



CENTRALPARKS

CNPA Steering Committee meeting, Krakow, Poland
Thursady, November 18th 2021, 2 pm
MEETING MINUTES



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AGENDA

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKERS
2:00 p.m.	WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE CHAIR OF THE CNPA STEERING COMMITTEE	Mircea Verghelet (CNPA SC CHAIR)
	SHORT REPORT FROM THE 3 RD CNPA CONFERENCE	Klaudia Kuras (UNEP-SCC)
	CONSIDERATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS PREPARED BY THE SECRETARIAT OF THE CARPATHIAN CONVENTION	Klaudia Kuras (UNEP-SCC)
	UPDATE FROM THE INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROJECT "CENTRALPARKS"	Isidoro De Bortoli (Eurac Research, Centralparks LP)
	CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS	Klaudia Kuras (UNEP-SCC)
3:30 p.m.	CLOSING OF THE MEETING	All participants

MODERATOR: Mircea Verghelet (*Piatra Craiului National Park*)



PARTICIPANTS LIST

SURNAME NAME	NAME ABBREVIATION	INSTITUTION
Bisconti Silvia	BiS	Eurac Research
De Bortoli Isidoro	Del	Eurac Research
Kadlečík Ján	KaJ	State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
Kuras Klaudia	KuK	UNEP-SCC
Parchuk Hryhorii	PaH	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine
Óhegyi Erzsébet	OhE	Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary
Shchoka Iryna	ShI	European Wilderness Society
Strnad Martin	StM	Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic
Svetazarevic Ivan	SvI	Consultant on behalf Serbia
Tar Gyula	TaG	Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary
Verghelet Mircea	VeM	Piatra Craiului National Park, Romania
Wasiak Przemyslaw	WaP	Bieszczady National Park, Poland



MEETING MINUTES





1. Welcome address by the Chair of the CNPA Steering Committee

Speaker: Mircea Verghelet (CNPA SC Chair)

Mr. Mircea Verghelet welcomed everybody gathered in Krakow and the online participants to the next CNPA Steering Committee meeting, organized within the 12th Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee meeting in Krakow (PL).

2. Short report from the 3rd CNPA Conference

Speaker: Klaudia Kuraś (UNEP-SCC)

Ms. Klaudia Kuraś shortly updated the participants on the 3rd CNPA Conference: A new age for the CNPA network, held in Visegrad on the 29th of September 2021, and its outcomes.

[Link to the 3rd CNPA Conference Minutes.](#)

3. Consideration of the Recommendations prepared by the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention

Speaker: Klaudia Kuraś (UNEP-SCC)

Ms. Klaudia Kuraś presented a draft recommendations prepared by the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention based on a [general overview of the state of implementation of the CNPA Medium Term Strategy](#). The proposed 10 recommendations, very much in line with the feedback from the 3rd CNPA Conference participants, are proposing the next steps for the CNPA regarding strengthening cooperation and future collaborative activities between the protected areas in the Carpathian region. These recommendations shall support the CNPA revitalization process.

- 1. Establishing the full CNPA Steering Committee representing all the Carpathian Parties** - the most crucial of all recommendations. The CNPA Steering Committee Members acting as the CNPA coordinators in their respective countries are essential for proper functioning of the Network, including for the exchange of information with the protected areas/CNPA members in their countries and with the Network as such. In this respect, it is recommended that the Parties of the Carpathian Convention nominate their CNPA Steering Committee representative/member suitable for this particular position, possibly with a long-term ambition to operate in this role, if not done so yet. The Secretariat informed about the ongoing consultations with Serbia regarding the Serbian member of the CNPA SC.



2. Updating the Terms of Reference of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas¹, which shall address the issue of sound and effective governance of the CNPA

The CNPA Steering Committee agreed that CNPA ToRs adopted in 2011 requires a proper revision. The meeting in Wieliczka (23-24 March 2022) could be a good opportunity to consider this topic further.

3. Updating / rethinking the CNPA Medium-Term Strategy² and the related Work Plan

The CNPA Steering Committee agreed that CNPA Medium-Term Strategy, which expired in 2020, shall be updated. However, the new version of the CNPA Strategy shall take into account activities and tasks that are clear, feasible and attainable. The new document shall be officially approved by the Carpathian Convention, ideally at the occasion of its COP7 in 2023. By then, the draft initiated by the Secretariat will be in consultation with the CNPA SC.

