

Progress Report for the 15th Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee

Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention
UN Environment Programme - Vienna Office



Meeting Agenda

DAY 1

SESSION I | 10:00 – 11:15

3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Report on the statuses of ratification
5. Implementation of the Carpathian Convention: Progress Report

5.1 Progress Report & Recommendations: COP7/1, 3-7, 14, 17

5.2 Progress Report & Recommendations: COP7/8
With presentation: Forum Carpaticum 2025

SESSION II | 11:30 – 13:00

5.3 Progress Report & Recommendations: COP7/9
With presentations: LECA project activities and updates; Joint conservation strategy for the native lynx population in the Carpathian Mountains (Carpathian Lynx Strategy); NaturaConnect project activities and updates

5.4 Progress Report & Recommendations: COP7/13
With presentation: ForestConnect project activities and updates

DAY 2

SESSION III | 10:00 – 11:15

5.5 Progress Report & Recommendations: COP7/12, 16
With presentations: Transhumance UNESCO ICH file extension; Carpathian Pastoralism UNESCO ICH file proposal; Green and Inclusive Agricultural Policy in Ukraine project activities and updates

5.6 Progress Report & Recommendations: COP7/19

SESSION IV | 11:30 – 13:00

5.7 Progress Report & Recommendations: COP7/2, 15
With presentations: Central Mountains project activities and updates; Sustainable Tourism Development in Ukraine

6. Presentation: Establishing a Peace Park between Romania and Ukraine
With presentation of the CCIC Recommendation

7. Presentation: “The ImPossible Park Carpathians” – Proposal to Safeguard Critical Carpathian Forest Areas

8. CC COP8 Updates and Discussion

9. Any Other Business

10. Conclusions and Closure

Statuses of ratifications of the Carpathian Convention and its Protocols

	CZECH REPUBLIC Signed / Deposited	HUNGARY Signed / Deposited	POLAND Signed / Deposited	ROMANIA Signed / Deposited	SERBIA Signed / Deposited	SLOVAKIA Signed / Deposited	UKRAINE Signed / Deposited
CARPATHIAN CONVENTION	2003 / 2005	2004 / 2009	2003 / 2006	2003 / 2006	2003 / 2007	2003 / 2004	2003 / 2004
PROTOCOL ON CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY	2008 / 2009	2009 / 2010	2008 / 2010	2008 / 2010	2008 / 2013	2009 / 2011	2008 / 2009
PROTOCOL ON SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT	2011 / 2012	2011 / 2013	2011 / -	2011 / 2013	2011 / 2015	2011 / 2013	2011 / 2012
PROTOCOL ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM	2011 / 2012	2012 / 2013	2011 / 2012	2011 / 2014	2011 / 2015	2011 / 2012	- / 2017
PROTOCOL ON SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT	2014 / 2018	- / -	2015 / 2016	2014 / 2019	2014 / 2018	2014 / 2015	2015 / 2016
PROTOCOL ON SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT	2018 / 2019	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2017 / 2020	- / -	- / 2018	2017 / 2021
NEW ARTICLE ON CLIMATE CHANGE 12BIS	2017 / -	2017 / completed	2017 / completed	2017 / completed	2017 / -	2017 / -	2017 / completed

DECISION COP7/1 Implementation of the Carpathian Convention

Activity: Implement the Ministerial Declaration of the Carpathian Commitments on the impact of war in Ukraine on the environment

Project Proposal for Ukrainian Carpathians on enhancing biodiversity through strengthened protected areas network

- Collaborative effort by the Secretariat and Ukraine's Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources
- Focus: Strengthen protected areas, sustainably manage key forest ecosystems, and increase climate resilience
- Concept note submitted to the Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Project: Ukraine's Participation in LIFE Transnational Carpathian SNaP Project

- Opportunity to align with EU environmental acquis
- Capacity building for LIFE and other EU funding applications

Projects: Additional Proposals Supported by the Secretariat for Ukraine

- "Integrating Biodiversity Conservation into Upstream Planning of Linear Transport Infrastructure in Ukraine" (submitted to GEF)
- "Mapping and Conservation Status of Natural Forests and Habitats in Ukraine, LIFE CONFORHUA" (submitted to LIFE Programme)
- "Green industrial recovery through municipality-based development in Ukraine" (supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development – collaborating with UNIDO)

Support for Ukrainian Scientists through Science for the Carpathians (S4C)

DECISION COP7/1 Implementation of the Carpathian Convention

Activity: Promote a regional Carpathian Day celebration

Aim: Promote Carpathian protection, sustainable development, and Carpathian Convention activities at multiple levels

- Collaborative effort by the Secretariat with education for sustainable development experts and protected area representatives from Romania

