



PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

PROJECT TYPE: Medium-sized Project

THE GEF TRUST FUND

Submission Date:

Re-submission Date:

PART I: PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

GEFSEC PROJECT ID:

GEF AGENCY PROJECT ID: 3458

COUNTRY(IES): Romania

PROJECT TITLE: Improving the Financial Sustainability of the Carpathian System of Protected Areas

GEF AGENCY(IES): UNDP

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNER(S): National Agency for Protected Areas (???) You need to give me the name of the executing agency.

GEF FOCAL AREA (S): Biodiversity

GEF-4 STRATEGIC PROGRAM(S): SO-1 SP1

NAME OF PARENT PROGRAM/UMBRELLA PROJECT: NA

INDICATIVE CALENDAR	
Milestones	Expected Dates
Work Program (for FSP)	NA
CEO Endorsement/Approval	Nov 2008
GEF Agency Approval	Dec 2008
Implementation Start	Jan 2009
Mid-term Review (if planned)	Jan 2011
Implementation Completion	Jan 2013

A. PROJECT FRAMEWORK

Project Objective:								
Project Components	Investment, TA, or STA	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Indicative GEF Financing		Indicative Co-financing		Total (\$)
				(\$)	%	(\$)	%	
1. Sustainable Carpathian PA financing plan in place	TA	Reduction in financing gap to meet protected area management objectives Diversification of income streams for protected areas	Financial analysis for Carpathian Protected Areas network (financial scorecard completed for all systems) Draft amendments to the legislative framework in place, Models business plans developed Replicable financing schemes validated in at least 3 model PAs in the Romanian Carpathians	455,000		???		
2. Capacity development for the Carpathian Network of PA administrations	TA	A network of skilled professional Carpathian protected area practitioners have the capacity to implement the sustainable financing plan	Training in business planning and financial management Information management and reporting on protected area financing	400,000		???		
3. PA information generation and exchange	TA	Carpathian PA information platform in place	Clearing house mechanism updated, PA management effectiveness	0	0	How much was the cofinancing from BBI MATRA?	100	

			monitoring system.				
4. Project management			95,000			The value here will follow the cofinancing ratio – so it will be 10% of the cofinancing ; as we have 10% of the GEF	
Total project costs			950,000				

B. INDICATIVE FINANCING PLAN SUMMARY FOR THE PROJECT (\$)

	Project Preparation	Project	Agency Fee	Total
GEF	50,000	950,000	100,000	1,100,000
Co-financing	50,000			
Total	100,000	5,664,000	100,000	

C. INDICATIVE CO-FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT (including project preparation amount) BY SOURCE and BY NAME (in parenthesis) if available, (\$)

Erika, Mircea, Monica please list here the RNP funding for Carpathian parks for four years (or whatever you want the duration of the project to be); MAVA foundation cofinancing, other WWF projects: BBI MATRA

Sources of Co-financing	Type of Co-financing	Amount
Project Government Contribution	Unknown at this stage	???
GEF Agency(ies)	Grant	Monica, we need to get something from UNDP even if in kind. Rules
Bilateral Aid Agency(ies)	(select)	
Multilateral Agency(ies)	(select)	
Private Sector	(select)	
NGO – WWF via MAVA Foundtaion	Grant	Erika???
Others	In-kind (PPG)	
Others	Unknown at this stage	
Total co-financing		

D. GEF RESOURCES REQUESTED BY FOCAL AREA(S), AGENCY (IES) SHARE AND COUNTRY(IES)* ; N/A

PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

A. STATE THE ISSUE, HOW THE PROJECT SEEKS TO ADDRESS IT, AND THE EXPECTED GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS TO BE DELIVERED:

1. The Carpathian Mountains extend over an area of 210,000 km² in Central and Eastern Europe covering seven countries: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine. More than 80% of Romania's water supply (excluding the Danube) and 40% of Ukraine's water supply comes from the Carpathians. The Carpathian Mountains are included in the WWF “Global 200” Ecoregion list and host Europe's most extensive tracts of montane forest, the largest remaining natural mountain beech and beech/fir forest ecosystems and the largest area of virgin forest

left in Europe. It is estimated that the Carpathian forests cover about 90,000 km² in total¹, which is approx. half of the Carpathians. Together with semi-natural habitats such as montane pastures and hay meadows, which are the result of centuries of traditional management of the land, the region's biodiversity is unsurpassed in Europe. One-third (3,988 plant species) of all European vascular plant taxa can be found in this region, 481 of which are endemic. The Carpathians form a 'bridge' between Europe's northern forests and those in the south and west and as such they are a vital corridor for the dispersal of plants and animals throughout Europe. The Carpathians are the last region in Europe to support viable populations of large carnivores. An estimated 8,000 brown bears, 4,000 wolves, and 3,000 lynx can still be found here.

