krynica, Poland and 9-11 September, Rzeszow, Poland) were co-organized by the Secretariat, as well as by Ekopsychologia Association and UNEP/GRID-Warsaw Centre within the project “Carpathians Unite – mechanism of consultation and cooperation for implementation of the Carpathian Convention”, supported by Switzerland through the Swiss Contribution to the enlarged European Union.

The main objective of the Working Group meetings was the consideration of a proposal to develop a Protocol on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge. The draft version of the Protocol was prepared by UNEP/GRID-Warsaw Centre and included feedbacks from regional consultations conducted by Ekopsychologia Association in the frame of the Carpathians Unite project.

The final draft version the Protocol constituted the outcome of the two sessions of Cultural Heritage WG. An informal legal check as to the legal consistency of the Protocol, in particular its procedural provisions contained in Chapter 4 of the draft Protocol, was requested from the Depository of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (see Info doc. 11). Following the Cultural Heritage WG decision, the final draft version of the Protocol will be submitted to the CCIC for its consideration and possible recommendation for the COP4 (see Doc. 11). Recently the Secretariat has received the comments to the Protocol from the Czech Republic (see Info doc. 18 and 19).

The Secretariat participated in the Second Carpathian Unite project Steering Committee meeting held on 11 December 2013 in Krakow, Poland.

The Carpathian Convention took honorary patronage of the Carpathian Sheep Transhumance 2013, which was a project of traditional movement of the professional shepherds with 300 sheep through the Carpathians. This initiative was organized to celebrate historical transhumance of the Vlach shepherds, which in the past led to the settlement of the mountain area and the creation of a common pastoral culture in the Carpathians. The main objective of the Transhumance is the international meeting of

people who live and work in the Carpathians, their integration, the ability to learn and to show the cultural wealth of the inhabitants, as well as the richness and uniqueness of the nature. The priority for the project is the sustainable development of the mountain areas.

Furthermore the Secretariat attended the conference organized in the capacity in the Polish Presidency to the Visegrad Group, which was held on 10 May 2013 in the Brasov. The event was organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Bucharest, in cooperation with the Embassies of the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary and was devoted to the topic of sustainable development on the Carpathian region. During the conference the Secretariat delivered a speech on using existing instruments of cooperation to secure sustainable development of the region. The meeting was organized back to back with the launching of the Carpathian Sheep Transhumance 2013.

CCIC:

- Requests the Secretariat to organize another meeting of the Working Group on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge before COP4, in order to finalize the draft Protocol on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge before the submission of the document for consideration and adoption by COP4;

- Reviews relevant COP4 draft Decision.

DECISION COP3/8

*Environmental assessment/information system, monitoring and early
warning*

Article 12 of the Carpathian Convention

Para 1. Welcomes the finalization of the Partnership agreement (PA) and the related Work Plan 2013 – 2015 between the Carpathian Convention and the European Environment Agency (EEA), and requests the Secretariat to coordinate this process;

The Secretariat welcomes the finalization of the Partnership agreement (PA) and the related Work Plan 2013 – 2015 between the Carpathian Convention and the European Environment Agency (EEA).

The Partnership agreement (PA) is aimed at providing a durable basis for the collaboration between the EEA and the Carpathian Convention regarding the observation, collection of data, monitoring and information analysis with relevance to the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians. The goals of collaboration include the management of data flow between the EEA and the Carpathian Convention; the harmonization of the use of Carpathian indicators with EEA Indicators and their application; the strengthening of the cooperation with EIONET National Focal points and European Topic Centre, also with a view of promoting cooperation with other mountain ranges.

Follow-up of the Partnership agreement, also according to the Joint Work Plan 2013-2015, will be the Joint Carpathian Convention and European Topic Centre on Spatial Information and Analysis (ETC - SIA) elaboration of a report on data and indicators relevant for sustainable forest management and for the elaboration of an inventory on the Carpathian forests (document Doc. 7).

CCIC:

- Gives the Secretariat a mandate to sign the Partnership Agreement with the EEA on behalf of the Carpathian Convention;
- Requests the Secretariat to facilitate contacts between WG on Forest and the European Environment Agency / European Topic Centre on Spatial Information and Analysis;
- Reviews the relevant draft COP4 Decisions.

Para 2. Welcomes the preparation for Forum Carpaticum 2014 and recognizes the Science for the Carpathians Network as an important basis for policy making in the Carpathians, and requests the Secretariat to further develop modalities for cooperation.

The Secretariat participated to Science for the Carpathians Scientific (S4C) Steering Committee, held on 21-22 October 2013 in Krakow.

During the meeting it actively took part to the preliminary discussion about Forum Carpaticum 2014 – “Local Responses to Global Challenges” which will be held in Lviv, Ukraine, 16-19 September 2014.

It was decided that the main themes of the 3rd Forum Carpaticum (FC2014) should be related, but not limited, to the policy priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Horizon 2020 Programme, focusing on major challenges relevant for the Carpathian

ecoregion, like for example: ecosystem services and land use change; climate change, water and extreme events/hazards; natural and cultural heritage; smart mountains.

Furthermore, the Secretariat will keep regularly update the S4C Scientific Steering Committee about the Carpathian Convention Working Group meetings and next Carpathian Convention Institutional Meetings (CCIC, COP4), for the S4C direct involvement.