Key Activities and Developments

- **Carpathian Day Concept Brief:** prepared by the Secretariat for outlining the background, objectives, and roadmap, including the proposal for an informal Carpathian Day committee
- **Informal Consultation Meeting (June 2024):** Slovak partners expressed interest in organizing Carpathian Day activities in 2025
- **Carpathian Day Webpage:** Launched to facilitate event registrations and collect information on activities in Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine
- **Presentation at the 15th Working Group on Biodiversity Meeting:** Andrea Kurta (Piatra Craiului National Park) presented on Carpathian Day and Youth at the Top to inspire further engagement

DECISION COP7/1 Implementation of the Carpathian Convention

Event: 20th Anniversary of UNEP Vienna Office and Carpathian Convention Secretariat (18 June 2024)

- Celebrated decades of international cooperation and sustainable development in the Carpathians, Western Balkans, and mountains globally
- Hosted by Austria's Federal Ministry for Climate Action
- Achievements and commitments highlighted:
 - *Carpathians: Developed Carpathian Biodiversity Framework, showcasing regional biodiversity*
 - *Western Balkans: Over 12 new protected areas, including Shar Mountain National Park*
 - *Pollution Platform: Tackling pollution issues across air, soil, and monitoring projects since 2018*
 - *UNEP's Global Role: leadership in global environmental governance and mountain partnerships*

Activity: General implementation of the Carpathian Convention





CCIC Recommendations

DECISION COP7/1 Implementation of the Carpathian Convention

The CCIC welcomes the Secretariat's support to Ukraine in developing the **strategic project for the Ukrainian Carpathians**, titled "Enhanced Protected Areas Network for Biodiversity Conservation and Development in Ukraine," to be submitted to the Global Environment Facility (GEF); and requests the Secretariat to enhance its support to Ukraine in the further development and execution of the GEF project. The CCIC also encourages UNEP in its prospective role as an implementing agency to strongly support the Secretariat in this role. (rephrased)

The CCIC welcomes the regional Carpathian Day initiative, including the successes of events that took place in 2024 throughout the Carpathians. *Furthermore, the CCIC invites* the Parties and relevant stakeholders to **organize and/or participate in a local Carpathian Day event** on or around 26 September 2025.

The CCIC welcomes the roadmap for future Carpathian Day operationalization as outlined in the Carpathian Day Concept Brief, including the **establishment of an informal, voluntary Carpathian Day committee** to coordinate Carpathian Day efforts throughout the region.

The CCIC welcomes the collaboration of the Secretariat with UNIDO on developing the **project 'Green industrial recovery through municipality-based development in Ukraine,'** including the output 'Green recovery and sustainable local development in rural municipalities of the Ukrainian Carpathians promoted through partnerships and transfer of best practices.' *The CCIC requests* the Secretariat to continue strengthening the implementation of the Carpathian Convention in Ukraine and to broaden its **collaboration with UNIDO in Ukraine** and the wider Carpathian region through the implementation of the project. *The CCIC invites* the Parties and relevant stakeholders to support these processes.

DECISION COP7/3 Cooperation with the European Union

Activity: Support closer cooperation with the EU, its instruments, and programmes

Secretariat's Support for EU-Funded Projects

- Project Development and General Support
 - *BioLine: Biodiversity restoration in powerline corridors (Interreg Danube Region Programme)*
 - *Harmon2: Capacity building for biodiversity in the transport sector (Interreg Danube Region Programme)*
 - *Aarhus Convention Project: Engaging Roma communities in the EU green transition (European Climate Initiative/EUKI)*
 - *LYCO Project: Institutional strengthening for Carpathian lynx conservation (EU LIFE Programme)*
 - *LIFE CONFORHUA: Mapping and conserving natural forests and habitats in Ukraine (EU LIFE Programme)*
- LIFE Strategic Nature Project for the Carpathians
 - Secretariat's consultations with EU institutions and project proposal development

DECISION COP7/4 Cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme

Activity: Cooperation with UNEP

UNEP Focal Points for Multilateral Environmental Agreements

- Secretariat's active participation in these meetings to promote Carpathian Convention goals and activities
- Explores future cooperation opportunities within UNEP's programmatic framework

Event: Mountain Innovation Fair (October 2023, Bolzano/Bozen)

- Organized by UNEP, Carpathian Secretariat, Eurac Research, and UN GLOMOS as part of the PRIMA project
- Brought together 65+ stakeholders from 20+ countries in regions like Africa, the Caucasus, the Balkans, the Carpathians, and the Alps
- Focus: Innovative approaches in sustainable mountain development on topics like water management, climate risk reduction, agriculture, renewable energy, and tourism



DECISION COP7/5 Cooperation with other conventions and international bodies

Activity: Cooperation with the Alpine Convention

General Collaboration with the Alpine Convention

- Regular contact with the Alpine Convention's Permanent Secretariat and bodies like the Alpine Biodiversity Board
- Mutual participation in relevant meetings for both Conventions

