



## Carpathian Convention and its role and contribution to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework - draft assumptions by the Secretariat

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The **Carpathians**, the second largest mountain region in Europe after the Alps, are one of the most important biodiversity reservoirs and living ecosystem of Europe. The Carpathian region is recognized as one of Europe's last great wildernesses **areas with exceptional levels of biodiversity** and a distinctive cultural heritage with **traditional knowledge and practices** having survived to this day. In terms of ecological characteristics, the Carpathians host largest remaining stands of primeval forests and grasslands of Europe. Such environments are hotspots for biodiversity, serving as habitats for the biggest populations of large carnivores including brown bears, lynx and wolves in Europe. Moreover, the Carpathians are a crucial supplier of freshwater to major rivers of Europe.

The **Carpathian Convention**, a multilateral environmental agreement, was established by seven Carpathian countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine), in order to protect outstanding natural and cultural heritage of the region and to support its sustainable development.

The Carpathian Convention unites seven Carpathian countries in a unique partnership, providing a transnational framework for cooperation and multisectoral policy integration, an open forum for participation by stakeholders and the public, and a platform for developing and implementing transnational strategies, programmes and projects for environmental protection and sustainable development.

The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework process and its future implementation offer an exceptional opportunity for improving synergies and reinforcing biodiversity related conventions in order to maximise their efforts in halting biodiversity loss and restoring ecosystems. The Carpathian Convention, as the **international treaty on environmental protection and sustainable development**, and one of only two international agreements specifically dedicated to mountain region worldwide, can play a substantial role in **translating the global biodiversity targets at regional level** and becoming an **important regional instrument for implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework**.

The Carpathian Convention is equipped, through the Article 4, its Protocol on Biodiversity and Sustainable Forest Management, with a specific mandate to safeguard the biological and landscape diversity in the region. The Convention, aided by its eleven strategic partnerships, including the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Alpine Convention, and a broad network of stakeholders, is perfectly placed to address the pressing environmental challenges facing the region and the world. It can make a valuable contribution to the development of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and its implementation, through its institutional arrangements as a **regional mechanism**.

The Carpathian Convention and its involvement in the Post-2020 process will strengthen the global biodiversity movement by serving as a **role model for other regions** sharing similar problems and challenges, especially in **mountain regions**, due to the regions' characteristics.

The Carpathian Convention addresses various thematic sectors relevant for sustainable development of the region, however, biodiversity shall be considered as the key, underpinning element on which the other sectors depend. Therefore, the Convention can be considered as a great **model for mainstreaming biodiversity into other sectors**.

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## Points to be considered for further discussion about the role and contribution of the Carpathian Convention to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework:

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### 1) Acknowledging and empowering the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework by other conventions – Carpathian Convention COP6

The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and its ongoing process to a large extent guided the preparation for the new implementation period of the Carpathian Convention 2021 – 2023 and was reflected in the priorities and decisions adopted at the **6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention – COP6** (25 November 2020). The COP6 adopted an entire chapter of the resolutions directly referring to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and its implementation (Annex 1). By its Decision COP6/6 para 4, COP6 requested further consultations with UNEP and other biodiversity related conventions regarding possible synergies for the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, including possible contribution and involvement of the Carpathian Convention.

### 2) An example of unique regional cooperation and as institutional mechanism

The Carpathian Convention recognized as the regional mechanism for the implementation of the upcoming Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in the region, shall constitute an example for other MEAs and frameworks, as well underline the **importance of regional approaches in the Global Biodiversity Framework implementation**.

The regional instruments, which reflect characteristics and challenges of the respective regions more precisely than the global ones, and can offer joint approaches in addressing regional needs, can be highly effective in facilitating the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, if they are well consulted and recognized within the process. The Parties, while fulfilling the obligations of the Carpathian Convention, will contribute to the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity framework on a regional scale.

Addressing global biodiversity loss and ecosystems restoration through coordinated actions at the regional level will give the Parties an opportunity for better integration of the Carpathian Convention in their national policies.

### 3) Regional and voluntary commitments

The Carpathian Convention could further support implementing the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework by adopting **regional commitments/contributions**, increasing synergies between the conventions. Carpathian Convention COP6 welcomed the idea of developing the **Carpathian Commitments** for the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, in the form of a Political Declaration. This could be developed in cooperation of Parties and key partners.

The commitments/contributions could be potentially reflected in the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). Integration of the Carpathian Convention specific objectives of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in respective NBSAPs of the Carpathian Contracting Parties could help avoid isolated approaches for the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and make the best use of limited financial and human resources.

Furthermore, the Carpathian Convention recognizes that **greater inclusion of local communities, local and regional authorities and civil society in its implementation**, is a crucial element of meaningful and successful biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use, which contributes to a global transformation towards living in harmony with nature.

Building capacity for local communities and civil society to ensure proper decision making and implementation of environmental law is thus essential. The IPBES global assessment identifies the need for strengthening environmental laws and policies and improving their implementation as a key lever for protecting biodiversity. Equally sustainable outcomes are more likely where local communities are involved in decision making.

Therefore, further consultation will be carried out on voluntary commitments by the local authorities and stakeholders to actively contribute to conservation and restoration of the biodiversity in the Carpathians, contributing to the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The voluntary commitments by the non-state actors could be reflected in the national or the regional/Carpathian commitments, if the Parties agree.