The Secretariat, within the wider UNEP network and in collaboration with its partners, further took efforts to promote the establishment of a Scientific Network for the Caucasus Mountain Regions, drawing on other established Scientific Networks for mountains, including Science for Carpathians.

CCIC:

- Welcomes the close cooperation between the Science for the Carpathians Initiative and the Carpathian Convention, and invites the Science for the Carpathians Initiative to deliver a keynote presentation to the high-level segment COP4;
- Reviews the relevant COP4 draft Decisions.

DECISION COP3/9

*Awareness raising, education and public participation
Article 13 of the Carpathian Convention*

Para 1. Welcomes the progress by Move4Nature, thanks the private sector for the contribution, and invites further support to the initiative;

A new **Move4Nature** Initiative page has been created on the Community Livelihood Platform (described below) <http://platform.bigfoot-project.eu/move4nature.html>, in order to bring more exposure to the initiative. In addition, a Slideshare page of UNEP Vienna ISCC – ESD was created, accessible from the Platform page, and the final presentations of the teachers trained during the Move4Nature initiatives were uploaded there.

The Secretariat has requested the **UNECE Steering Committee on ESD** to present its recent ESD-related activities at the upcoming Steering Committee meeting in April 2014, and to promote a **Carpathian regional network** within the UNECE ESD process. This will facilitate a connection between the partners of the Carpathian Convention and the

Steering Committee focal points from the Carpathian Countries, in order to support further development of ESD in the Carpathians in cooperation.

Para 2. Decides to actively support the expansion of the Tool Kit to other countries, and supports cooperation with other partners and other mountain regions in Education for Sustainable Development, such as the Alps, the Balkans and the Caucasus;

The Move4Nature Tool Kit provided the ground for further involvement of the secretariat in ESD partnerships, such as the RCE and the Lifelong Learning programme of the EU.

The Secretariat continues to be partner in the **Regional Center of Expertise (RCE)** in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) since 2011. The website has been set-up: <http://www.rce-vienna.at/>.

The Secretariat became a partner in the project “**Big Foot. Crossing Generations, Crossing Mountains,**” dedicated to lifelong learning, intergenerational learning and sustainable development. The role of the Secretariat included supporting capitalization and transferability of the project results in the Carpathians. The project was finished in July 2013. The website of the project, produced and maintained by the Secretariat, contains all relevant information in several languages: <http://www.bigfoot-project.eu/home.html>

The Secretariat organized the **final Big Foot conference “Intergenerational Learning and Innovation for Sustainable Development”** in the Vienna International Center on June 5th-6th, starting on the World Environment Day, in cooperation with the Academic Council on the United Nations System. The high-level speakers at the conference included Alan Hatton – Yeo, Chief Executive Officer of the Beth-Johnson-Foundation and Coordinator of the European Map of Intergenerational Learning, and Jan Dusik, the acting director of UNEP ROE. The RCE, mentioned above, participated in part of the Big Foot project evaluation activities.

As part of the project deliverables, the **Big Foot Transferability Tool Kit** has been produced by UNEP Vienna and presented at the final conference. The printed versions are available in English, and electronic versions on the website - in English, Italian, Bulgarian and Greek. The Tool Kit contains description of the project activities and advice from the partners, in order to enable transferability of the project activities to the Carpathian Countries and other mountain regions.

The Secretariat facilitated writing another Lifelong Learning project – **Innovation in Rural Tourism (InRuTou)**, which received funding from the EC and was launched in February 2013, and which includes partners from Poland (Ekopsychology Society), Romania (Romontana) and Ukraine (Green Dossier). The project aims at vocational training in sustainable tourism development of the local population of the rural areas, by creating ICT learning modules and destination – promotional tools. Information about the project can be found on the website: <http://inrutou.eu/> or the Community Livelihood Platform.

Para. 3 Requests the Secretariat, in consultation with Parties, Northern Alliance for Sustainability and other stakeholders, to explore possibilities for the further development and finalization of the Public Participation Strategy.

Intergenerational programs, such as Big Foot play an important role in supporting public participation in community development, which is especially relevant for the mountainous regions, where the older generation holds a lot of traditional knowledge, and the younger inhabitants often plan to move away, which threatens the maintenance of cultural heritage, traditional land use practices, as well as culturally-sensitive innovation, and renders sustainable development of rural communities more difficult. The Big Foot project deliverables include the Participatory Mapping Guidelines, available electronically in English on the Big Foot website in the publication section. The Transferability Tool Kit also makes a reference to Participation and suggests further resources to support communities' participatory initiatives.

In order to make use of this mechanism, the electronic **Community Livelihood Platform** has been developed by the Secretariat, which connects the Big Foot project with the Carpathian Convention community electronically, and which includes links to the Move4Nature Initiative and Tool Kit, the Cultural Heritage Inventory, InRuTou project, etc.

The aim of the platform is to provide space for participation of the local community actors by sharing their stories and initiatives in various thematic areas, such as ESD, intergenerational learning, cultural heritage, tourism, sustainable production and consumption, etc, and to demonstrate that these themes are interrelated and equally important in sustainable development initiatives. The URL of the platform is: <http://platform.bigfoot-project.eu/>. A direct link to the platform has been added to the Carpathian Convention website, page on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge.