Event: Alpine Biodiversity Conference (June 2024, Kranjska Gora, Slovenia)

- Secretariat and WG Biodiversity Chair (Czech Republic) participated, sharing insights on Carpathian Biodiversity Framework and ongoing activities



Consultation with Italian Alpine Convention Presidency (2025-2026)

- Secretariat consulted on preliminary programme discussions under the Italian Presidency and Alpine Biodiversity Board invited to strengthen collaboration

DECISION COP7/5 Cooperation with other conventions and international bodies

Activity: Supporting exchange on mountain governance

Adaptation at Altitude – Global Programme for Sustainable Mountain Development

- Ongoing interregional exchange with Andean Mountain Initiative (IAM) and Alpine Convention
 - *Carpathian Convention fosters knowledge-sharing, focusing on the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework as a model for regionally implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*
- **Goal:** Support IAM's establishment of a legal cooperation framework for sustainable mountain development in the Andes
- **Publication:** Mountains Connect Brief summarizes governance exchanges among Andes, Alps, and Carpathians



DECISION COP7/5 Cooperation with other conventions and international bodies

Activity: Funding for efforts under the Multi-Country Mountain Flagship (not included in the Progress report)

Multi-Country Mountain Flagship

- Contributes to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030
 - *Multi-Country Mountain Flagship is one of the first 10 World Restoration Flagships of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration*
- The UN recognized a multi-country effort to preserve mountain ecosystems through restoration efforts in Kyrgyzstan, **Serbia**, and Uganda and Rwanda,
 - *The Carpathians in Serbia were recognized as one of 10 pioneering efforts in reviving mountain landscapes*
- UN has now approved funding to support efforts, including technical expertise





CCIC Recommendations

***DECISION COP7/5
Cooperation with other
conventions and international
bodies***

The CCIC commends the Slovenian Presidency of the Alpine Convention for its dedicated efforts in promoting mountain biodiversity within the Alps and interregional cooperation.

*Furthermore, the CCIC welcomes the initiatives of the **upcoming Italian Presidency to collaborate on joint activities with the Carpathian Convention**, particularly in light of the renewed Memorandum of Cooperation between the two Conventions and the CBD for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).*

DECISION COP7/6 Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)

Activity: Promoting the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework (CBF) and the Carpathian Vision 2050

Recognition and Inclusion of the CBF in Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Documents

- CBF adopted and highlighted on CBD website, aligning KMGBF targets and Carpathian Convention activities
- Mentioned in Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-4) documents, with direct references:
 - **Formal Recognition:** Referenced the Carpathian Convention's CBF and COP7/6 Decision
 - **Model for Regional Biodiversity Action:** Recognized the Carpathian Convention and the CBF as a model for regional and global biodiversity alignment
 - **Memorandum of Cooperation:** Recognized the triparty agreement with the Carpathian and Alpine Conventions and CBD
- INF Document (CBD/COP/16/INF/23) submitted to be included in CBD COP16 documentation, as requested by CBD Secretariat
 - highlights CBF as a key regional instrument for KMGBF implementation



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

DECISION COP7/6 Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)

Activity: Promoting the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework (CBF) and the Carpathian Vision 2050

Trilateral Memorandum of Cooperation

- Alpine Convention developing a regional instrument inspired by CBF
- CBF presented at the Alpine Biodiversity Conference (June 2024), discussions continue for aligning efforts

Event: Bern III Conference (January 2024)

- Secretariat presented CBF as a case study for successful regional cooperation in biodiversity conservation
- **Conference goals:** Strengthen cooperation among MEAs for KMGBF implementation, share scalable practices
- **Conference outcomes:** CBF recognized as an exemplary model for MEA collaboration in the final report and UNEP-WCMC's Cross-mapping paper on biodiversity collaboration

DECISION COP7/6 Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)

Activity: Developing guidance materials for streamlining the CBF into NBSAPs

Encouraging CBF Integration into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)

- Streamlined approach benefits include:
 - Efficient resource use, reducing isolated approaches (CC/COP7/6, paragraph 2)
 - Enhancing KMGBF alignment and impact at national and regional levels (CBD/COP/DEC/15/4 Annex paragraph 7q)
 - Incorporating actions relevant to other biodiversity agreements (CBD/COP15/DEC/15/16, paragraph 23)
 - Establishing the Carpathian Convention as a model for global and regional policy adaptation

Guidance Document for CBF Integration into NBSAPs

- Developed by the Secretariat for prompting Carpathian countries to consider environmental and sustainable objectives/contexts of the Carpathian region in national biodiversity targets, indicators, policy measures, and means of implementation
- Provides steps for integrating the CBF:
 - 1. Assess current national biodiversity goals and policies against KMGBF and CBF
 - 2. Engage key sectors, government agencies, and stakeholders to align national targets with CBF
 - 3. Update targets with relevant CBF actions, set indicators, and identify responsible groups
 - 4. Utilize the CBD's NBSAP Template for submission
- Provides list of documents, networks and tools, and example policy actions (Annex I)

