



16th Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Biodiversity

14 May 2025

Veselí nad Moravou, Czech Republic

Updates and Outlook from the Carpathian Wetland Initiative



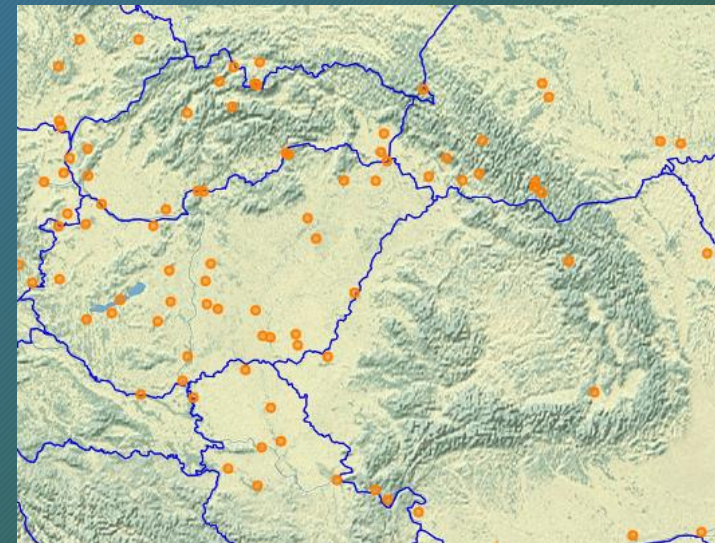
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<https://cwi.sk/>



CWI development



- Regional network covering the **Carpathian Mountains** eco-region
 - From the beginning closely related to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (**Carpathian Convention - CC**)
 - **Launched 2004** - after adoption of the regional Carpathian Convention (2003) - SK initiative
 - **Endorsed 2009** by the Ramsar Standing Committee
 - between secretariats of the Convention on Wetlands and the Carpathian Convention (13 December 2006 in Kijiv, Ukraine, CC COP1) MoC between secretariats of the Ramsar and Carpathian Convention (2006)
- **Regional Ramsar Initiative**- partnership of governmental institutions in 7 Carpathian countries (Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine), secretariats of the Ramsar and Carpathian Conventions, intergovernmental organizations, NGO's and other partners



<https://www.ramsar.org/sites-countries/ramsar-sites-around-the-world>

Mission



To contribute to the implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ramsar Convention and Carpathian Convention.

The CWI facilitates collaboration between the two Conventions and their Parties in their efforts in conservation and wise use of wetlands in the Carpathian region and beyond, through local, national, regional and international activities.

8 fields of cooperation identified



<http://archive.ramsar.org/pictures/carpathian-moc01.jpg>

Common areas for joint activities



The Ramsar Convention Secretariat and UNEP Vienna Secretariat of CC work together:

1. To improve the information base on wetland ecosystems;
2. To improve exchange of wetland-related information, inter-sectoral cooperation and international collaboration;
3. To ensure the network of globally important Ramsar sites is complete and representative;
4. To integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including wetlands, into river basin management;
5. To identify and develop specific wetland restoration projects in major Carpathian river catchments;
6. To identify potential transboundary wetland ecosystems and possibilities for their joint management;
7. To facilitate cooperation in species and habitat monitoring; and
8. To facilitate communication and information exchange aiming at capacity building and public awareness on the role of wetland ecosystem services in human wellbeing.

Governance and functioning



- **Terms of Reference** - adopted by the Carpathian Convention COP
- **Governing body** - CWI Board consisting of representatives of relevant ministries and agencies or other organizations (including PA/RS administrations)
- **Coordinated on voluntary basis** by the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic, co-financed from the annual budget of the SNC SR. Currently no full-time staff; small part of work tasks of coordinator and other contributing SNC staff members
- **Not a legal entity**, accounting under the accounting system of the agency
- **Financing and support** - after support from the Ramsar core budget for initial 6 years - voluntary contributions from some ministries (CZ, HU, SK), projects, contribution of partners, organizations
- **Partners** - Secretariats, Ramsar IOPs (WWF CEE, Wetlands International, IUCN) and Carpathian partner organizations (CNPA, ICPDR, DANUBEPARKS, DAPHNE - IAE)
- **Cooperation with other organizations** (BirdLife partners in CPs; ALPARC; Science for the Carpathians S4C; Danube Carpathian Programme UA; CEEweb; UNEP GRID Warsaw, Greifswald Mire Centre, DUENE...)

Carpathian Wetland Initiative: achievements 2024



- Wetland benefits are featured in the Carpathian Convention policies, strategies and plans
- Ecological networks and integrated management of RSs strengthened
- Wetlands conservation, restoration and maintenance supported
- Wetlands conservation, management and wise use mainstreamed through communication, capacity development, education, participation and awareness
- Cooperation with other regional initiatives and partners strengthened
- Operation and governance of the CWI reinforced

Carpathian Wetland Initiative: achievements 2024



World Wetlands Day, 2 February, www.worldwetlandsday.org

- Active coordination and celebration of World Wetlands Day in Slovakia, including events for schools and the public.
- Contribution to capacity-building workshops aimed at wetland site managers across the region.