The Secretariat also introduced the idea of intergenerational learning to the Carpathian Protected areas by informing the CNPA steering committee about the Big Foot project, and presenting it at the CNPA Conference in April 2013, at the workshop on future

project ideas. Several protected areas expressed interest in this approach and indicated the need for intergenerational learning, which would enable to strengthen public participation in Protected area (PA) management, to preserve traditional land use practices, and to enhance PA cooperation with the locals in ESD and economic development of the communities.

In order to highlight Intergenerational learning importance for public participation and empowerment, the Big Foot Project was also presented at the annual conference Romanian rural tourism in the context of sustainable development in Vatra Dornei, Romania, in May 2013. Moreover, Intergenerational learning was included in the Draft Cultural Heritage protocol.

The InRuTou project also has a community participation component: partners from Poland, Romania and Ukraine carried out community consultations, in order to base the training on the community needs. Moreover, one of the objectives of the project is to facilitate community consultation and participation as the basis of the rural tourism development process.

CCIC:

- Requests the Secretariat to promote the use of the Community Livelihood Platform by sharing it with the relevant national and regional partners and stakeholders;
- Requests the Secretariat to promote the Big Foot Transferability Tool Kit and the Move4Nature Tool Kit among the relevant stakeholders, in order to facilitate their use in the Carpathian countries;
- Considers the Regional Center of Expertise (RCE) Vienna as a possible model for the Carpathian countries;
- Request the Secretariat to contact the respective Carpathian focal points of the UNECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development, in order to support the establishment of the Carpathian ESD network.

DECISION COP3/10

Cooperation with the European Union

Para 1. Welcomes the European Commission Communication on the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) and the accompanying Plan of Action, in particular its references to the Carpathian region and to the Carpathian Convention, as well as the included priority issues and flagship projects relevant for the Carpathian region. Reiterates the importance of the Carpathian region as the area relevant both for the Baltic and the Danube macroregional strategies and underlines the need to reflect this in the implementation of the EUSDR as well as in future activities related to the development of the EU macroregional approach.

Para 3. Invites the Parties to further solicit support from European Territorial Cooperation funds, SDC cohesion funds, Norwegian fund, LIFE, European Neighbourhood and partnership Instrument and Instrument for pre Accession Assistance, and requests the Secretariat to ensure coordination in project development and implementation.

Paara 4. Calls upon Parties, supported by the Secretariat, to cooperate with European Union bodies in further promoting the “Carpathian Space” concept in the context of existing or planned European Union cooperation programmes (e.g. such as under the European Union Territorial Cooperation budget for 2014-2020.

The Secretariat actively participated in the Fourth EU Strategy for the Danube Region Priority Area 6 (“**Preserving Biodiversity, Landscapes and the Quality of Air and Soil**”) Steering Group (EUSDR PA6 SG) meeting on 06 March 2013 in Zagreb, Croatia.

The participation of the Secretariat was focused mostly on the promotion of Carpathian Convention activities related to the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and on establishing contacts with European Commission – DG REGIO and other relevant stakeholders. The PAs coordinators and SG members highly appreciate the efforts of the Carpathian Convention related to its contribution to the implementation of the EUSDR.

The Secretariat had the opportunity to contact the Representative of European Commission – DG REGIO for the EUSDR – Environmental Pillar, that supported the idea of promoting a EU Strategy for the Carpathian Region “bridging” the Danube and Baltic Strategies and “completing” the EUSDR with few priorities for the Carpathians that are not included in the already existing strategies.

The Conference was organized by the PA 6 coordinators (Mr. Ballnus, Ministry of the Environment of Bavaria, Ivna Vukšić and Ana Kobaslic, Ministry of Environment and

Nature Protection of Croatia) and the representatives of the SG and of the European Commission – DG REGIO and of ICPDR participated in the meeting.

The Secretariat requested the label of the EUSDR for the BIOREGIO Carpathians project in order to strengthen the visibility of the project and to further increase the support from the European Commission according to the procedure established by the PA 6 Steering Committee.

The Secretariat had also regular contacts with the **European Commission – DG Regional Policy, the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions** on the contribution of the Carpathian Convention to the EU Strategy of the Danube Region, on the possible future Carpathian Strategy and on the next European Territorial Cooperation Programmes.

Finally the Secretariat enjoys the financial support of the **European Commission – DG Environment** for the activities related to the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change through the CARPIVIA project and has regular contacts with the European Commission contact point for CARPIVIA (for further information on the Secretariat activities in the climate change sector see below DECISION COP 3/15).

In addition, the Secretariat organized the **Workshop “Towards a EU Strategy for the Carpathian Region”**, hosted by the **Committee of the Region**, Brussels, Belgium, on 28 May 2013 (see DECISION COP3/2 for further information).

The Secretariat actively participated the in the conference entitled "**The macro-regional strategy for the Carpathian Region**", which was organized by Mr. Tomasz Poreba, Polish Member of the **European Parliament**, on 3 December 2013, in the European Parliament in Brussels (see DECISION COP3/2 for further information).

CCIC:

- Request the Secretariat to contact the respective Permanent Representations and Embassies in Brussels in order to support the request of the accession of the EU to the Carpathian Convention towards the European Commission – DG Environment and DG Regional Development;
- Noting that the Carpathian Convention is a holistic instrument for sustainable regional development, requests the Secretariat to promote a further strengthening of cooperation with the DG Regional Development;

- Reviews draft COP4 Decision.