2. The main threats to the globally significant biodiversity of the Carpathian mountains are: (i) overexploitation of natural resources, especially forest resources through logging and poaching which have intensified as a result of land restitution and privatization; and (ii) habitat degradation and fragmentation through construction of roads, houses and other infrastructure including tourism infrastructure that is not properly planned and developed and by opening up access to natural areas that should be preserved for nature. Carpathian grassland biodiversity is degrading as a result of the socio-economic changes: the removal of subsidies and introduction of competition through free market-reforms has caused a significant decline in the agricultural employment and rural income in Carpathian countries; the result has been depopulation of the rural areas, emigration of rural people to the cities in search of work and consequent land abandonment in many areas of the Carpathians, which has led to significant reduction of the mountain grasslands biodiversity.

3. Recognizing the biological and economic importance of the Carpathians, in 2003 all the range states signed a Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (the Carpathian Convention), which was subsequently ratified by six of the signatory countries and entered into force with the first COP meeting on December 11, 2006. One of the provisions of the Convention is the establishment of a Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) to facilitate and coordinate the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of biodiversity in the Carpathians. Currently, there are 285 protected areas in the Carpathians, covering only 17% (2,791,300) ha of the ecoregion², with the northwest of the Carpathians more effectively covered and managed than the southeast portion.

Table 1. Current protected areas in the Carpathians

Country	No of PAs	Total area (ha)	Legal resp. for PA	Type of management authority
Romania	106	1,057,487	Min. of Env. and Water Magmt.	National Forest Authority, NGOs
Slovakia	64	817,720	Ministry of Environment /State Nature Conservancy	State Agency for Nature Conservation
Ukraine	77	355,880	Min. of Env. And Natural Res.	State Agency for Protected Areas
Poland	21	536,496	Ministry of Environment	National Park, State Forest Administration, Local Forestry offices
Hungary	15	161,487	Ministry of Environment	National Park Directorates
Czech Republic	13	205,832	Ministry of Environment	Administration of Protected Areas
Serbia	1	62,943	Min. of Science and Env. Prot. of the Republic of Serbia	Public Enterprises (mostly), NGOs approved by the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia
Total	285	2,791,300		

Table 2. Overview of the number and total area of Ramsar sites in the Carpathian countries

Country	Total in the country		Total in the Carpathian Ecoregion		Area (ha)		Ha in the Carpathian ecoregion	
	Ramsar	IBAS	Ramsar	IBA	Ramsar	IBA	Ramsar	IBA
Czech Republic	12	16	1	3	54,681	627,853	11,500	125,380
Hungary	28	43	2	7	235,430	1,466,244	2,151	308,800

¹ Slovakia forest land: 1.94 million – of which 90% belongs to Carpathians; Poland Carpathian forests: 480,000 ha; Ukrainian Carpathians: 1.5 million ha, Romania: 5.5 million ha.

² This is very low coverage if compared with the Alpine Bioregion of Europe, with 35% Natura 2000 coverage.

Poland	13	81	0	4	145,075	2,966,277	0	204,194
Romania	5	44	0	13	683,628	655,727	0	126,049
Slovakia	14	32	5	22	40,697	1,216,737	2,326	1,150,898
Serbia	8	40	0	n.a	53,714	101,500	0	n.a
Ukraine	33	141	1	3	744,651	2,486,864	29	222,107

4. The Carpathians' current protected area system is insufficient in scale, connectivity and management performance on its own to prevent the irreversible loss of biodiversity over the next decades. In 2006, the experts and decision makers from government, civil society and protected areas throughout Carpathians participated in a workshop on "Implementation of the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA) in the Carpathians organized by WWF. The main objective of the meeting was to outline a joint strategy and clear targets to meet PoWPA requirements. The participants agreed that a Long-term solution for the Protected areas in the Carpathians is that "parties to the CBD from the Carpathian Ecoregion are enabled to achieve the 2012 targets of the PoWPA, in particular the establishment of a scientifically based and representative regional network of well managed protected areas that are sustainably financed, ensure effective participation of local communities and provide social and economic benefits".

