



“Carpathian Biodiversity Days”

3rd Meeting of the Working Group on Biodiversity of the Carpathian Convention

3 March 2009, Vienna, Austria

MEETING REPORT

The 3rd Meeting of the Working Group on Biodiversity of the Carpathian Convention was opened at 9:30 on 3 March 2009, by Mr. Frits Schlingemann (UNEP Regional Office for Europe). The meeting agreed on Mr. Schlingemann chairing the meeting.

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Schlingemann briefed the meeting on the main discussions and conclusions of the Bureau Meeting (2nd March 2009), including voluntary contributions and the status/development of the CNPA and its activities.

At this point, an extensive discussion on CNPA and related matters took place. Mr. Silviu Megan (Ministry of Environment of Romania) stated that Romania recognised the need for additional financial/human resources to carry out the activities of the interim Secretariat, including the CNPA related activities; Romania is making all efforts to provide the additional voluntary contribution (8 500 EUR – agreed upon by COP2), and the interim Secretariat will soon be informed of the outcome of the related consultations conducted by the Minister of Environment of Romania. At the same time, he emphasised that Romania is not in favour of the idea of an interim arrangements for the CNPA and believes that also in that case of the Carpathian Convention Secretariat the process of establishing a permanent Secretariat should be accelerated. Mr. Megan emphasized that UNEP as the interim Secretariat has a catalyst role in the negotiation process and on the final decision to be taken on the permanent arrangements. Mr. Megan pointed out the importance and necessity of having a Unit to coordinate the CNPA, including the implementation of the Medium Term Strategy (MTS) and of the Work Plan.

On the negotiation process, Mr. Ladislav Ambros (Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic) commented that further consultations should be undertaken by the three countries offering to host the permanent Secretariat: Romania, Slovak Republic and Ukraine. Mr. Serhij Gubar (Ministry of Environment of Ukraine) remarked that all the countries should be involved in the negotiation process, with the help of the ISCC. Further, he stated that CNPA activities do not depend on the existence of a separate Unit, but could be coped with additional staff to be provided to the (interim) Secretariat. Ms. Haczek remarked that the consideration of additional institutional arrangements for a CNPA should follow the requirements of the activities to be carried out upon completion of the preparation of the CNPA Medium Term Strategy and Work Plan.

Further, Czech Republic expressed its interest in having a detailed analysis taking into consideration several factors: envisaged activities to be carried out by a future CNPA Unit and human resources implications, and the expected benefits for the protected areas.



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Mr. Schlingemann explained the applicable decision-making process of the CNPA Steering Committee, by applying *mutatis mutandis* the Rules of Procedure of the Carpathian Convention (decision by consensus). If the CNPA SC is unable to take a decision, it can always address the issue to a higher level – the CCIC (Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee). Also, he reminded the Meeting that the CNPA has terms of reference approved by the COP and that is managed by a Steering Committee; furthermore, the Biodiversity Protocol adopted by the COP2 (its provisions are binding to the Parties of the Carpathian Convention) has direct reference to the CNPA and therefore the Network will actively be involved in the implementation process.

Mr. Niewiadomski added that focusing for the moment the CNPA (and its Steering Committee) activities on setting out the priority tasks would help and naturally determine the institutional structure. In this context, terms of reference should be prepared for the CNPA Steering Committee (at the moment there are in place only ToRs for the CNPA).

Mr. Egerer remarked that the (interim) Secretariat is servicing the CNPA Steering Committee in organising meetings, preparing strategic documents and projects for the development of the Network, but it would be difficult to perform additional tasks in interaction with all the Protected Areas members of the CNPA (in seven national languages etc.) – for such concrete tasks additional institutional capacity will be required, for example a future CNPA Unit, additional staff and/or the strengthened CNPA Focal Points in each country.

Mr. Megan agreed with Mr. Egerer on the need for a CNPA Unit, and furthermore he asked the ISCC to prepare a similar questionnaire for a CNPA Unit to the one on the Permanent Secretariat to be filled in by the countries. The questions should take into consideration the most important aspects to be considered for the establishment and operations of a proposed CNPA Unit.

Mr. Schlingemann summarised the discussions (also taken into considerations discussions/conclusions of the Bureau Meeting on 2 March 2009) and presented the conclusions:

- As decided by the Bureau, the Slovak Republic offered to facilitate and organise consultations between Romania, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine on the establishment of the Permanent Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, including the CNPA Unit; the conclusions and possible recommendations taken by the 3 countries will be communicated to all the Parties by June 2009;
- The 3rd Meeting of the WG on Biodiversity recommends the CNPA Steering Committee to not further discuss about institutional arrangements/structure until an official decision will be taken by the countries, but should concentrate on concrete activities in order to achieve the objectives of the Network.