DECISION COP3/11

Cooperation with the Alpine Convention

Para 1. Welcomes the cooperation with the Alpine Convention in the framework of the concluded Memorandum of Understanding, and requests the Secretariat to continue to strengthen the cooperation with the Alpine Convention in the fields such as institutional cooperation, the exchange of information and experience, the development and implementation of common projects, the collaboration on the implementation of the Conventions and their respective Programmes of Work, the implementation of the Convention Biodiversity Programmes of Work on Protected Areas and Mountain Biodiversity and the collaboration in the field of protected areas networks in the Alps and the Carpathians.

The Secretariat participated as observer at both the **52 and 53 Permanent Committee of the Alpine Convention** organized under the Italian Presidency respectively in Bolzano, Italy, on 7 - 8 March 2013 and in Cortina d'Ampezzo, on 26 - 27 June 2013.

The Secretariat supported the Italian Presidency of the Alpine Convention in the organization of the first **Task Force Meeting on International Mountain Cooperation** held on 6 – 7 June 2013 in Budoia, Italy.

Several stakeholders from different mountain regions including the Alps, Carpathians, Caucasus, Dinaric Alps and the Tien Shan - Pamir ranges participated in the Workshop which focused on sub-national / local levels of cooperation in mountain areas. The aim of the meeting was to identify cooperation sites, pointing some urgent challenges for mountain regions and detect some priority areas for taking action.

Through the workshops of the Task Force, the Secretariat and the Italian Presidency of the Alpine Convention aim at delivering a final document where a strategy for implementing Sustainable Mountain Development (SMD) and creating new partnership networks in mountain regions are outlined.

The Secretariat actively contributed as observer in the Workshop **“The Alpine Convention and EXPO 2015”** organized by the Italian Presidency of the Alpine Convention on 1 October 2013 in Sondrio, Italy.

The Workshop focused on evaluating and developing modalities for the contribution of the Alpine countries and other mountainous regions to the Universal Exposition (EXPO)

that will be held in Milano, Italy from May to October 2015. The discussion brought forward the great opportunity of EXPO Milano 2015 to showcase the experience of regional cooperation for the sustainable development of a mountain transboundary region as well as the actions and good practices of mountain regions such as the Alps and the Carpathians.

In this frame the Secretariat is willing to facilitate the networking between the National Focal Points to the Carpathian Convention and the Commissioners for the National Pavilions at EXPO 2015.

Besides the work on the Transport Protocol, the Secretariat continued to facilitate the exchange of experience between Alps and Carpathians in the context of the Working Group on Sustainable Transport of the Carpathian Convention, e.g. either through the presentation of Alpine Convention relevant experiences in the field and preparation of joint meetings between representatives of the Working Groups on Transport of both Conventions.

The Secretariat supported the Italian Presidency of the Alpine Convention and Italian Presidency of the Alpine Convention in the organization of the 9th edition of the Scientific Workshop on Mountain Mobility and Transport (SWOMM 2013) which was held in Vienna, Austria on 11 December 2013.

The meeting was organized in the frame of Access2Mountain, the project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund through the Programme "South-East Europe", with the support of the University of Camerino, EURAC Research, the Environmental Agency Austria and the Austrian Ministry of the Environment. (See DECISION COP3/5 for further details).

Experts coming from research centres and from the Alpine and Carpathian Transport Working Groups, involved public administrations, representatives of the Italian and Austrian Ministry of the Environment and Austrian Ministry of Transport jointly discussed about the relationship between sustainable accessibility and sustainable tourism in mountain areas and called for continuing the cooperation of the Carpathian and Alpine Convention on these issues.

Para 2. Also welcomes the joint approaches made by the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions to EU institutions, and encourages further cooperation to ensure the contributions of the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions in the consideration or development of macro-regional strategies and mountain-relevant policies at the European (EU) level.

The Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention are willing to have a joint political declaration between both conventions to be adopted in Lima, Peru in December

2014 during the UNFCCC COP20 at the Mountain Pavilion. (see DECISION COP3/15 para.1 for further information).

Moreover the Italian Presidency of the Alpine Convention will participate at the Carpathian Convention Conference of the Parties (COP 4) in Mikulov (24-26 September 2014) and will invite the Carpathian Convention to the Torino Alpine Conference in November 2014.

CCIC:

- Supports the idea of a joint political declaration between Alpine and Carpathian Conventions to be adopted in Lima Peru in December 2014 during the UNFCCC COP20 at the Mountain Pavilion and requests the Secretariat to assist the process;
- Welcomes the initiative by the Italian Presidency of the Alpine Convention and of the Carpathian Convention to organize a joint meeting on sharing of experiences regarding EU macroregional strategies, and requests the Secretariat to support the organization of the meeting.

DECISION COP3/12

On Cooperation with other conventions and international bodies

Para. 2 Welcomes and supports further specific cooperation with International Conventions and international bodies, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Ramsar Convention, the Aarhus Convention, the European Landscape Convention, the Council of Europe, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the European Space Agency, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, the Central European Initiative and the Carpathian EcoRegionInitiative, the REC, UNEP.