DECISION COP7/6 Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)

Activity: LIFE Strategic Nature Project (SNaP) for the Carpathians

PURPOSE

- **Long-term, large-scale funding for impactful Carpathian activities, regarding:**
 - *Carpathian Biodiversity Framework*
 - *Individual countries' NBSAPs and their transnational coordination*
- **Important for transboundary and transnational activities**
 - *Such activities cannot be financed from national/in-country funding sources*
 - *No transnational LIFE SNaPs have been implemented thus far*
- **Majority of Carpathian countries are eligible**
 - *Contrary to Interreg Central Europe or Danube Transnational Programmes*
 - *Ukraine can participate fully; Serbia can participate as a "third country"*

THEMATIC FOCUS

- **Align with EU environmental policies**
 - *EU Birds and Habitats Directives and EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030*
- **Align with CBF objectives to mainstream biodiversity into other sectoral policies**
 - *Strategic Objective 1: extend protected areas network; set up ecological corridors; ecosystem restoration*
 - *Strategic Objective 2: protect primary and old-growth forests, improve resilience of managed forests*
 - *Strategic Objective 5: bring nature back to agricultural land*
 - *Strategic Objective 8: cooperate with Ukraine*



DECISION COP7/6 Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)

Activity: LIFE Strategic Nature Project (SNaP) for the Carpathians

CURRENT DEVELOPMENT

- **Submitted a proposal for Technical Assistance Project Preparation (TA-PP) in September 2024**
 - *Overall budget: about 90.000 EUR*
 - *One applicant on behalf of the consortium: Blue! Advancing European project in cooperation with the Secretariat*
 - *Strong letters of support from the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Hungary and Serbia*
 - *Czech Republic, Poland and Romania are Associated Partners in the TA-PP project consortium*
 - *Evaluation results expected December 2024*
 - *If successful, the TA-PP will support the SNaP preparation*
 - *About 1 year for preparing concept note and, if accepted, elaboration of a full SNaP proposal*
 - *All Carpathian countries expected to be Associated Partners in the SNaP consortium: developing concept note and full proposal and implementation*
- **Planning and development of a 'CBF Action Plan'**
 - *CBF Action Plan to serve as a reference for achieving targets within the Carpathian SNaP implementation period, ensuring feasibility and alignment with common objectives*
 - *TA-PP process will involve consultations with Ministries and stakeholders from each participating country*
 - *Specific actions, budget, and timeline to be outlined in the CBF Action Plan for formal adoption by the CCIC in 2025*
- **Be prepared for future consultations**



CCIC Recommendations

DECISION COP7/6 Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

*The CCIC thanks the Parties and the Secretariat for promoting the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework (CBF) at the global level, particularly within CBD-related processes, and invites them to further **support the integration of the CBF into CBD processes**, especially in light of the past CBD COP16 in Cali, Colombia and its Decisions.*

*The CCIC invites the Parties and the Secretariat to further promote the CBF among other mountain regions and to specifically **strengthen cooperation with the Alpine Convention and the CBD** in light of the renewed Memorandum of Cooperation.*

*The CCIC welcomes the **contribution of the Secretariat to the Bern III Conference** on Cooperation among the Biodiversity-related Conventions for the implementation of the KMGBF, which further promoted the Carpathian Convention at the global level and among relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements and requests the Secretariat to continue its efforts in this respect.*

*The CCIC welcomes with thanks the “Guidance Document for streamlining the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework into NBSAPs” and its “Annex I: Table with example policy actions relevant for the Carpathians” developed by the Secretariat, and encourages the Parties to **make use of these relevant documents while undergoing the revisions of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans** so they better reflect Carpathian Convention-related activities.*



CCIC Recommendations

DECISION COP7/6 Implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

*The CICC welcomes the submission of the Technical Assistance Project Preparation (TA-PP) for the LIFE Carpathian Strategic Nature Project (SNaP) and the support by the Parties; invites the Parties, relevant stakeholders and the Secretariat to **collaborate on implementing the TA-PP**, thereby supporting the development of the concept note and a full project proposal for the LIFE transnational Carpathian SNaP, to be submitted under the LIFE SNaP call in 2025; and supports the **development of the related CBF Action Plan** which shall outline the activities to be undertaken during the Carpathian SNaP implementation.*

*The CCIC invites the Parties to identify relevant stakeholders from their countries to **participate in relevant consultations for the TA-PP** implementation.*