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The Agenda of the Meeting was adopted with a new point 6 as proposed by Ms. Haczek - Exchange of information on relevant ongoing projects within the framework of the Carpathian Convention.

2. Update on the signature of the Biodiversity Protocol. Ratification of the Biodiversity Protocol

Mr. Serhij Gubar on behalf of the Depositary of the Biodiversity Protocol informed (the information was already presented during the Bureau Meeting held prior to the Meeting of the WG on Biodiversity on 2 March 2009) the meeting on the status of signature of the Protocol.

The meeting decided that the interim Secretariat will send a letter to all the Parties informing them on the status of signature and ratification, urging those who did not sign the Protocol in Bucharest (COP2) – Hungary and Slovakia - to do so bearing in mind the deadline of 19 June 2009.

3. Update on the Memorandum of Cooperation with CBD

The meeting requested the interim Secretariat to prepare - additionally to the national reporting to the CBD's COP10 on the mountain programme of work - a complementary report on the regional perspective – reporting on the advancements made in the framework of the Carpathian Convention; the note will be prepared and sent by the ISCC.

4. The Carpathian Ecological Network – presentation of the final results (by the project partners: CERI and WWF-DCP)

The meeting continued with two presentations on the outcomes of the “Carpathian Ecological Network” given by Ms. Anna Guttova (CERI) and Mr. Mike Baltzer (WWF-DCP).

Romania had few remarks on the presentations delivered:

- the project refers to the Romanian part of the Carpathians which does not match the definition/delimitation as considered in the national legislation;
- the arguments in favour of designating new protected areas are not well-grounded;
- the information presented is questionable as the data was collected more from literature than through field research.



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5. The E-CONNECT project – towards a Carpathian ECONET-C and other possible project ideas?

Mr. Egerer introduced the draft project proposal – ECONET-C – which would provide, if approved, support to the activities of the WG on Biodiversity and of the CNPA Steering Committee. Further, he gave useful information about conditions and advantages of the EU funding programmes:

- According to new programme rules of the CENTRAL and SEE programmes of European Territorial Cooperation, international organizations cannot become a lead partner of the project;
- the lead partner must have the capacity to carry out this role which implies: its legal status allows this type of activities, sufficient human resources as it is also in charge of reporting to the European authorities managing the programmes;
- examples of “possible lead partners: a national service for the protected areas, a national nature conservancy agency, an institute with great operational capacity”;
- preferably the project would have a balanced consortium of partners: ministries, protected areas administrations, regional authorities, research institutions, NGOs;
- the intended length of the project/funding: 36 months;
- funds available/offered for one project: 1-5 million euros;
- the institutions/organisations that intend to become partners should be able to co-finance its contribution (national co-financing: 15%); in kind contributions are possible e.g. in the form of human resources employed;
- the advantages of the involved partners – 85% of costs are reimbursed;
- as not all the ministries would be able to participate as partners in the project, the Steering Committee of the project could / should be formed by the national focal points of the Carpathian Convention and thus ensuring that all the Parties benefit.

Also, Mr. Egerer remarked that even though the ISCC will not formally become a project partner, it will invest time and resources in the development of the project on behalf of the Carpathian Convention.

Romania informed the meeting that might be possible for them to participate in this project as lead partner or partner by using funds available from the GEF programme.

6. Exchange of information on relevant ongoing projects within the framework of the Carpathian Convention

Ms. Haczek informed the meeting about two projects/initiatives in Poland dedicated to the Carpathians.



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1. “Sustainable development of the Carpathians through environment-friendly tourism” launched by the UNEP/GRID-Warsaw and carried out in the period January 2009 – November 2010 in partnership with the Ekopsychologia Association and ANPED. The projects aims at promoting sustainable development of the Carpathian region through the development of environmentally friendly tourism in the mountainous communities; and is financially supported by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the Financial Mechanism of the EEA and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, as well as by the state budget of Poland.

2. possibility of financing a new project(s) through the Swiss Fund under focus area no.4 - Biodiversity, Protection of ecosystems and support of cross-boarder environmental initiatives; with a the total allocation of 10 million Swiss Francs. The deadline for submitting projects is 10 March 2009.