5. The main barriers hampering the achievement of the long-term solution are: (i) biogeographical representation: The Status of the Carpathians report (2001) identified 30 areas of highest biodiversity in need of protection based on assessing the relative impacts of various threats on biodiversity. Although these areas have been determined and publicized for the Carpathians, only about 34% of their area is under some form of protection; (ii) capacity: Although all the governments of the Carpathian countries have ratified CBD and have committed to implement PoWPA, there is not enough capacity to meet all the targets. One of the priority identified by the relevant stakeholders in the Carpathians is the need to developing the skills of PA management staff both through training programmes and by facilitating information exchange among PA professionals and with other stakeholders; and (iii) financial: Funding for the effective management of PAs varies considerably across the Carpathian countries: no governmental funding is available in Romania and Serbia, but the state forestry administrations makes significant contributions to protected area management, whilst in Ukraine and Slovakia funding is made available from the state budget. The current legislation on PAs is limited in the region as in most countries does not fully reflect existing budgetary regulations; lacks standardized national PA business planning guidelines; current level of public financing and donor assistance is not sufficient for management effectiveness of PAS and innovative and sustainable models for revenue generation are not supported; there are inconsistencies and collisions among PA and other laws. The lack of trained human resources is one of the most critical issues. Many PAs lack management plans and few have a business plan; there are no capacities to prepare business plans internally; and a lack of experience in raising additional funds to ensure financial sustainability.

6. While a number of GEF and non-GEF initiatives and programs (a list of these projects is provided in table 3) have been launched at the regional and national level to remove mainly the bio-geographical and some of the capacity barriers identified above and to strengthen the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas in order to provide an effective buffer against the main threats to biodiversity, there is an unmet need to address the financial barriers. There is a need for alternative funding mechanisms that will ensure a diversification of funding sources and new revenue streams without competing with local communities in developing activities/businesses that build on the values of the protected areas. National and nature parks and other protected areas have a key role to play not only in protecting the region's greatest natural values, but also in turning this prodigious natural capital into sustainable development opportunities for local stakeholders, e.g. through appropriate and well-managed tourism, sustainable management of forest and non-timber resources.

7. Romania committed at the first COP of the Carpathian Convention (December 2006) to use its potential GEF 4 national allocation under Biodiversity Focal Area for the development and implementation of a regional project aiming at improving the financial sustainability of the Carpathian Network of Protected Area. The objective of this project is that the Carpathian network of Protected Areas is able to secure stable and long-term financial resources, allocate them in a timely manner and appropriate form, cover the full costs of protected areas and, ensure that the protected areas are managed effectively and efficiently. The project will complement the other initiatives at national and regional level and in particularly the "2012 PA Programme - The Carpathian Mountains Ecoregion" implemented by WWF and funded by MAVA foundation.

8. The main outcomes are: (i) Sustainable Carpathian PA financing plan in place – this would include activities such as: building a diverse funding portfolio, going beyond conventional mechanisms and including multiple funding sources; setting-up mechanisms to manage the funds in a way that promotes cost efficiency and management effectiveness, allows for long-term planning and security, and provides incentives and opportunities for managers to generate and retain funds at the PA level, etc. (ii) Capacity of the Carpathian network of PA practitioners developed so as to implement the financing plan - The project will strengthen the government capacities to ensure that the funds leveraged for the management of protected areas are used efficiently and effectively; training programmes in business planning and financial management will be organized for the CNPA practitioners; and (iii) PA information, generation and exchange system in place (this is an entirely cofinanced item) and aims to create an environmental research and indicator-based monitoring program developed and implemented for the Carpathians to set the baseline for conservation success for all projects and plans, including the establishment of a ‘Carpathian Clearinghouse’(CCH) as a meta-database for mutual information and data exchange. The CCH will consist of information on occurrence of habitats, endemic plants and focal species group as well as detail information on protected areas and unprotected biodiversity important areas. The clearinghouse will house its information in the Central Database-GIS (CD-GIS) unit. Full access to the information will be available to organisations which significantly contribute to the CD-GIS, CERI members and nature conservation organisations. Other clients and the public will have access to aggregated data information. The clearinghouse mechanism will act as a single source for harmonized metadata and data, supporting the development of a ‘Carpathian Biodiversity Information System,’ which will be used to develop the Carpathian Ecological Network, and to facilitate scientific and technical cooperation both nationally and internationally. This outcome will be fully co-funded from BBI-Matra. The DAPHNE Institute of Applied Ecology is responsible for implementation of this project component.

9. The proposed project represents the countries’ commitment to address the main articles of the Carpathian Convention and as such is in line with the priorities identified by all Carpathian countries. The global benefits will be improved conservation management of the Carpathian Protected areas that now cover 2.8 million hectares.