4. Reviewing and updating of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Secretariat and the CNPA Unit/Association of Natural Protected Areas Administrations in Romania ANPAA, according to the updated CNPA Terms of Reference.

It was agreed that the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Secretariat and the CNPA Unit/Association of Natural Protected Areas Administrations in Romania ANPAA should be reviewed and updated in accordance to the new CNPA ToRs.

5. Verifying the list of CNPA members and nominating new member areas by end of January 2022

In this regard, the CNPA SC agreed to verify the list of the CNPA members (protected areas included into the CNPA) by the end of January 2022. The Secretariat informed that recently the list of the Carpathian protected areas has been updated under the Centralparks project, with a reservation that some of the new PAs included in the updated list have not yet officially been nominated by the Parties as the CNPA member areas. Hence, there is a need for verification and official confirmation by the Parties.

Verifying the list of Protected Areas nominated as the CNPA members should include updating the respective contact details, which is an imperative for communicating with the PAs in each country. Furthermore, this task should lead to updating the map of CNPA Members to be further included in the Carpathian Countries Integrated Biodiversity Information System (CCIBIS).

The Secretariat informed that Ukraine has already provided relevant updates. While Hungary informed about challenges in updating the list. In this respect, the CNPA SC agrees to provide the updates by the end of January 2022.

¹ http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/02%20Activities/2.1.1%20ToR%20CNPA.pdf

²

http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/02%20Activities/2.1.1%20CNPA%20medium%20term%20strategy.pdf



The CNPA SC Members have been requested to consult with the respective Carpathian Convention Focal Points from their countries regarding the verification of the list of Protected Areas as the CNPA Members, especially in case of new nomination. New nomination should be sent by the CC Focal Points to the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention.

6. Organizing the CNPA conferences and CNPA Steering Committee meetings more regularly.

The CNPA SC supported the idea of more regular organization of meetings, including the CNPA conferences and the CNPA SC meetings, possibly without full financial support from the external projects, as it has been the case so far. The CNPA SC, the Secretariat and relevant partners shall look for other opportunities beyond the support of projects and will exchange ideas and initiatives in this respect.

7. Considering and using relevant project results, especially of Centralparks and ConnectGREEN projects.

The tools and strategies developed by the projects, specifically by the Centralparks project, are highly relevant for the CNPA revitalization process. The finalized project results will be shared with the CNPA SC with the request to circulate them among all CNPA PAs. Further discussion on the practical use of the project results should take place, possible within the Centralparks final conference.

8. Strengthening cooperation with other Networks within the Memorandum of Cooperation between the CNPA, ALPARC, and DANUBEPARKS through initiating common activities, as well as facilitating cooperation and exchange with other neighboring mountain regions and other initiatives.

The CNPA SC, the Secretariat and relevant partners will further consider opportunities for strengthening the cooperation with other networks and regions. This activities shall be included in the new CNPA Strategy.

9. Considering establishing thematic working groups within the CNPA which should focus on substantive work of the Network.

Establishing the thematic working groups within the CNPA will be crucial for progressing on substantive cooperation and consulting on concrete activities of CNPA. This task shall be included in the new CNPA Strategy, however, the discussion on creating one or two CNPA thematic working groups should start as soon as possible, especially considering possible project proposals that could further strengthen the work and ideas of CNPA. The Secretariat mentioned that a natural follow up to the Centralparks work, would be establishing the CNPA thematic working group on biodiversity and on sustainable tourism. The CNPA SC agreed to the idea of establishing thematic working groups within the CNPA, which will require more consultation in the coming future in order to make sure it is feasible and operational.



10. Considering/establishing the internal CNPA newsletter functioning independently from the financial support by the external and time-limited projects.

So far the only CNPA newsletter has been carried on by the Centralparks project. However, there is a need for continuation in regular information sharing among the CNPA members after the project completion. It was agreed by the CNPA SC that this point shall be included in the new CNPA strategy.

The full set of the recommendations agreed by the CNPA Steering Committee is annexed to this report.

The rich inputs and recommendations provided by the 3rd CNPA Conference participants will be taken into account while preparing the new CNPA Strategy.

