

Terms of Reference of the CNPA

Introduction

As defined in the article 4.5 of the Carpathian convention "The parties shall cooperate in developing an ecological network in the Carpathians, as a constituent part of the Pan-European Ecological Network, in establishing and supporting a Carpathian Network of Protected Areas, as well as enhancing conservation and sustainable management in the areas outside of protected areas". This cooperation must be encouraged at both the national and international levels through the creation of formal and informal networks.

Since the official creation of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (further referred to as "CNPA") in December 2006 during the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention in Kiev (Decision COP 1/4), the process of the CNPA coordination unit establishment is intensifying.

Preamble

The Carpathian Network of Protected Areas constitutes a regional thematic and in final terms as well a spatial network of cooperation of mountain protected areas in the Carpathians. The CNPA shall have the objective to contribute to the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians, and in particular to accomplishing goals listed in Article 4 of the Convention, and by supporting the work and activities of the Working Group on the conservation of biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathian Convention.

A. Objectives and Missions of the CNPA

The objective of the Carpathian network of Protected Areas is to promote common activities of the protected areas managers and to participate to the application of the Carpathian Convention strategies. The coordination unit of the CNPA should assist the protected areas managers to realize activities responding to this objective.

The activities of the CNPA are split up in three principal domains:

1) Thematic network

Exchanges within this network treat principally the different aspects of the protected areas management:

- a. fauna, flora, habitat: protection, management methods, NATURA 2000
- b. tourism and sustainable development: tourism consequences on the nature, protected areas offers, opportunities of the regional sustainable development
- c. protected areas and mountain economy: cultural landscape conservation through a nature friendly agriculture and forestry.

Activities within these domains contribute to the implementation of the article 4 of the Carpathian convention about the Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity.

2) Ecological network

In cooperation with other governmental and non-governmental organizations the coordination unit of the CNPA shall contribute to the progressive establishment of an ecological continuum within the Carpathian mountain range to improve the potential for species migrations and for conserving habitats. This spatial implementation of the Carpathian network shall be developed in long-term.

3) Communication network

Within this important domain, one of priorities of the network, the CNPA shall develop the activities with the large public as well as the exchanges between the protected areas managers and other experts. The principal objectives are:

- promote the common identity of the Carpathian protected areas
- awareness raising activities about the importance of the natural and cultural Carpathian heritage
- promote the large public participation on the nature protection intensification and the sustainable development, even outside the protected areas

This communication network shall make the Carpathian convention known by the inhabitants and visitors of the protected areas and their regions.

Other domains:

The coordination unit can work for the Carpathian network of protected areas also in other domains in condition of supplement capacities and financial means acquirement.

The coordinated research within the Carpathian range is of the principal importance for the three domains of activities. The cooperation with research institutions has to be developed.

The Carpathian Network can extend to regions outside the Carpathians in order to collaborate with other protected areas or networks established in other mountain areas and especially in the Alps.

The Carpathian network of protected areas follows several strategies in order to accomplish his objectives:

- establishment of a common work program for the major themes defined by the protected areas managers of the Carpathian mountains,
 - exchanges of know-how, experiences and methods of the protected areas and of research and scientific studies,
 - active implication of all Carpathian protected areas for the establishment of a spatial network between existing protected areas and for the establishment of a Carpathian ecological continuum
- These strategies are linked to some general principles like those of continuity and coresponsibility, for activities of the protected areas and contracting parties of the Carpathian convention.

B. Carpathian network of protected areas structures

The CNPA structuring, as an international organization in service of the protected areas cooperation, is framed by:

Institutional frame: The Carpathian convention

The CNPA coordination unit is available for all Carpathian convention protected areas for the active cooperation on implementation of the convention. The principal actions of CNPA shall correspond to the requirements of the Conference of Parties of the Carpathian convention.