7. First round of negotiations on the Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the Biodiversity Protocol

Mr. Egerer remarked that the text of 2nd draft of the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) was submitted to the meeting by the ISCC for a first reading (developed with the technical assistance from Poland - Mr. Zbigniew Niewiadomski).

Requested by the Chair, Mr. Zbigniew Niewiadomski gave a brief presentation of the 2nd draft of the Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the Biodiversity Protocol. The SAP was first developed in parallel with the Biodiversity Protocol and a first draft was available for the Meetings of the WG in March and November 2007; the 2nd draft was annotated accordingly to the text of the Biodiversity Protocol adopted by COP2.

Mr. Schlingemann remarked on the obligations of the countries imposed by the signature and ratification of the Biodiversity Protocol; thus, the countries are obliged to implement the Protocol through national (status of implementation to be reported to COP) and international action (undertaken by the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention and include in its programme of work, the priorities being set out by COP).

Further, each country presented its initial general remarks/comments on the structure and contents of the 2nd draft SAP.

→ Czech Republic

- the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention should also assume activities;
- the deadline of 5 years represents to little time – a time period of 12 years was proposed;
- the text of the 2nd draft of the SAP is to similar to the one of the Protocol; the SAP should be more specific on concrete activities and actions;



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- proposed to have a leader (government, NGO, protected area, etc) for every action/activity;
 - costs estimation – the financial implications of each action/activity proposed must be identified;
 - clear implementation methodology;
 - the provisions related to CNPA should be discussed and receive comments/suggestions from the CNPA Steering Committee;
 - the existing instruments in place (e.g. CBD) should be used and not double the existing work (less burden on the Parties);
 - regarding the coordination with / implementation of the EU regulations in the case of Ukraine and Serbia is currently not valid; until their compliance with these rules become official, complementary tasks and activities should be proposed;
- Hungary
- the 2nd draft of the SAP is too general and should be more action oriented;
- Romania
- agreed with the observations/suggestions given by Czech Republic;
 - the SAP should be further improved by making it more action oriented as well as country oriented;
 - the CNPA Steering should be involved in the preparation of SAP on the part that refers directly to the CNPA;
 - Mr. Megan emphasised that the area of application of the Protocol (consequently the SAP) is the one officially designated by Romania;
- Serbia
- no comments were provided; suggestions will be provided after further internal consultations;
- Slovakia
- congratulated Poland (Mr. Zbigniew Niewiadomski) for preparing the 2nd draft of the SAP which represents a good starting point for discussions and consultations among the countries;
 - suggestions will be provided after further consultations at country level;
- Ukraine
- congratulated Poland (Mr. Zbigniew Niewiadomski) for preparing the 2nd draft of the SAP which represents a good starting point for discussions and consultations among the countries;
 - the correlation with the EU legislation is very useful and welcome;
 - the period envisage for implementation should be between 10 to 15 years;
 - the participants were reminded of COP2 decision COP2/1 paragraph 4 (“encourages Parties, pending the ratification and entry into force of the Protocol, whenever possible to start its implementation”).



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→ Mr. Andras Krolopp (IUCN) agreed with Czech Republic’s point of view on using and building the SAP upon the existing instruments in place (e.g. CBD); moreover, he suggested to have a clear linkage between SAP for implementation of the Biodiversity Protocol to the Carpathian Convention and the relevant Conventions / EU Directives/ Strategies etc.; activities / actions proposed should also include other issues e.g. climate change.

Further, Mr. Schlingemann presented – based on the first round of comments offered by the participants – 2 options for the further development of the SAP (the nature of the document):

- a) specific document = programme of work - developed for a period of 2 years (short-term)
- b) framework document = reference document - developed for a period of 15 years (long-term)

taken into consideration: the financial means available, who is responsible for each action/activity (government, Carpathian Convention Secretariat, partners), objectives to be achieved.

→ Poland – opted for SAP as a framework document/reference document taken into consideration decision COP2/1 paragraph 15;

→ Romania – opted for SAP as a specific document/programme of work;

→ Ukraine – opted for SAP as a framework document/reference document; and a Work Plan developed on a yearly basis;

→ Czech Republic – opted for a specific document/programme of work with a timeframe of 6 year similar to the NATURA 2000 procedure;

→ Hungary – opted for a specific document/programme of work (concrete action plan focused on activities).