4. Update from the Interreg CE project “Centralparks”

Speaker: Isidoro De Bortoli (Eurac Research, Centralparks LP)

Mr. Isidoro De Bortoli, Eurac Research, informed that the Centralparks project will end in March 2022, stressing the importance of ensuring the continuity in the CNPA revitalization process initiated by the project.

For this reason, close cooperation and synergies with other Carpathian projects would be necessary, as well as working together with the PAs managers, also with local communities inside and outside PAs.

Greater synergy and connectivity between the PAs would be of key importance for:

- Strengthening ecological corridors and protected sites at local, regional, and transnational levels, which will help to reduce landscape fragmentation and improve the transboundary connectivity of habitats.
- Testing in pilot actions innovative technical solutions for the restoration of degraded ecosystems and upscaling these approaches at a wider territorial level.
- Fostering and testing solutions to evaluate and enhance ecosystem services and to raise the awareness of policymakers on the local and regional value of ecosystems.
- Improving policy frameworks for biodiversity and implementing strategies at a local, regional and transnational level to conserve and restore ecosystems and to protect wildlife.
- Enhancing skills and competencies of relevant stakeholders on all policy levels through the exchange of knowledge and best practices to foster the integrated management of natural resources.
- Fostering the implementation of policies and strategies for the protection of cultural landscapes and integrating biodiversity protection interests into PAs management.



Mr. Isidoro De Bortoli underlined the importance of the network in the framework of the EU Green Deal: the recognition of transnational networks' potential to address societal challenges has resulted in an increasingly prominent role for nature-based solutions in the EU policy landscape, with the European Green Deal providing an opportunity to mobilize their implementation and increase funding. Nature-based solutions, in Europe and beyond, are an integral part of restoration efforts and represent the building blocks for a sustainable future in many relevant fields. Joint action, as well as local, regional, and international cooperation networks are crucial to maximize the impact and spread of nature-based solutions.

The main inputs received from the questions proposed during the conference in Visegrad can be summarized in the following points:

- communicate with local managers,
- share results, testing innovative technical solutions in pilot actions
- be sure that PAs in the next months will evaluate our results and also improve them.

Governance is really important for CNPA. Although, it takes a lot of time to work on it, it's strongly needed. We could work on a new ideal model of governance from now to the next CNPA meeting. It's something that as Centralparks partnership we can work on together in the next weeks. The complexity of PAs and the management of this complexity is the real challenge for the CNPA.

The capacity of PAs to manage potential trade-offs and deliver conservation measures is shaped by many contextual factors, in which available financial and human resources, existing governance frameworks, and relations with the local community seem to play a decisive role.

The new CNPA structure has the great opportunity to demonstrate that the range of conservation and socio-economic benefits provided by protected areas is best understood within a broader context, represented by all the Carpathian Countries working together for the same purposes. Without finding ways to work together with local communities and address their concerns over future socio-economic development, protected areas risk failing to deliver the socio-economic benefits expected of them.

Robust changes can emerge from systematic efforts, supported by adequate resources, to transform the practices and behaviour that shape local context. CNPA should recognize that protected areas alone are insufficient to ensure effective long-term biodiversity conservation, due to the increasing complexity of environmental problems and climate change. Instead, wide-scale landscape changes could be better addressed by alternative conservation strategies that seek ways to work together with private owners to find multifunctional, adaptive uses for protected areas and the surrounding rural landscapes.

Finally, concerning **Centralparks final conference (23-24 March 2022)**, a further CNPA event will be organized. This CNPA meeting should be open to PAs, to encourage the



participation of several representatives from each protected area. The Project may be able to fund travel for some of the PAs representatives. The CNPA SC is welcome to be present from the first day of the conference, which could be the start of the new CNPA era, therefore, an active participation in this process is encouraged.

The CNPA network can potentially facilitate the process of trust-building between the park administrations and local citizens and provide grounds for more collaborative conservation approaches. Better focusing on the local context, flexibility, and cooperation among all the involved stakeholders are needed to deliver the desired change and keep communication activities. Centralparks efforts should be well-capitalized through:

- Continuing to keep Carpathian PAs informed about main cooperation opportunities on similar issues;
- Activating new projects with a cross-border dimension;
- Investing energies in communication activities with aim of reaching all the possible interested stakeholders;
- Bringing all involved PAs together stresses the importance on keep on working sharing experiences and data.