Following the long-term process with the involvement of the global mountain community and the inclusion of a mountains chapter in the **Rio+20 Conference outcome “The Future We Want”** (see Info doc. 20, in particular para.210-212) the Secretariat took efforts to implement the “mountains” chapter. Following-up to the Rio Summit, the UN Secretary General (UNSG) has mandated UNEP together with FAO and UNESCO to lead the implementation of the “mountains” chapter as included in the Rio+20 outcome document “the Future We Want” (paras.210-212). In this context, various events and

activities have been organized by the Secretariat and its partners with the view of fostering experience exchange with other mountain regions. Activities undertaken included the following: the Task Force Meeting on International Mountain Cooperation established by the Italian Presidency of the Alpine Convention with the support of UNEP, 6-7 June 2013, Budoia, Italy (see DECISION COP3/15 for further information about the meeting), Celebration of the International Mountain Day 2013 (11 December as designated by the UN General Assembly), a series of events with regards to the Scientific Network for the Caucasus Mountain region, a series of event with regards to the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and mountains**, contribution to Fourth Meeting of the Global Mountain Partnership, 17-19 September 2013 (Erzurum, Turkey) etc.

The Secretariat participated and contributed to the **Fourth Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership**, held in Erzurum (Turkey), 17 to 19 September 2013..During the meeting the future and new governance structure of the Partnership was discussed and endorsed by its members. During the meeting, participants addressed *inter alia*: the new Mountain Partnership Strategy and Governance; mountains in Rio+20 and the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the Mountain Forum knowledge platform for sustainable mountain development; regional coordination mechanisms; and the selection of the Steering Committee. Thematic working groups considered how to put the Mountain Partnership into practice. Parallel regional meetings, Partnership Fairs and side events also took place.

The Secretariat was invited to present the experiences of the Carpathian Convention under the item regional cooperation and contribute to a side event related to European mountains and stressed the importance to mainstream mountain-related issues into the SDGs. At the meeting it was noted, that many Carpathian countries are not yet members of the MP. At the moment the future participation and role of the Secretariat in the Partnership has to be further discussed with Carpathian Convention National Focal Points.

The Secretariat, through UNEP, provided various inputs to the UN Secretary General's Report on Sustainable Mountain Development (coordinated by Mountain Partnership Secretariat) that was presented to the UN General Assembly in autumn 2013. Various Carpathian-related information has been included in the aforementioned report (see the Report of the Secretary General on Sustainable mountain development – Info doc. 21). In its recommendations, the UNSG also stressed the importance of the Alpine and Carpathian Convention: “(d) *Promote, where relevant, the establishment of regional mechanisms for coordinated and integrated transboundary cooperation and knowledge sharing for sustainable mountain development, strengthen existing mechanisms such as*

the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions and promote the exchange of experiences and lessons learned". The UN General Assembly further adopted Resolution A/RES/68/217 related to Sustainable Mountain Development on 20 December 2013, stressing again the importance of the Alpine and Carpathian Convention, following the intervention of the Secretariat and some Carpathian countries.

Following the meeting of the Global Mountain Partnership and the Report of the UNSG, the Secretariat, through UNEP, partnered with various institutions, including with its collaborating centre GRID Arendal (GRIDA), the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), CDE Bern, FAO/MP Secretariat and other partners (ICIMOD, CONDESAN, Alpine Convention etc.) to mainstream mountain-related issues into the current Post-2015 Process and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) discussions. As part of this overall initiative, a series of thematic briefs (see Info doc. 22 ,23 and 24) related *inter alia* to energy, climate change and disaster risk reduction, forestry and biodiversity has been prepared (including proposals for mountain-specific targets and indicators, drawing on the various information and data that has been gathered including in the context of the Carpathian Convention) that should guide discussions in the context of the Open Working Group (OWG) in New York. For this purpose, various events have been organized, including a meeting of the Mountain Focus Group (attended by Carpathian countries) on 16 October 2013 in New York as well as side event related to climate change and disaster risk reduction in the frame of the 7th session of the OWG, 8 January 2014 in New York, an International event "Why mountains matter for the Post2015 Process" organized on the occasion of the celebration of the International Mountain Day (11 December as designated by the UNGA) in Vienna.

A joint GRID Arendal – UNEP unit has been established in summer 2013 to support the work of the UNEP Vienna Office also with the view of promoting experience exchange and lessons learnt between the Alps and Carpathians with other mountain regions. The Secretariat, through the wider UNEP Network, works very closely with its Regional Office for Europe (ROE), Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI) , collaborating centre GRID Arendal in the context of sustainable mountain development, and to promote the Carpathian Convention in various fora and platforms.

Furthermore **relevant documents and publications** related to the "global mountain agenda" have been developed in follow-up to Rio+20 with contribution of the Secretariat, e.g. "Mountains: Our Life, Our Future – Progress and perspectives on sustainable mountain development" (produced by SDC, CDE Bern and others) as well as other relevant publications that will emerge in 2014 addressing the topics climate change and tourism, drawing as well on the experiences and lessons-learnt of the Carpathians.