Mr. Niewiadomski made few initial observations to the comments and suggestions received:

- the SAP can be composed of two parts: a framework document/reference document (long-term), and a specific document/programme of work (short-term) which would be developed once agreed on the general framework;
- possible financial resources include national or regional financing and European programmes, an ECONET-C project proposal should be developed and submitted;
- agreed that the instruments in place should and will be used; the SAP could also represent a “check-list” for each country – some might have implemented a certain regulation but others might have not;
- emphasized that the Carpathian Convention and the Biodiversity Protocol provide a platform for EU and non-EU members;
- agreed with the idea of having expert panels.

The meeting agreed on several points and means to further develop the Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the Biodiversity Protocol:

- the 2nd draft of the SAP is a first step and will be used as such;



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- the future SAP must include concrete actions;
- the timeframe is going to be of 6 years – in accordance with the EU framework budget (important in the context of projects financed through European programmes);
- the 2nd version will be included the comments provided during the 3rd meeting of the WG on Biodiversity (3 March 2009) and further developed with “3 years priorities”;
- the final document will be finalized by the Working Group and submitted for adoption by COP3 (2011).

The Meeting was closed on 3rd of March 2009 at 18:00.



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ANNEXES:

- 1. Agenda**
- 2. Programme of work**
- 3. List of participants**

ANNEX 1 - Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the Agenda
2. Update on the signature of the Biodiversity Protocol. Ratification of the Biodiversity Protocol
3. Update on the Memorandum of Cooperation with CBD
4. The Carpathian Ecological Network – presentation of the final results (by the project partners: CERI and WWF-DCP)
5. The E-CONNECT project – towards a Carpathian ECONET-C and other possible project ideas?
6. Exchange of information on relevant ongoing projects within the framework of the Carpathian Convention.
7. First round of negotiations on the Strategic Action Plan for the implementation of the Biodiversity Protocol



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ANNEX 2 – Programme of work

Meeting venue:

ROOM: **F0817** (F-building, 8th floor)
Vienna International Centre (VIC)
Wagramer Strasse 5
1220 Vienna
Austria

Tuesday, 3 March 2009 (Day one)

09:00 – 13:00 Session 1

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch

14:00 – 18:00 Session 2

16:00 – 16:30 Coffee break



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ANNEX 3 – List of participants

<i>No.</i>	<i>Carpathian Country</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>First Name</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Position</i>
1.	Czech Republic	DOSTALOVA	Alena	Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection	
2.	Czech Republic	VAVRINOVA	Jana	Ministry of the Environment	Carpathian Convention National Focal Point
3.	Hungary	HERCZEG	Zoltan	Ministry of Environment and Water	Counsellor
4.	Hungary	PROHÁSZKA	Tamas	Ministry of Environment and Water	Counsellor
5.	Poland	HACZEK	Bozena	Ministry of the Environment	Minister’s Advisor Carpathian Convention National Focal Point
6.	Poland	NIEWIADOMSKI	Zbigniew		CNPA National Focal Point
7.	Romania	MEGAN	Silviu Augustin	Ministry of Environment	Director – Nature Protection Directorate Carpathian Convention National Focal Point
8.	Romania	VÎRTOPEANU	Liliana - Viorica	Ministry of Environment	Counsellor – Nature Protection Directorate Carpathian Convention National Focal Point
9.	Serbia	PISCEVIC	Nevena	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning	Advisor
10.	Slovakia	AMBROS	Ladislav	Ministry of the Environment	Senior Adviser – Department of Nature Protection for Spatial Protection
11.	Ukraine	GUBAR	Sergiy	Ministry of Environmental Protection of Ukraine	Deputy Director – Directorate of Biotic Resources and Econet Carpathian Convention National Focal Point

<i>No.</i>	<i>Entity</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>First Name</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Position</i>
12.	Carpathian Project	WIEDERWALD	Doris	Carpathian Project/ ÖAR Regionalberatung	Consultant



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13.	CEEweb for Biodiversity	TRIPOLSZKY	Sarolta	CEEweb for Biodiversity	Natura 2000 coordinator
14.	CERI	GUTTOVA	Anna	CERI	Coordinator
15.	IUCN	KROLOPP	Andras	IUCN	Deputy Head

<i>No.</i>	<i>Entity</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>First Name</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Position</i>
16.	UNEP ISCC	BUCUR	Andreea	UNEP Vienna Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention	Consultant
17.	UNEP ISCC	EGERER	Harald	UNEP Vienna Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention	Head
18.	UNEP ROE	RUIS	Barbara	UNEP Geneva Regional Office for Europe	Legal Officer
19.	UNEP ROE	SCHLINGEMANN	Frits	UNEP Geneva Regional Office for Europe	Senior Adviser