DECISION COP7/7 Cooperation with Eurac Research

Activity: Cooperation with Eurac Research

Ongoing Scientific Support for the Carpathian Convention

- Eurac Research continues providing scientific expertise and project assistance to the Carpathian Convention
- Renewed the Work Plan between Eurac Research and UNEP Vienna-SCC, signed at the Mountain Innovation Fair (October 2023, Bolzano)

Event: IMPETUS Project (EU Horizon) Replication Workshop (March 2025)

- 27 March 2025 in Hostětín, Czech Republic, organized by Eurac Research with Secretariat's support
- **Focus:** Demonstrate European climate commitments in action, with emphasis on adaptation measures under the EU Green Deal
 - *Includes insights from the Valle dei Laghi demonstration site (Northern Italy) led by Eurac Research*
- **Secretariat's role:** facilitating Czech stakeholder communication and engagement to foster knowledge exchange

eurac
research



CCIC Recommendations

DECISION COP7/7 Cooperation with Eurac Research

*The CCIC expresses its profound appreciation for the longstanding and dynamic **collaboration between the Secretariat and Eurac Research**. Eurac Vienna Office's indispensable contributions have been instrumental in driving forward key initiatives and projects.*

The CCIC endorses the continuation and deepening of this successful partnership, recognizing it as a strong added value to the ongoing and future work of the Secretariat and Convention.

DECISION COP7/14 Sustainable transport and infrastructure, industry, and energy

Activity: IENE International Conference

Event: IENE International Conference Prague 2024 (September 2024)

- IENE International Conference on "Biodiversity in the Headlight of Future Transport"
- Session: "Enhancing International Collaboration Between Transport Infrastructure and Ecology"
 - Focused on exploring new intersectoral and international collaboration strategies
 - Aimed at addressing urgent challenges faced by transportation and ecological organizations



CCIC Recommendations

***DECISION COP7/14
Sustainable transport and
infrastructure, industry, and
energy***

The CCIC welcomes the **active cooperation of the Secretariat with IENE** and the proposal from IENE Regional Working Group for Eastern Europe and Balkans to develop a **Memorandum of Understanding** with the Secretariat.

DECISION COP7/17 Environmental assessment/information system, monitoring and early warning

Activity: Cooperation with the EEA and EU-funded projects

Ongoing Cooperation with the European Environment Agency (EEA)

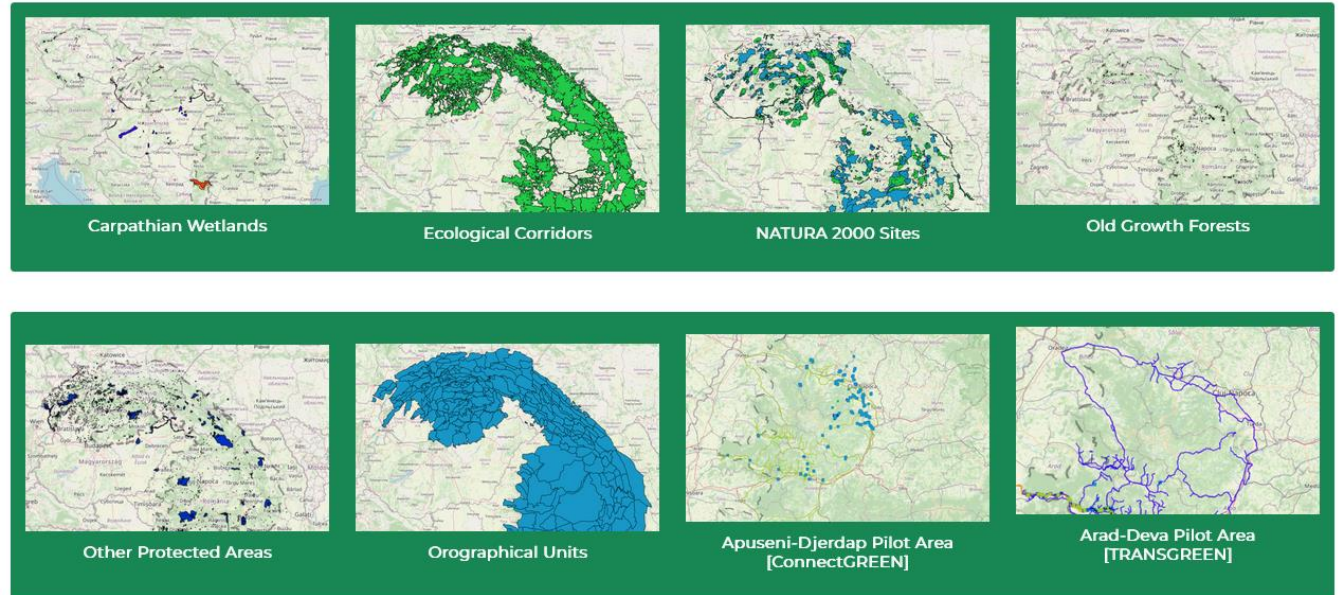
- Continued collaboration with EEA's European Topic Centers on supporting Carpathian Convention activities:
 - *Forests, climate change adaptation, biodiversity, ecological connectivity, integration of common information systems*
- Secretariat and the EEA updated the work plan for 2023-2024 guiding cooperation activities
- Event: Secretariat invited to the EEA Eionet Expert Workshop (October 2024) and discussed:
 - *Current state and future plans of national adaptation knowledge platforms*
 - *Potential collaboration with EEA*
 - *Role of transnational adaptation knowledge platforms in multi-level governance and cross-border adaptation*
- EEA dataset for mapping Ukrainian Carpathians available soon
 - Part of the project "Creation of the standard European database Corine Land Cover (CLC) of the Carpathian region for an area of 27,000 km²"
 - To be published on websites of EEA, Ukraine's Regional Eastern Europe Fire Monitoring Center (REEFMC) and the Ministry of Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources

DECISION COP7/17 Environmental assessment/information system, monitoring and early warning

Activity: Cooperation with the EEA and EU-funded projects

Improvement of the Carpathian Countries Integrated Biodiversity Information System (CCIBIS)

- Supported by NaturaConnect project (EU Horizon Europe) and ForestConnect project (Interreg Danube Region)



CCIC Recommendations

DECISION COP7/17
Environmental
assessment/information
system, monitoring and early
warning

*The CCIC strongly values its enduring **partnership with the European Environment Agency (EEA)** and the valuable support on forests and climate change related work and urges the continuation of this productive collaboration by renewing the joint work plan for 2025-2026.*

*The CCIC expresses its deep gratitude to the EEA for financially supporting the Secretariat's participation in the **Eionet Expert Workshop** on adaptation knowledge platforms. It welcomes the presence of Transnational Mountain Regions under the **Climate-ADAPT platform** and calls on the Secretariat to actively collaborate with the EEA in updating the Carpathian webpage on Climate-ADAPT and in enhancing efforts in raising awareness on this important initiative.*

*The CCIC welcomes the active cooperation of the Secretariat with WWF CEE under the EU-funded projects contributing to the further **development of CCIBIS** and recommends that the Secretariat further strengthen this collaboration.*

*The CCIC welcomes the update on **Corine Land Cover for the Carpathian region of Ukraine**, requests the Secretariat, in collaboration with the S4C, to facilitate dissemination of the dataset when it is available, invites the Parties and Convention partners and stakeholders to make use of the dataset, and invites the Secretariat to facilitate collaboration in this respect.*

DECISION COP7/8 Strengthening science-policy-practice interface and cooperation with scientific networks

Activity: Participation in relevant conferences/events

Event: Student Conference on Conservation Science (SCCS) (September 2024)

- Presented Carpathian Convention's biodiversity initiatives at SCCS, hosted by Hungarian Academy of Sciences
- Aimed to increase awareness among young/early career researchers and engage them in Carpathian Convention activities

Events: Secretariat supporting key scientific events (September 2025)

- Secretariat organized a meeting with Carpathian experts to promote awareness and synergy among event organizers
 - *European Landscape Ecology Congress, Bratislava (Sept 2-5)*
 - *Forum Carpaticum, Bratislava (Sept 9-11)*
 - *SCCS 2025, Hungary*
 - *International Mountain Conference, Innsbruck (Sept 14-18)*
 - *Multifunctional Farming Conference, Rzeszów (Sept 16-18)*

DECISION COP7/8 Strengthening science-policy-practice interface and cooperation with scientific networks

Activity: Participation in relevant projects and activities

Secretariat supporting completed and new projects

- **Completed Project:** “Strengthening the ESD network in the Carpathian Convention via a science-policy-practice interface” (German Federal Environment Ministry’s Advisory Assistance Programme)
 - *Advanced Carpathian ESD Expert Network, including defining its vision and objectives*
 - *Collaboration with S4C to support 7th Forum Carpaticum and a special session on Ukraine*
- **New Project:** “Promoting Biodiversity through Transdisciplinary Learning Interventions in the Carpathians (ProBioTIC)” (German Environmental Foundation, led by Leuphana University Lüneburg)
 - *Addresses sustainable consumption/production, biodiversity, and ESD in Carpathian region, focusing on strengthening young scientists' participation in policy*

Secretariat support of master's thesis

- Secretariat backed the successful defense of Elena Fischer’s thesis: “Fuzzy Maps for Wicked Problems: An Inclusive Systems Approach to Improving Biodiversity Outcomes in the Carpathian Region”
 - *Developed with contributions from relevant experts and partners*

DECISION COP7/8 Strengthening science-policy-practice interface and cooperation with scientific networks

Activity: Strengthening cooperation with the Science for the Carpathians (S4C) network