A work program responding to the requirements of all contracting parties is established every two years:

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1. Elaboration of a draft program for two years based on the demands of the Carpathian protected areas and of the International Steering Committee by the CNPA coordination unit
2. Consultation of the protected areas of the Carpathian mountains during its General Assembly about the work program
3. Adaptation of the work program
4. Final version of the work program by the CNPA International Steering Committee

Decision Instance of the protected areas: General assembly of the Carpathian protected areas

The General assembly of the Carpathian protected areas is an official biennial meeting of all protected areas of the Carpathian range. The essential points of cooperation between the protected areas in the principal domains of activities and strategies of evolution of the CNPA are treated.

Permanent representation of the protected areas: International Steering Committee

The International Steering Committee (ISC) is composed by the managers of the Carpathian protected areas and their number is relative to the number and diversity of protected areas of each member Country. The ISC elects one president and two vice-presidents, all three issued of the ISC members, by the majority of the votes. This election takes place just after the election of the ISC members by the General assembly. The president and the vice-presidents are elected only by the ISC members.

Executive unit: Coordination unit for the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas

The Coordination unit for the CNPA is a work and cooperation unit of the actions and projects within the CNPA. It is a part of the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention and realizes the work program elaborated by the ISC and validated by the Working Group on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity.

C. Functioning of the CNPA structures

1) General assembly of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas

1.1. Missions

The General assembly give an opinion on the Activity report proposed by the ISC president and approve the directions for the draft work program for next two years. The General assembly can make the propositions for the work priorities in the frames fixed by the Carpathian Convention. It can also validate and modify the CNPA Terms of reference.

1.2. General assembly rules

I – APPLICATION DOMAIN

Article 1

This rules applies for all the sessions of the General Assembly of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas

II – COMPOSITION

Article 2

Members: The General assembly gathers together all the managing organisms of all protected areas situated in the Carpathian Convention perimeter. During the voting, each managing organism disposes of one vote without consideration of the representatives count and without possibility of proxy.

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Other protected areas, which are in the countries of the Carpathian Convention but outside the Carpathian Convention perimeter, and which would like to participate actively in the CNPA activities can be admitted after their written request is approved by the General Assembly. These members will also have the voting right.

The General assembly can as well invite the representatives of outside organisms and/or NGOs as observers and without the voting rights, in function of the treated themes.

III – PRESIDENCY

Article 3

The president of the International Steering Committee (further referred to as “president”) insure the role of the presidency. In the case of absence or temporal difficulty, his deputy replaces him. The president can leave his presidency to another member of the ISC in the case of necessity.

Article 4

The president is responsible for the organization of ordinary and extraordinary sessions of the General assembly. As such, he, with the help of the CNPA coordination unit, ensures the services needed for the sessions, collection, translation and diffusion of the work documents, preparation of the meeting proceedings as well as their diffusion. The organizing protected area ensures the logistic and the meeting rooms.

IV – SESSIONS CONVOCATION

Article 5

The ordinary General assembly takes place at the same time as a thematic workshop. Both the General assembly and the thematic workshop compose the “International Conference” of the Network, presided by the President of General assembly.

The president fixes the place, the date and the duration of each session after the consultation with the ISC. The General assembly can take place in every Carpathian country, signatory of the Carpathian Convention with agreement of the organizing protected area

The General assembly takes place every two years for taking into account the programming of the CNPA activities.

The members of the General assembly as well as the observers are informed by the president about the place, the date and the duration of the session at least **four months** before its beginning.

V – AGENDA

Article 6

The agenda for each ordinary session is established by the president (based on an ISC proposition) and includes:

- adoption of the agenda
- verification of the voting rights by the present members
- admission of the invitees and observers
- election of the new International Steering Committee

Article 7

The president sends (by Internet) the agenda of each ordinary session to its every member and invitee at least two months before the session beginning, completed by the working documents, if possible. The resolution propositions to be adopted by the General assembly have to be communicated in the official languages of the Carpathian Convention. The

amendments requests to these propositions have to be returned to the president at least one month before the beginning of the session (via the CNPA Coordination unit).

Article 8

The president inscribes to the agenda of the General assembly each additional point, which will be addressed to the CNPA coordination unit by a member at least **6 weeks** before the session's beginning.

VI – DECISIONS

Article 9

The General assembly shall reach its decisions by consensus. If all the possibilities to reach the consensus are used up, the resolution voting by majority of two thirds takes place. Only members disposing the voting rights can participate.

