

Outputs of the Workshop about the strategic documents

1st CNPA Conference

Poiana Brasov, 23rd-24th September 2008

The 1st CNPA Conference was held in Poiana Brasov, near Brasov, one of the candidates for hosting the CNPA Unit.

During the 1st day, after the official welcoming were made the presentations of the Carpathian Convention by Mr. Harald Egerer (Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention), Carpathian Network of Protected Areas - CNPA by Mr. Mircea Verghet (chair of the CNPA Steering Committee), ALPARC by Mr. Guido Plassmann (director of the Task Force Protected Areas) and Carpathian Wetland Initiative - CWI by Mr. Ján Kadlecik (State Nature Conservancy of Slovak Republic). The advantages and challenges of international cooperation for the protected areas were underlined during these presentations. The legal frameworks of this cooperation were also set out.

Afterwards, the CNPA focal points made an overview of the nature protection and protected areas of their respective countries (except Serbia, which was not present). They presented different conservation policies and nature protection approaches of the countries of the Carpathian Convention.

Five thematic working groups were organized during the afternoon and each of them defined the priorities for the thematic cooperation:

1. NATURA 2000, Management planning, Forestry, Wetlands

Generally, the participants of this working group underlined the importance of the sharing the data, results of monitoring methods and staff exchanges and trainings. Concerning the *NATURA 2000* issue, the cooperation of the Carpathian protected areas shall be oriented on these topics:

- Stakeholders and landowners involvement in the NATURA 2000 establishment process,
- harmonisation of methods - in different countries and with national legislations, including also the non-EU countries,
- implementation of Environment impact assessment law.

For the *Management planning*, the most important issues are:

- Elaboration of joint plans for transboundary protected areas,
- stakeholders participation and participatory planning,
- implementation of standards of management effectiveness (ranking systems)
- legal status of management plans and zonation, and the integration within the regional planning policies

The topics for the exchanges regarding the *Forestry* activities are:

- Compensation of local communities linked to changes in landuse regimes,
- comparison of natural and managed areas (bark beetle, chemicals, ...),
- climate changes impacts and management responses,

- importance of forest in ecological networking - virgin forests and HCVF (High Conservation Value Forests)

For the *Wetlands*, the cooperation shall be oriented on:

- Reinforcement of the legislation, recognizing of the status of protected territory,
- awareness raising activities, inventory and new sites designation,
- restoration and prevention of pollution

2. Wildlife management: large carnivores and herbivores, birds of prey

Several problems were defined and the cooperation within these working groups shall aim at solving these problems. The principal challenges are to limit the fragmentation and loss of habitats, to develop a good strategy of communication towards the population, schools and stakeholders, to prevent the conflicts with domestic animals and human activities and to find appropriate compensation systems, to adapt the inadequate legislations and management plans and more generally to increase the transboundary cooperation activities.

3. Local communities, cultural heritage

The priority for this working group is to develop a common Carpathian identity, to integrate the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of local communities in protected areas and to increase the power of local communities within the decision making process in the Carpathian parks. The challenge is also to raise the awareness regarding the cultural heritage of protected areas, natural and semi-natural sites.

4. Sustainable tourism and visitor management

The aim of the cooperation within this working group is principally:

- To develop the long term tourism strategies for the protected areas, which take into account the ongoing changes (especially global climate changes),
- to develop the visitor management and monitoring plans,
- to collect the best and bad practices and publish the guidelines for the tourism development in the Carpathian protected areas
- to diversify the tourism activities, assess the impacts on nature and evaluate the economic benefits
- to cooperate with the working groups dealing with local communities and cultural heritage in order to identify the Carpathian identity and promote it

5. Financial sustainability

The main challenge of activities within this working group is to develop the strategy for a sustainable financing of the protected areas within the Carpathians as well as of the CNPA. It will be oriented on researching of finding opportunities and on developing the different kinds of financing (i.e. entrance fees in the parks, payment for ecosystems services and others).

The **second day** was the day of the workshop. It begun with the presentation of the Medium-term strategy in order to facilitate the discussions on this important document. Both work plans were presented afterwards. Work programme 2009, based on joint activities of principal partners of the CNPA and Work plan 2010-2015, proposing a list of activities in the next several years. The working groups prepared their comments and remarks to all of these documents:

Issues of discussions about the Medium term Strategy during the conference:

- The complexity and a complicated understanding of the document were remarked by several working groups of the workshop;
- many participants consider the level of details too important making the strategy hard to follow;
- several working groups proposed to elaborate a summary for an easier lecture and implementation of the document
- some missing priorities of cooperation were defined (especially ecological networking, work outside the protected areas, cooperation with local communities, cultural heritage);
- the structure in working phases was criticised because of the reason of possible overlapping of the phases. It was proposed to develop the strategy rather in form of themes of cooperation.

Issues of discussions about the Work programme 2009 during the conference:

The activities proposed by ALPARC, CERI, WWF and ISCC to support the CNPA in 2009 were welcomed and no important remarks were made.

Issues of discussions about the Work plan 2010-2015 during the conference:

Group of action “Cultural heritage” was proposed for the cooperation between the protected areas. Several specific actions were defined by each of 5 working groups during the workshop and these actions were integrated in the document.

Issues of discussions about the Alpine-Carpathian cooperation action plan during the conference:

This list of cooperation themes was accepted and welcomed without any remarks.

After the workshop sessions, the 1st CNPA Conference adopted the Structure of the CNPA, the rules of the CNPA Conference and the Declaration of the 1st CNPA Conference.