Key S4C activities supported by the Secretariat

- boosting S4C participation, linking S4C projects with Convention efforts, and refining S4C recommendations for WG Biodiversity

Secretariat and S4C members co-authored chapter on science-policy-practice

- published in Elsevier's "Safeguarding Mountain Social-Ecological Systems" (Aug 2024)



Secretariat facilitated cooperation between S4C and Scientific Network for the Caucasus Mountain Region (SNC-mt)

- implemented MoU between S4C and SNC-mt
- enabled SNC-mt representation at WG Biodiversity meeting

Events: Forum Carpathicum

- Outcomes of 7th Forum Carpathicum "Carpathian Futures – Critical Transitions" (September 2023):
 - Strengthened ties between S4C and UNESCO Chair on Higher Education for Sustainable Development (Leuphana University)
 - Coordinated S4C's key messages and policy recommendations for COP7 and WG Biodiversity
 - Organized follow-up S4C meeting at Jagiellonian University (May 2024)
 - Discussed S4C restructuring, Working Groups, 8th Forum Carpathicum planning, and joint projects
 - Signed Memorandum of Cooperation with Jagiellonian University
- Planning for 8th Forum Carpathicum (September 2025)

8th Forum Carpathicum 2025

Jakub Csabay
Comenius University
Bratislava / S4C

Presentation



CCIC Recommendations

DECISION COP7/8 *Strengthening science- policy-practice interface and cooperation with scientific networks*

*The CCIC welcomes the ongoing collaboration between the Secretariat and the S4C; takes note of the potential restructuring of the S4C; requests the Secretariat to continue supporting this process and recommends continuing **cooperation on the S4C recommendations to the Convention and its Working Groups**; and invites the Parties to continue providing feedback on how to make them more relevant and useful.*

*The CCIC recommends the Secretariat to closely collaborate with the S4C on organizing the **8th Forum Carpathicum conference** and invites the Parties to promote the conference and encourage active stakeholder participation in their countries.*

*The CCIC welcomes the efforts of the Secretariat in **coordinating various events relevant for implementing and raising awareness about the Carpathian Convention**; invites the Secretariat to continue these efforts; and invites the Parties to facilitate coordinated actions to build on potential synergies offered by these fora.*

*The CCIC welcomes closer cooperation among Carpathian partners and the UNESCO Chair on Higher Education for Sustainable Development at Leuphana University Lüneburg through the **ProBioTIC project**; invites the Parties and the Working Groups to collaborate with the project partners to strengthen its effectiveness and relevance in implementing the Convention; and requests the Secretariat to facilitate collaboration between the project partners and the respective Convention bodies and networks.*

*The CCIC takes note with appreciation the findings of the thesis, "**Fuzzy Maps for Wicked Problems**: An Inclusive Systems Approach to Improving Biodiversity Outcomes in the Carpathian Region," developed by Elena Fischer and further invites the Parties and the Secretariat to consider its recommendations.*

COFFEE BREAK

*15th Carpathian Convention Implementation
Committee Meeting*



LECA project

Martin Duľa

*Mendel University in Brno / LECA Project
Lead Partner*

Carpathian Lynx Strategy

Urs Breitenmoser, IUCN SSC Cat
Specialist Group
Jochen Krebühl, Lynx Institute

NaturaConnect project

Hildegard Meyer
World Wildlife Fund – Central Eastern
Europe



Presentations



CCIC Recommendations

DECISION COP7/9 Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity

The CCIC approves the **WG Biodiversity Work Plan 2024 – 2026** and encourages the WG Biodiversity and relevant stakeholders to diligently implement it with support of the Secretariat.

The CCIC welcomes the ongoing **implementation of the LECA project** and its recent achievements, particularly the joint conference of the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions for the exchange of practices on large carnivore management, which took place 6-8 March 2024 in Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia, and encourages the Parties, the WG Biodiversity, the Large Carnivores Expert Group, relevant stakeholders, and the Secretariat to actively contribute to the ongoing and planned activities that are crucial for the Carpathians and the successful implementation of the Action Plan on Conservation of Large Carnivores and Ensuring Ecological Connectivity.

The CCIC welcomes the idea of the joint strategy for the conservation of the autochthonous lynx population in the Carpathian Mountains (**Carpathian Lynx Strategy**) to be potentially developed under the auspices of the Carpathian Convention, the Convention on Migratory Species and Bern Convention, and invites the WG Biodiversity, the Large Carnivores Expert Group, relevant stakeholders and the Secretariat to support the process.

The CCIC welcomes the **reestablishment of the Carpathian Convention Large Carnivores Expert Group**, extends its thanks to the Parties and Observers that have already submitted nominations for experts, and encourages the remaining Parties and other actors to act promptly in providing this information to ensure full representation of the Parties and Observers in the Expert Group.