#### **4) Enhancing synergies**

Successful implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework depends great deal on cooperation and coordination of biodiversity-related conventions, including the regional conventions, which should be acknowledged in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework outcome documents.

Currently the Carpathian Convention together with the Alpine Convention and the CBD are preparing a **trilateral Memorandum of Cooperation** in the light of the new Global Biodiversity Framework, which shall be considered a useful instrument for enhancing synergies and initiating common activities for the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in specific areas of cooperation. As the MoU calls for institutional cooperation between the Conventions' Secretariats, exchange of information and experience, and further collaboration on the implementation of the Conventions, it provides a well-suited framework for undertaking joint actions in addressing biodiversity issues and shall be further explored for the effective implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Joint actions or statements during relevant high-level events are highly recommended to promote political attention for the need and benefit of an integrated and Global Biodiversity Framework.

Exchange of information and sharing of knowledge between the focal points of relevant conventions and agreements at the national level will allow mainstreaming biodiversity into required sectors and will support aligning activities for the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in the respective Parties.

The Carpathian Convention has already initiated involvement of and exchange with the CBD National Focal Points in the activities of the Carpathian Convention through the exchange of information and consultation on the role and contribution of the Carpathian Convention to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

#### **5) Review of implementation and reporting under the Post-2020 GBF?**

Synergies in reporting to relevant conventions need to be strengthened. Regional reporting can be very powerful if the specific needs of regional instruments are properly addressed.

Developing an integrated reporting system, which should lead to harmonized knowledge management, enabling the use of relevant information in different reports, increasing the transparency and value of data collection, and limiting the reporting burden of the Parties, shall be considered as one of the most relevant elements for the successful reporting under the new framework.

In this respect, the Carpathian Convention COP6 encouraged the Parties to make use of the global Data Reporting Tool for Multilateral Environmental Agreements (DaRT), and invited UNEP to support the process towards a successful reporting system for the Carpathian Convention under the DaRT. The process is being considered by the Carpathian Convention Parties.

## **6) Mainstreaming mountain biodiversity into the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework**

The Carpathian Convention's involvement in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, contributes as well to raising the importance of mountains and mountain biodiversity at the global political agendas. In this regard, together with UNEP Vienna Office and other partners, the Secretariat contributed to and supported organization of several events and publications, among others, two informal thematic consultations were organized on the margins of the OEWG-1 and OEWG-2 on Post-2020 GBF, where the latest scientific evidence on importance of mountain biodiversity ([Elevating Mountains - Policy brief](#) and [Elevating Mountains 2.0 – Policy brief](#)) were presented and the discussion held on why mountains matter for the Post-2020 GBF process. The consultation seeks further political support for better recognition of the mountains and their importance for healthy ecosystems and possible inclusion in the negotiated Post-2020 GBF. The Convention actively contributed to the organization of the Mountain Biodiversity Day, held on 13 January 2021 and will further support promoting mountain biodiversity within the upcoming meeting of the CBD bodies, SABSTTA-24 and SBI-3 and the OEWG-3 leading to the CBD COP15 in China in October 2021.

## **7) Acknowledging the importance of traditional knowledge**

The Carpathians Convention puts great emphasis on traditional knowledge and practices of the Carpathian local communities, which contribute to sustainable use of natural resources and biodiversity. The Parties shall acknowledge the importance of the traditional knowledge and practice of local communities, which should be fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Carpathian Convention. The Parties should consider the best way of ensuring preservation and use of the local traditional knowledge.

## **8) UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration**

The Carpathian region, as one of the most unique eco-regions on the European and global scale, should contribute to and receive special attention in the context of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

The Carpathian Convention would like to contribute to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, especially considering the impact of climate change on the Carpathian forest and the associated ecosystems. The UN Decade should be also reflected in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.



CC/COP6/DOC3/ADOPTED

## DECISIONS

### Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (COP6)

#### DECISION COP6/6

Implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

##### *The Conference of the Parties*

1. *Recognizing* the role of the Carpathian Convention as a regional mechanism for the implementation of the upcoming Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in the Carpathians, translating the Global 2050 Goals and 2030 Action Targets to the regional level, *welcomes* the active engagement of the Secretariat in the process of elaborating the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and *requests* the Secretariat to continue contributing to the process, including by increasing visibility of the Convention at the international level and preparing of relevant documents on the role and contribution of the Carpathian Convention to the Post-2020 Framework, to be announced at the CBD COP15 in China;
2. *Welcomes* the revision of the trilateral Memorandum of Cooperation between the CBD, the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention in the light of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which shall be considered as a useful instrument for enhancing synergies and initiating common activities for the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, and in this respect, *mandates* the Secretariat to sign the revised MoC;
3. *Welcomes* the efforts made by the Parties, especially Hungary and Poland, the Secretariat, UNEP and relevant partners in raising the importance of mountain biodiversity within the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and other global political agendas, including undertaking consultations on this subject within the meetings of the CBD Open-Ended Working Group on Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and preparation of relevant documents and policy briefs, and *requests* further support and actions in this respect;
4. *Requests* the Secretariat to further consult with UNEP and other biodiversity related conventions regarding possible synergies for the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, including possible contribution and involvement of the Carpathian Convention;
5. *Welcomes* the idea of developing the Carpathian Commitments for the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in the form of a Political Declaration, *encourages* the Parties to adopt the Declaration prior or at the CBD COP15, and *requests* the Secretariat to further facilitate the process.