Article 10

Voting is generally held as a show of hands. On request of one of the members or on president's decision voting can be held as a secret poll. However, voting of procedure questions must always be held as a show of hands.

VII – LANGUAGES

Article 11

The official language of the General assembly is English. In case of necessity and sufficient budget a translation can be proposed in all the Carpathian languages: Czech, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian, Serbian, Slovak, and Ukrainian. The declarations and the official documents are translated in each CNPA official language.

VIII – PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 12

The General assembly approves a brief report of the session's decisions at its ending. The president communicates these proceedings to all participants of the General assembly as well as to the General Secretary of the Carpathian Convention and to the national delegations within **two months** following the session.

IX – FEES

Article 13

The general fees of the General assembly organization are in charge of the organizing country and protected area. The CNPA coordination unit ensures the logistic. Therefore external financial resources can be used for the General assembly organizing. The fees of transport and accommodation for the General assembly session are in charge of participants.

2) International Steering Committee

2.1. Missions

The principal role of the International Steering Committee is to treat the common preoccupations and needs of all CNPA members and to find the necessary measures and solutions to these preoccupations.

The ISC elaborates the work propositions for the General assembly, based on the multi-annual work program of the Carpathian Convention. It applies the decisions of the General assembly and defines the CNPA coordination unit activities. It decides also about the organization, coordination and financing of additional network's activities as well as about the cooperation with other organisms.

It pronounces on the Activity report and validates the two years CNPA coordination unit's work program.

The ISC follows all the CNPA activities and supports the CNPA coordination unit in exercising its missions and in the fund raising activities.

The International Steering Committee members represent the protected areas of their country during the international meetings within the Carpathian convention scope.

2.2. ISC rules

I – APPLICATION DOMAIN

Article 1

These internal rules apply to all the CNPA International Steering Committee sessions.

II – COMPOSITION

Article 2

The International Steering Committee is composed by:

- **Members** elected by the General assembly. Each representative of a protected area bigger than 100 ha and situated within the Carpathian Convention perimeter or of a protected area outside the Carpathian Convention perimeter with the voting rights is eligible.

The number of the ISC members per country is relative to the count and diversity of protected areas within a country.

The repartition of members disposing the voting rights within the International Steering Committee is as follows:

- Czech republic: 1
- Hungary: 2
- Poland: 2
- Serbia: 1
- Slovakia: 3
- Romania: 3
- Ukraine: 3

The ISC disposes also of 15 ordinary members including its presidents.

- **Invited members without the voting rights:** NGOs and other organisms experts can be invited to the ISC meetings according to the treated themes.
- The General Secretary of the Carpathian Convention is invited as well to the ordinary sessions of the ISC meetings.
- For the sessions concerning the two years work program elaboration, the financial partners are invited.

III – PRESIDENCY

Article 3

1. The International Steering Committee president and vice-presidents are issued from the ISC members for a two years period
2. In the case of multiple candidatures, the presidents are those, who obtain the most of votes.
3. In the case of president's temporal absence, his deputy will ensure his functions.

4. The ISC's presidents task is to:

- Invite and conduct of the ISC meetings
- Make sure that the work program is followed by the CNPA coordination unit
- Represent the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas within the important international meetings
- Ensure the contact with the Carpathian Convention General Secretary

IV – SESSIONS CONVOCATION

Article 4

The International Steering Committee meets ordinary at least twice a year. The ordinary sessions are announced at least 2 months before their beginning, the date changes at least 4 weeks before their beginnings.

The ISC can extraordinary meet if at least 2/3 of its members (excluding the invitees) address a written request to the president or after an ISC decision during an ordinary session. In this case, the extraordinary session has to be announced at least 4 weeks before its beginning.

V – AGENDA

Article 5

The agenda for each ordinary session is established by the president and includes:

- adoption of the agenda
- the themes of discussion decided by the General assembly
- the themes asked by the contracting parties of the Carpathian Convention
- all additional themes proposed by a ISC member after the agenda communication before the session's beginning
- power verification: eventual proxies and quorum of at least 8 members

Article 6

The president sends, by e-mail, the draft agenda of each ISC session at least three weeks before its beginning to each ISC member and to all invitees. The work documents are sent by e-mail at least one week before the session's beginning. In the exceptional case, the work documents can be distributed during the session.