Furthermore, the CCIC invites the Large Carnivores Expert Group to actively participate in consultation processes by **providing expert inputs on activities related to the implementation of the International Action Plan on Conservation of Large Carnivores and Ensuring Ecological Connectivity**, with a particular focus on thematic guidance on monitoring harmonization, poaching investigations, and conflict prevention developed by the LECA project, as well as the **development of a joint strategy for conserving the native lynx population in the Carpathian Mountains** (Carpathian Lynx Strategy); and requests the Secretariat to support this process.



CCIC Recommendations

DECISION COP7/9 Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity

*The CCIC welcomes the recent outcomes of the **NaturaConnect project** and encourages the WG Biodiversity and relevant stakeholders to consider the suggested interventions in the “Review and Synthesis of Best Practices in Governance and Land-use Policies to Implement TEN-N”, contribute to the further implementation of the project, and disseminate its results to relevant stakeholders at the national level with the support of the Secretariat.*

*Furthermore, the CCIC invites the WG Biodiversity, its observers and relevant stakeholders at the national level to **participate in future NaturaConnect capacity-building events**.*

*The CCIC welcomes the active **cooperation of the Secretariat with ICPDR, WWF CEE and the EUSDR** on the topic of ecological connectivity and recommends the Secretariat to further strengthen this collaboration.*

*The CCIC welcomes the offer by the Czech Republic to host the **next meeting of the WG Biodiversity in the first half of 2025**, which could potentially be organized back-to-back with a meeting of the Large Carnivores Expert Group; invites the WG Biodiversity, the Large Carnivores Expert Group and relevant stakeholders to actively participate in the meeting, and requests the Secretariat to support its organization.*



CCIC Recommendations

DECISION COP7/9 Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity

The CCIC welcomes the involvement of the **Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA)** in **awareness-raising initiatives** about the ecological importance of Carpathian protected areas, and in fostering youth engagement in environmental stewardship through the "Youth at the Top" programme.

The CCIC invites the CNPA to undertake relevant activities that should **improve the CNPA's governance and operations**, with the support of the Parties, relevant stakeholders and the Secretariat.

The CCIC welcomes the **Carpathian Wetland Initiative's (CWI) organization of a five-day international course**, held from 7-11 October 2024, in the Elbe River Basin wetlands of the Czech Republic, which aimed to enhance understanding, communication, and cooperation across various sectors, including land use, nature conservation, water resource management, agriculture, and forestry; *thanks* the Secretariat for support of participation of experts from Serbia; and *encourages* continued efforts by the CWI, with the support of the WG Biodiversity, relevant stakeholders, and the Secretariat, to advance similar initiatives in the future.

The CCIC welcomes the submission of the "**BioLine project** on restoration of biodiversity and connectivity for ecological management of powerline corridors in Danube – Carpathian region" under the Interreg Danube Region Programme and *encourages* the WG Biodiversity and relevant stakeholders to actively support the project approval.

DECISION COP7/13 Sustainable Forest Management

Activity: Implementation of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Forest Management - Work Plan 2023 – 2026

Event: Next WG Forest Meeting (Spring 2025)

- Organized in consultation with WG Forest Chair (Slovakia)
- Agenda aligned with WG Forest Work Plan 2023-2026
 - *Meeting agenda currently under discussion*
- Dates and details will be shared with WG Forest members soon

DECISION COP7/13 Sustainable Forest Management

Activity: Consideration of the Assessment of climate change risks and adaptation options for the Carpathian forests and their ecosystem services and implementation of recommendations

Assessment of climate change risks and adaptation options for the Carpathian forest ecosystems and their services

- Developed by Dr. William Keeton of Vermont University, and the Secretariat, based on inputs from the Carpathian Expert Group (WG Forest + WG Climate Change)
- Endorsed by the COP7
- Secretariat currently improving the format and layout of the publication
 - *Final version available soon*



ASSESSMENT OF CLIMATE RISKS AND ADAPTATION OPTIONS FOR
CARPATHIAN FOREST ECOSYSTEMS AND THEIR SERVICES



Virgin forest in Ukrainian Carpathians © Mariia-Varvara

ForestConnect project

Cristian Remus Papp
WWF Romania

Presentation



CCIC Recommendations

DECISION COP7/13 Sustainable Forest Management

*The CCIC welcomes the offer by Slovakia to host the **next meeting of the WG Sustainable Forest Management in the first half of 2025**; invites the Working Group and relevant stakeholders to actively participate in the meeting; and requests the Secretariat to support its organization.*

*The CCIC welcomes the approval of the **ForestConnect project on climate-smart forest connectivity for large carnivores** in the Balkan-Carpathian-Dinaric region under the Interreg Danube Programme, and invites the Working Groups and relevant stakeholder to actively support the project implementation and exchange with the LECA project partners to look for synergies.*

Thank You

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