B. DESCRIBE THE CONSISTENCY OF THE PROJECT WITH NATIONAL PRIORITIES/PLANS:

10. Recognizing the biological and economic importance of the Carpathians, in 2003 all the range states signed a Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (the Carpathian Convention), which was subsequently ratified by six of the signatory countries and entered into force with the first COP meeting on December 11, 2006. One of the provisions of the Convention is the establishment of a Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) to facilitate and coordinate the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of biodiversity in the Carpathians. Romania

C. DESCRIBE THE CONSISTENCY OF THE PROJECT WITH [GEF STRATEGIES](#) AND STRATEGIC PROGRAMS:

11. The project is fully consistent with the GEF Strategic Objective 1: Catalyzing the Sustainability of Protected Areas/Strategic Programme 1. “Sustainable Financing of Protected Areas”. The project will support the development of a sustainable financing plan which would include the legal and institutional framework to enable protected areas to plan and conduct income generating activities, to retain and invest back in conservation activities the funds generated. In addition, it will build the capacity of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas practitioners in business planning so as to effectively implement the sustainable financing plan and demonstrate replicable innovations in protected area management, testing public-private sector partnerships and other types of governance and new income generating activities, such as utilization of non-timber forest products, grazing and mowing in some areas, fishing, game viewing, tourism and recreation, etc. The project will also explore the feasibility of applying market-based charges for PA goods and services, such as: tourism charges, resource extraction fees and payments for ecosystem services. Lessons learned from these interventions will be replicated through the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative (CERI) NGO, institutionalized through the Carpathian Convention and signatory governments through improved and enforced legislation and policy, and sustained through the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) through knowledge transfer across the network.

D. OUTLINE THE COORDINATION WITH OTHER RELATED INITIATIVES:

12. The table below lists the major national and regional major initiatives in the ecoregion. Opportunities for collaboration have already been sought, as the project’s partners are also part of the Carpathian network of Protected areas Association.

Table 3. List of relevant initiatives in the Carpathian Mountains (national and regional)

Name	Main partners	Aim
Romania: Conservation of Maramures Mountains	UNDP, GEF, National Forest Authority	Demonstrating effective biodiversity conservation in Maramures Mountains Natural Park in Romania's northern Carpathian Mountains.
Romania: Biodiversity Conservation Management (FSP – completed in 2005)	World Bank, GEF, National Forest Authority	Establish effective, inter-sectoral, participatory planning and sustainable management of natural ecosystems and associated landscapes at three demonstration sites in the Carpathian mountains, and mechanisms to support replication of these activities at other priority conservation sites.
Slovakia: Conservation, restoration and wise use of rich fens	UNDP, GEF, Daphne Institute of Applied Ecology	Representative habitats of unique calcareous rich fens are maintained through the promotion of restoration, conservation and sustainable management practices.
Slovakia: Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Central European Grasslands	World Bank, GEF, Daphne Institute of Applied Ecology	Maintain representative samples of unique grassland ecosystems and their biodiversity in both protected areas and within the production landscape, through the promotion of restoration, conservation and sustainable use management practices.
Czech Republic: Carpathian grasslands	UNDP, GEF	Management of globally significant species in mountain meadows rich in species (meadows and pastures) in two Protected Landscape Areas in the Carpathians.
Regional: Reversal of land and water degradation in the Tisza basin ecosystem: establishment of mechanisms for land and water management	UNDP, GEF, governments	Strategic Action Plan that meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and the July 2004 EC Communication on Flood Risk Management while at the same time addressing wider sustainability issues in the water, agriculture, energy, industry and navigation sectors.
Regional: Carpathian List of endangered species	WWF and Polish Academy of Science	List of threatened species and awareness
Regional: Network of Carpathian Protected Areas and Ramsar sites	Slovak Nature Conservancy, Norwegian Government	Establishment of the Carpathian network of Protected Areas
Regional: Carpathians Environment Outlook	UNEP	Comprehensive assessment of the state and trends in the Carpathians
Regional: Supporting the Carpathian Convention – Guide to Implementation of Carpathian Convention	REC Slovakia, Italian Trust Fund, UNEP, MoE Italy	Country by country diagnostic audit of policy, institutional and legal frameworks relevant to Carpathian Conventions;
Regional: Development of a Carpathian Ecological network	CERI, Daphne Institute of Applied Ecology, ECNC, WWF Danube Carpathian, Dutch BBI Matra Programme Programme	Carpathian Biodiversity Information System; Carpathian Ecological network based on analysis of existing PAs and other priority areas.
Regional: Realizing large scale Action in the Carpathians as part of the vision for an ecological network	WWF, WWF Netherlands	Realization of a functional ecological network in the Carpathians
Regional: Carpathian Project	UNEP and 19 project partners from the region, EU Interreg IIIB CADSES programme	Atlas of Cultural Diversity. Tourism protocol for the Carpathian Convention Capacity development on EU funding opportunities
Regional: The Carpathian Mountains Ecoregion	WWF, Mava Foundation	Establish a mechanism to support and coordinate the PoWPA implementation; Capacity development for PA practioners; Improved participation in PA design, management and benefit sharing; ensure that critical gaps in the PA network are filled with a focus on creation of large intact blocks, freshwater ecosystems, wilderness and Transboundary PAs