CCIC:

- Requests the secretariat to continue to promote the Carpathian Convention and sustainable mountain development in the context of the Rio+20 Follow up and of the development of the Sustainable Development Goals, in cooperation with UNEP, FAO and UNESCO
- Reviews draft COP4 Decision

DECISION COP3/13

Programme of work and budget of the Carpathian Convention

See Updated list of Carpathian Convention meetings (see CC Meetings 2015 – 2017)
See the Follow Up Platform for the Carpathian Convention (see Follow Up Platform).
See the updated ToRs of the Carpathian Convention Working Groups (see CC WG ToRs)

CCIC:

- Supports to the proposed dates and locations of the next Carpathian Convention meetings and requests the Secretariat to supports organization of the meetings;
- Reviews draft COP4 Decision including Annexes (Programme of Work 2015-2017 of the Carpathian Convention);
- Supports the idea of organizing the joint meetings of Working Group and requests the Secretariat to coordinate these initiatives;
- Reviews the Follow Up Platform for the possible future Carpathians Convention projects;
- Reviews and submit the updated ToRs of the Carpathian Convention Working Groups for COP4 approval.

DECISION COP3/14

Administration and financial management of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention) and its Protocols

By Decision COP3/14 of 27 May 2011, the Contracting Parties, inter alia:

- Agreed to establish a Trust Fund to cover the cost of administering and meeting the objectives of the Carpathian Convention and related Protocols, including the functioning of its Secretariat (para 12);
- Adopted the terms of reference for the administration of the Trust Fund as annexed to the decision (para 12);
- Decided that the Convention's Programme of Work and budget for 2012 – 2014 be used as the budget of the Trust Fund (para 14), and
- Requested the Executive Director of UNEP to assume responsibility for administering the Trust Fund, and to delegate the necessary administrative authorities to the Head of the Secretariat in line with the Rules and Regulations of the United Nations (para 15);;

The terms of Reference of the Trust Fund, adopted by the COP, inter alia:

- Repeated that the Executive Director of UNEP can delegate the administration of the Trust Fund to the Head of the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention and related Protocols (para 2);
- Stated that the budget estimates, covering the income and expenditures for the financial period to which they relate, shall be submitted to and approved by the COP (para 9);
- Stated that it is for the COP and UNEP to agree on and administrative support charge to be paid to UNEP (para 10);
- Suggested that at the end of each calendar year the Executive Director will through the Head of the Secretariat, submit to the Contracting Parties, the certified accounts for that year.

Following the request of COP3, the UNEP Deputy Executive Director (DED) on 17 January 2012 provisionally approved the establishment of a Trust Fund for the Carpathian Convention noting that “the purpose of the Trust Fund is clearly defined by the terms of reference agreed at COP3”. Included in the approval was the proposal that Programme Support Cost will be charged at the rate of 13%; in line with ST/AI/286. The UNEP Governing Council, in its 27th session held in Nairobi in February 2013, by Decision 27/14, approved the establishment of what it called “the Trust Fund for the Core Budget of the Carpathian Convention for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians and Related Protocols”². The Trust Fund was established for two years with an expiry date of December 2014.

² Decision 27/14: Management of trust funds and earmarked contributions 22 The Governing Council, Having considered the report of the Executive Director on the management of trust funds: 1. Notes and approves the establishment of the following trust funds since the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council: Trust funds in support of regional seas programmes, conventions, protocols and special funds 3. Notes and approves the establishment of the following trust fund since the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council: CAP – Trust Fund for the Core Budget of the Carpathian

CCIC:

- Considers that COP3 decided to establish the Trust Fund for a period of 3 years, i.e. formally to 27 May 2014, whereas the Trust Fund arrangement in UNEP ends already in December 2014. Consequently COP4 has to decide on an extension of the Trust Fund and request and provide guidance to UNEP for extending the arrangement beyond December 2014 with another two years;

-Considers that COP3 wanted the COP and UNEP to agree on and administrative support charge to be paid to UNEP whereas UNEP unilaterally decided on a charge of 13%. Consequently COP4 may wish to request UNEP to, at the least inform and seek an agreement with the Contracting Parties as to the use of the PSC;

-Considers that COP3 requested the Executive Director of NEP to delegate the necessary administrative authorities to the Head of the Secretariat in line with the Rules and Regulations of the United Nations. Consequently COP4 may wish to request the Executive Director of UNEP to inform the Contracting Parties about the delegation of authority which he has put in place;

-Reviews both the certified financial statement and the proposed decision by COP4, prepared by the Secretariat;

DECISION COP3/15

Climate change

Para 2. Emphasizing the importance of climate change and its impact for the implementation of the Carpathian Convention;

The Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention are willing to have a joint political declaration between both conventions to be adopted in Lima, Peru in December 2014 during the UNFCCC COP20 at the Mountain Pavilion.

The declaration should focus on the adoption of Guidelines on Climate Change adaptation at local level and on Macro-regional strategies. The text of the declaration should be prepared through two technical meetings to take place jointly between the two Conventions.

The Secretariat will be in charge of organizing the Climate Change Working Group (foreseen for March 2014 in Vienna) and extend the invitation to the Alpine countries while the Alpine Convention and the Italian Presidency will take care of the Macro-regional meeting (probably in May 2014 in Italy) and invite the Carpathian Convention countries.

For information about previous meetings of WG on Climate Change, since the establishment of the Working Group (COP3), please see the Progress Report 2012 (see Info doc. 25). After the last meeting of the WG on Climate Change the Strategic Agenda on Adaptation to Climate Change was finalized (see Doc. 12)

The Secretariat participated in the **Circle 2 MOUNTain Final Meeting** held on 26 and 27 of September in Barcelona, Spain. Several representatives of institutions from Spain, France, Austria and other Alpine countries were invited to attend the conference and presentations on adaptation to Climate Change in different mountain regions of the world were delivered.