The Centralparks project continues to improve communication activities, update the website. Further feedback on how the CNPA activities can be disseminated through this website is invited. CNPA is also a network to collect data, provide good elements to work on project ideas, implement new strategies, and share these data.

Ms. Iryna Shchoka, European Wilderness Society made a comments that Ukraine was not really involved in the implementation of the Centralparks Project. Since several PAs managers have difficulties with English. She suggested to possibly translate some of the project result, such as the communication tools or biodiversity strategies into Ukrainian.

Mr. De Bortoli, in this reply stressed that unfortunately Ukraine is not eligible as a partner in the Interreg Central Europe Programme. However, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Ukraine is a Centralparks Associated Partner and has been receiving all the communication and project results. Mr. De Bortoli, said the translation will be taken into consideration according to the funds availability, stressing that strong exchange of communication is still to be expected.

Ms. Iryna Shchoka, thanked for this consideration. The European Wilderness Society is also in contact with universities and we had experience with online training, so it could offer its help with communication activities in Ukraine.

5. Conclusions and next steps

Speaker: Klaudia Kuras (UNEP-SCC)

As the agreed next steps, the Secretariat will circulate the minutes of the meeting and the agreed recommendations. The recommendation will be also shared with the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee for the attention and action of the



Carpathian Convention Focal Points. The Secretariat will initiate the updating of the documents mentioned within the recommendations with the aim to present/circulate first drafts of the documents for the CNPA meeting in Wieliczka within the Centralparks project Final Conference (23-24 March 2022, Wieliczka, Poland). The save the date and the official information about the Centralparks project Final Conference will be circulated in due course.

6. Closing of the meeting

The Chair of the CNPA SC, Mr. Mircea Verghelet, thanked all the participants for discussion and agreeing to the proposed recommendations. Appreciations were extended also to Mr. De Bortoli for the presentation and the support by the Centralparks project and to Ms. Klaudia Kuraś for the organization of the meeting and preparation of the recommendations.

Closure of the meeting: 3.30 p.m.



Annex



Recommendations by the CNPA Steering Committee agreed at CNPA STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

18 November 2021, Krakow, Poland

- 1) Establishing the full CNPA Steering Committee representing all the Carpathian Parties**
Need for consultation with the Parties of the Carpathian Convention that are responsible for appointing the CNPA SC member.
- 2) Updating the Terms of Reference of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas³, which shall address the issue of sound and effective governance of the CNPA**
The ToR was adopted in 2011 and requires revision.
- 3) Updating / rethinking the CNPA Medium-Term Strategy⁴ and the related Work Plan**
CNPA Medium-Term Strategy was adopted in 2011, expired in 2020.
- 4) Reviewing and updating if necessary the MoC between the Secretariat and the CNPA Unit/Association of Natural Protected Areas Administrations in Romania ANPAA⁵, according to the updated CNPA Terms of Reference.**
- 5) Verifying the list of CNPA members and nominating new member areas by end of January 2022**
Recently the list of Carpathian protected areas has been updated under the Centralparks project, with a reservation that some of the new PAs included in the updated list have not yet officially been nominated by the Parties as the CNPA member areas. Hence, there is a need for verification and official confirmation by the Parties. This task should lead to updating the map of CNPA Members to be further included in the Carpathian Countries Integrated Biodiversity Information System (CCIBIS).
- 6) Organizing the CNPA conferences and CNPA Steering Committee meetings more regularly**
Possibly without the financial support from the external projects, which was the case so far.
- 7) Considering and using relevant project results, especially of Centralparks and ConnectGREEN projects.**
- 8) Strengthening cooperation with other Networks within the Memorandum of Cooperation between the CNPA, ALPARC and DANUBEPARKS through initiating common activities, as well as facilitating cooperation and exchange with other neighbouring mountain regions and other initiatives.**
- 9) Considering establishing thematic working groups within the CNPA which should focus on substantive work of the Network.**
- 10) Considering/establishing the internal CNPA newsletter functioning independently from the financial support by the external and time-limited projects.**

³ http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/02%20Activities/2.1.1%20ToR%20CNPA.pdf

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http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/02%20Activities/2.1.1%20CNPA%20medium%20term%20strategy.pdf

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http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/02%20Activities/Biodiveristy/Doc.%2010_MoC_SCC_ANPAA_CNPA_signed.pdf