VI – DECISIONS

Article 7

An ISC member cannot give the proxy to another ISC member.

Article 8

The General assembly shall reach its decisions by consensus. If all the possibilities to reach the consensus are used up, the resolution voting by majority of two thirds takes place.

Article 9

Voting is generally held as a show of hands. On request of one of the members and on president's decision voting can be held as a secret poll.

The Internal rules of the International Steering Committee can be modified only by majority of two thirds of all ISC members and will be submit to the General assembly agreement.

VII – LANGUAGES

Article 10

The ISC official language is English.

VIII – PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Article 11

The president sends to each ISC member the list of adopted decisions within a month after the session.

If no remarks or requests are addressed to the CNPA coordination unit within 14 days after the publication of this list of decisions, this one is adopted and validated.

IX – FEES

Article 12

The fees of transport and accommodation for the ISC session are in charge of participants.

3) CNPA coordination unit

3.1. Missions

The Coordination Unit of the Network follows various projects and actions with the protected areas and associated partners.

Priority areas of activity are:

- Organizational support for the ISC of the CNPA
- Coordinating the thematic networking within the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas preferring the projects between several protected areas
- Capacity building of the member protected areas and of the network
- Establishing the activities report and annual program (including financial plan), common fundraising from external sources for activities of the network
- Building contacts between partners and support for the creation of specific partnerships between protected areas within the Carpathian range as well as with other mountain ranges
- Organizing meetings
- Providing working tools and documents
- Conception of publications and exhibits
- Up-dating a website and database for and of all protected areas
- Developing the communication and exchange tools (newsletter, Internet website, publications, ...)
- Providing linguistic support (translations with financial support from partners)
- Organizing educational trips
- Exchange of experience, skills, knowledge and data among network members
- Raising ecological awareness and promoting trans-boundary cooperation and sustainable development
- Large public communication activities for a better knowledge and comprehension of the nature protection within the Carpathian range
- Liaising and cooperating with other bodies established under the Carpathian Convention as well as with other relevant international, regional and national organizations under the guidance of the ISC, thus building upon the vast experience and knowledge available
- Preparing reports, opinions and recommendations on request of the Conference of the Parties, the Working Group on the conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity, and the relevant bodies established under the Carpathian Convention

- Support the activities of common thematic working groups established under the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee and common communication actions

Concerning the content of the organizational support for the ISC of the CNPA, animation and communication, the CNPA Coordination unit will follow the counselling of the ISC and its president.

The CNPA Coordination unit works systematically in English and all Carpathian languages so far as the representatives of these languages are present in the Coordination unit. An external organism or partner can make the translations, in the frame of financial means.

3.2. Activities plan

The Coordination unit elaborates its annual programs according to the available budget. These programs must reflect the requests and needs of the Carpathian protected areas.

The financial supporters of the CNPA can emit proposals and requests.

The International Steering Committee must approve each annual program.

The Coordination unit also elaborates a multi annual program, which includes the annual programs. The duration of this multi annual program varies in accordance with the available financial resources.

3.3. Resources

A coordination team (2-3 people) manages activities and ensures the implementation of mission's priorities. The financial support for the functioning of this coordination team will be assured both by the contribution of all contracting Parties and Carpathian convention.

Each State should find it useful to provide a staff member for the Coordination Unit, at the headquarters of the Network who will soon be familiar with the operations and partners of the Network and who will become the permanent contact person in his/her native language.

Therefore, the fundraising for specific actions is needed. The protected areas are invited to actively participate in fundraising and to support the proposed applications, through their own networks of contacts.

A contribution in the form of a membership fee is not conceivable as it is considered going against the philosophy of the Carpathian Network, which considers itself a tool for exchange and cooperation between protected areas, between colleagues who are managers or technicians.

Internal rules validated by the General assembly of the Carpathian protected areas in September 2008