At the margins of the conference the Secretariat met with the organizers of the meeting in order to discuss the main results of the conference and possible connections between EEA ClimatADAPT and the mountain regions. The future developments and tasks of the Eger Group were also taken into account.

The Secretariat attended the **High Summit 2013 Meeting** organized by Ev-K2-CNR which was held from 23 to 25 October 2013 in Lecco, Italy.

The Secretariat took active part in the **International Symposium on Climate Change** organized by the Working Community of the Pyrenees (CTP) as part of the Pyrenees Climate Change Observatory (OPCC) held on 6 November 2013 in Pamplona, Spain.

Within the section dedicated to international cooperation in mountain areas the Secretariat delivered a presentation on “Adaptation efforts on Climate Change in the Carpathians and in the Alps”, stressing the role and work of the Carpathian Convention and of the Alpine Convention by highlighting the ongoing projects dealing with adaptation to climate change in the two regions.

The Secretariat is partner in the European Transnational Cooperation Alpine Space “**ALPSTAR – Towards carbon neutral Alps**” project (www.alpstar-project.eu).

The EU funded Alpine Space project is addressing the need for well-directed and cross-cutting action to effectively manage climate change and reduction of climate-damaging

emissions in the Alpine region which was expressed in the Action Plan on Climate Change in the Alps approved within the frame of the Alpine Convention during the 10th Alpine Conference. Furthermore, ALPSTAR also encourages good practice climate change reduction measures on a regional and local level. With a total budget of 2,79 million Euros, the three year project will last until 31 June 2014. The final conference will take place on the 27-29 May 2014 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

The UNEP Vienna – ISCC office provides input for agreement on common methodology and common criteria and standards on what is considered as a good practice in strategies, action plans and measures toward carbon neutrality. In addition, UNEP Vienna transfers project results and outcomes to stakeholders in different Alpine and other towns and stakeholders from Carpathian Convention and Dinaric Arc Initiative through its well established channels and will guarantee an adequate Media coverage of the project through the organization and support of the Final Conference. Finally, UNEP Vienna supported the establishment of the Policy Board which gathers together experts in the field of climate change adaptation to elaborate recommendations on climate change strategies.

The Secretariat is also partner in the European Transnational Alpine Space **“C3ALPS-Capitalising climate change knowledge” project** (<http://www.c3alps.eu>).

C3-Alps is a transnational capitalisation project. Building on the results of previous projects (for ex.CLISP) and initiatives on adaptation to climate change in the Alps, C3-Alps seeks to synthesize, transfer, and implement in policy and practice the best available adaptation knowledge. By applying a knowledge transfer concept driven by the information and communication needs of target groups, the project optimizes the usability of available knowledge resources in an attempt to bridge the gap between the generation of adaptation knowledge and its application in real-world decision-making.

UNEP Vienna - ISCC is, in the frame of the C3ALPS Project, communicating the project results and sharing outcomes with ministries, international governmental organizations, international non-governmental organizations, EU institutions, UN agencies and expert communities on the international level, including with leading international climate change expert institutions. Furthermore, UNEP was engaged in involving and financing experts from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) providing a scientific perspective on the project results, as well as in financing two external experts in the sectors health, energy and agriculture for the knowledge Inventory Platform (a platform regrouping all the knowledge and results collected in previous Alpine Space projects). The UNEP ISCC office will co-organize the final conference which will take place on the 14.10.2014 in Vienna, Austria. The project will end on the 31.12.2013.

The Secretariat, within the wider UNEP network, further raised successful funds for the implementation of the inter-regional project “Climate change action in developing countries with fragile mountainous ecosystems from sub-regional perspective”.

The project contributes to the implementation of the UNEP Programme of Work, subprogramme: climate change and aims at replicating the experiences gained in the Alpine and Carpathian Convention (regional action towards climate change adaptation) in the following regions: Africa, Andes, Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia. The multi-year project (2013-2017) will have a total budget of 1.75 Mio EUR (funded by the Government of Austria under the Fast Start Finance Mechanism of the UNFCCC) and be implemented by UNEP Vienna ISCC in close collaboration with DEPI and other partners.

The project forms a contribution to the implementation of the Rio+20 outcome related to mountains and the operational mandate as included in para. 211: *“We invite States to strengthen cooperative action with effective involvement and sharing of experience of all relevant stakeholders, by strengthening existing arrangements, agreements and centres of excellence for sustainable mountain development, as well as exploring new arrangements and agreements, as appropriate.”*

CCIC:

- Welcomes the outcomes of the Carpivia and Carpatclim projects and the related activities by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) and requests the Working Group on Climate Change to possibly develop follow up activities;
- Recommends and submits the Strategic Action Plan for Adaptation to climate change, developed by the Working Group on Climate Change, for COP4 approval;
- Supports and welcomes the organization of a joint meeting together with the Alpine Convention Task Force on climate change, aiming at developing a joint message on climate change and mountains to be presented at the COP20 of UNFCCC to be held in Lima, Peru, from 1 – 20 December 2014, and to exchange experience between Alpine and Carpathian Conventions on local adaptation plans, and requests the Secretariat to support the organization of the meeting;
- Reviews draft COP4 Decision.