E. DISCUSS THE ADDED VALUE OF GEF INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROJECT DEMONSTRATED THROUGH INCREMENTAL REASONING

13. In the absence of the project, even though the Governments of the Carpathian Countries have articulated their commitment to expand the Carpathian network of protected areas so as to cover priority areas for biodiversity conservation, this will likely remain an ambitious programme unless fundamental PA financing issues are addressed. The PA system will neither be able to provide effective protection to biodiversity within its existing national and regional system nor expand to include ecosystems and habitats that are receiving sub-optimal coverage.

F. INDICATE RISKS, INCLUDING CLIMATE CHANGE RISKS, THAT MIGHT PREVENT THE PROJECT OBJECTIVE(S) FROM BEING ACHIEVED, AND IF POSSIBLE INCLUDING RISK MEASURES THAT WILL BE TAKEN:

Erika, Mircea if you see other risks please add

Risk	Risk rating	Risk Mitigation Strategy
Lack of political support	M	Participatory project management by establishing a Project Steering Group with representatives from all 7 Carpathian countries and key regional stakeholders. Project Implementation Team with significant lobbying experience and with the capacity to gain support from relevant national and international parties who can help mitigate this risk.
Business planning is not recognized as necessary element in PA management.	L	The project will carry out comprehensive training programs in PA business planning through the involvement of the CNPA; Best practice will be promoted and demonstrated through pilot BP preparation and launching of activities.
PA professionals interested in regional training seminars have the language skills needed	L	Language skills are generally a problem among PA staff in the region, but there are enough PA staff with English knowledge and strong interest.
Governments use the results of the project to further develop and implement activities to strengthen the financial sustainability of national protected area systems in the Carpathians	L	The project has been proposed by the relevant PA management authorities and governments.

L-Low; M- modest; H - high

G. DESCRIBE, IF POSSIBLE, THE EXPECTED COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROJECT:

14. A comprehensive cost-effectiveness analysis will be developed as part of the project preparation stage. The existing financial flows are not always managed effectively, either in relation to PA financing needs or conservation priorities. Thus, in many cases, PA funding is skewed towards recurrent costs, especially staffing, while critical investment needs remain under-funded. By focusing on creating the enabling environment for protected area financial sustainability, the project aims at improving the ability of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas practitioners to secure stable and long-term financial resources, allocate them in a timely manner and appropriate form, cover the full costs of protected areas and, ensure that the protected areas are managed effectively and efficiently.

H. JUSTIFY THE COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE OF GEF AGENCY:

15. The project fully complies with the comparative advantages matrix approved by the GEF Council. The project is strongly linked with the portfolio of environmental projects currently being implemented by UNDP Romania and will benefit from their experience. This project is designed to be linked strongly to the three main Program Areas (PA) of UNDP-Romania's Country Cooperation Framework: 1) Democratic governance and decentralized development; 2) Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction; and 3) Environmental Governance. The proposed project is consistent with the

UNDP Country Cooperation Framework (CCF) in promoting the conservation of natural resources, while recognizing the need to sustainably manage those resources through capacity building and encouraging broader multisectoral participation of all stakeholders. Given UNDP's recognized role in capacity development to enable countries to access investments for environmental management and based on the fact that UNDP is the implementing agency for a large portfolio of GEF – funded protected area projects covering 22 countries in Europe and CIS and working on 60 protected areas covering over 15 million hectares, the Government of Romania has requested UNDP's assistance in the design and implementation of this project.

PART III: APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT BY GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT(S) AND GEF AGENCY(IES)

A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S):

(Please attach the [country endorsement letter\(s\)](#) or [regional endorsement letter\(s\)](#) with this template).

<i>(Enter Name, Position, Ministry)</i>	<i>Date: (Month, day, year)</i>
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<i>(Enter Name, Position, Ministry)</i>	<i>Date: (Month, day, year)</i>
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B. GEF AGENCY(IES) CERTIFICATION

This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF policies and procedures and meets the GEF criteria for project identification and preparation.	
<i>Yannick Glemarec</i> GEF Agency Coordinator	Adriana Dinu Project Contact Person
<i>Date: (Month, Day, Year)</i>	Tel. and Email: adriana.dinu@undp.org +421 905 428 238