DECISION COP3/16
Location of Permanent Secretariat

Para 1. Underlines the need and urgency of taking a decision on the location of the Permanent Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention and decided that, serviced by the interim Secretariat, a meeting at expert level will be held within six months to prepare for High-level meeting to be organized by the Presidency. In preparation for the meetings Country offers should be updated, proposed sites should be visited, and criteria for the selection of the location should be prepared.

In accordance with the decisions of the fourth meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (Vienna, 5-7 December 2012) regarding the submission of new, complemented or amended offers on the location of a permanent Secretariat by 31 May 2013, the Secretariat received offers from four Parties: Poland submitted offer for Rzeszow (see Info doc. 26), Slovakia submitted new offer for Bratislava (see Info doc 27), Romania provided an update on the current Romanian offer - Brasov (See Info doc 28), Ukraine has informed that, in accordance with Decisions of the Fourth Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee and the Decision COP3/16 "Location of Permanent Secretariat" and the interim secretariat letter dated 01.02.2013, the proposal to host a permanent Secretariat of the Kyiv Convention (Carpathian Convention) in Chernivtsi, Ukraine, remains unchanged.

Next, the Secretariat finalized the comparison of the offers received and distributed it to the Parties for the consideration at the next meeting of the CCIC (see Info doc. 29).

The further discussion may be assisted by some additional information concerning what the host country would be willing to consider or offer over and above its original submission, such as related financial issues, conditions and other contributions to meet the operating costs of the Secretariat.

Furthermore, the Secretariat prepared a comparative estimate of secretariat costs at the given location as well as the existing arrangement.

CCIC:

- Gives guidance as to the way forward regarding the location of the Secretariat.

USE OF THE LOGO OF THE CARPATHIAN CONVENTION

CCIC:

- Recommends and submits the use of the logo of the Carpathian Convention for COP4 approval.

SLOVAK PRESIDENCY

CCIC:

- Discusses the possibility of presenting the results and activities of the successful Slovak Presidency during COP4.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	Austrian Development Cooperation
AEA	Austrian Environment Agency
AEM.....	European Association of Elected Representative from Mountain Regions
AKK.....	Alpine Carpathian Corridor
ALPARC.....	Alpine Network of Protected Areas
AEBR	Association of European Border Regions
ANPAA	Association of Natural Protected Areas Administrations
ASFINAG	Autobahnen-und Schnellstraßen-Finanzierungs Aktiengesellschaft
BD.....	Carpathian Convention Biodiversity Protocol
BIOREGIO Carpathians	Integrated management of biological and landscape diversity for sustainable regional development and ecological connectivity in the Carpathian
CADSES	Central, Adriatic, Danubian and South-Eastern European Space
CARPATCLIM.....	Climate of the Carpathian Region
CarpathCC.....	Climate Change in the Carpathian Region
CARPIVIA.....	Carpathian Integrated Assessment of Vulnerability to Climate Change and Ecosystem – Based Adaptation Measures
CC	Carpathian Convention
CCIC.....	Carpathian Conventions Implementation Committee
CC WG Climate Change.....	Carpathian Convention Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change
CEE.....	Central East Europe
CIBIS	Carpathian Integrated Biodiversity Information System
CIMM	Common Integrated Management Measures
CNPA.....	Carpathian Network of Protected Areas
CONDESAN	Consortio para el Desarrollo Sostenible de al Ecorregion Andina
COP3.....	Third Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention
COP4.....	Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention
CoR	Committee of the Regions
CTP	Working Community of the Pyrenees
DAHNE	Institute for Applied Ecology
DEWA.....	The Division of Early Warning and Assessment
EEA.....	European Environment Agency

EIONET	European Environment Information And Observation Network
enerSKI	Energy Efficiency, Networking and Capacity- Building for Skiing-Resorts
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development Programme
ETC – SIA.....	European Topic Centre on Spatial Information and Analysis
EU	European Union
EURAC.....	European Academy Bolzano
EUSDR	European Union Strategy for Danube Region
EUSDR PA 6 SG	EU Strategy for the Danube Region – Pillar 2 – Priority Area 6 Steering Group
FAO.....	Food and Agriculture Organization
Forest Protocol SAP.....	Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the Forest Protocol
GEF.....	Global Environment Facility
GRIDA	GRID Arendal
ICIMOD.....	The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
ICPDR.....	International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River
IPCC.....	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISCC.....	Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention
InRuTou	Innovations in Rural Tourism
JTS	Joint Technical Secretariat
MEAs	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSP.....	Medium Size Project
NFPs.....	National Focal Points
NFC.....	National Forest Center
OPCC	Pyrenees Climate Change Observatory
PSAC.....	Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention
PA	Priority Area
REC.....	Regional Environmental Center
RCE.....	Regional Centre of Expertise
ROE.....	Regional Office for Europe
SAP	Strategic Action Plan
SC.....	Steering Committee
SDC.....	The Swiss Agency for Development and Sustainable Cooperation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMD.....	Sustainable Mountain Development
SEE	South East Europe
SG	Steering Group

SNCSR.....	State Natural Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
SWOMM	Scientific Workshop on Mountain Mobility and Transport
S4C.....	Science for the Carpathians Initiative
TORs.....	Terms of Reference
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC.....	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNOOSA.....	The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs
UNWTO.....	United Nations World Tourism Organization
VITUKI.....	Environmental and Water Management Research Institute
WG.....	Working Group
WP.....	Working Package
WWF DCP.....	WWF Danube Carpathian Programme