Carpathian Wetland Initiative: achievements 2024



The recent International training course on River and Wetland Restoration organized in cooperation with the Czech Ministry of Environment was held in Hradec Králové at the invitation of the Elbe River Authority (in Czech Povodí Labe), from 6 to 11 October 2024.



Carpathian Wetland Initiative: RRI Cooperation DANUBEPARKS



- Support of the CWI to DANUBEPARKS in establishment of the the Danube WILDisland RRI (2024), participation at the kick-off meeting, ongoing cooperation- project proposals

- WILDisland RRI received a Danube Strategy Flagship Certificate (2024)

Danube Strategy Flagships are distinguished projects or processes that make a substantial contribution to the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) and its Priority Areas.

This initiative focuses on the protection and sustainable management of the "WILDislands" - a series of natural and semi-natural riverine habitats along the Danube that are critical for biodiversity conservation.



<https://wildisland.danubeparks.org/news-media/detail/news/rri-internal-kickoff/>

Carpathian Wetland Initiative: RRI Cooperation The Danube WILDisland Ramsar Regional Initiative



- Advice of the DANUBEPARKS to CWI and CNPA in governance of the networks
- Stronger voice of wetlands / Ramsar issues in the EU Strategy for the Danube region (EUSDR) and its Priority Areas and in the Carpathian Convention
- Common projects and management / restoration activities / ecological connectivity - follow-up LIFE WILDisland, new Interreg project proposal
- Common training and CEPA activities
- Exchange of information and cooperation with partners (WWF, IUCN, Wetlands International, BirdLife, ALPARC, CNPA...)



<https://danube-region.eu/danube-wildisland/>

Carpathian Wetland Initiative: RRI Cooperation MedWet



- Support for MedWet initiative to establish an European Coalition of RRI to strengthen the impact of Ramsar at European level (launched 2023)
- The website has been set up [Carpathian Wetland Initiative \(CWI\) - Coalition for Wetlands](https://www.coalitionforwetlands.eu/carpathian-wetland-initiative/)
- Ongoing communication and cooperation
- The **Wetland City Accreditation** initiative discussed (connection to not approved project proposal Tiny ties)
- MedWet is taking on a lead in coordinating activities / communication between the European RRI
- **Future cooperation based on Knowledge and Experience Exchange**
 - **Shared expertise** in wetland restoration techniques, especially in the context of climate adaptation,
 - biodiversity protection, and water management
 - **Joint technical workshops** on ecosystem services, nature-based solutions, and wetland inventory methods.
- Cooperation in the preparation and co-organization of the RRI side event (Ramsar COP 15 - Zimbabwe 7/2025)



<https://www.coalitionforwetlands.eu/carpathian-wetland-initiative/>

Carpathian Wetland Initiative: Cooperation with Wetlands International Europe



- **Promote wetland conservation and wise use in the Carpathian region.**
- **Policy support:** Joint efforts to integrate wetland conservation into regional and EU environmental policies, including the EU Biodiversity Strategy and Carpathian Convention.
- **Knowledge exchange:** Sharing best practices, data, and experiences on wetland restoration, ecosystem services, and climate adaptation.
- **Joint projects:** Collaborating on EU-funded initiatives (e.g. Interreg, Horizon) focusing on wetland restoration, capacity-building, and stakeholder engagement.
- **Networking:** Strengthening cooperation among Carpathian countries and other international partners through joint events, workshops, and publications.



WI - CWI

Reconnecting the Latorica River Floodplain Landscape in a Transboundary Context



Collaborative effort involving partners from both Slovakia and Ukraine. It aims to restore and reconnect the Latorica River's floodplain ecosystems, enhancing biodiversity and resilience against climate change.

- The overall aim of the project is to establish the knowledge, partnerships and stakeholder enabling conditions for a transborder landscape-scale restoration vision in the Latorica river floodplain between Slovakia and Ukraine.



WI - CWI

Reconnecting the Latorica River Floodplain Landscape in a Transboundary Context



Project Overview

- **Area of Focus:** Approximately 38,000 hectares spanning both Slovakia and Ukraine.
- **Ecosystems Targeted:** Oxbow lakes, floodplain forests, grasslands, and meadows.
- **Biodiversity Significance:** The area supports rare and threatened bird species and a variety of indigenous fish species.

Objectives:

- Reconnecting and rewetting floodplains.
- Implementing transboundary management strategies.
- Developing a shared vision and framework for landscape restoration.
- Engaging local communities and stakeholders in conservation efforts.
- Assessing and addressing climate change impacts on water availability and ecosystem health.



Carpathian Wetland Initiative: priorities 2025



- Integration of wetlands and their services and benefits into the work of the Carpathian Convention, its Protocols, bodies, thematic WGs, CNPA, implementation of the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework
- Projects on ecological connectivity in the Carpathians; cooperation in designation of new RSs in the region + within network of RSs managers; networking with other partners and EUSDR PA6
- Sharing ideas and experience on restoration planning, NbS-s, cooperation in project development; „sponges“ projects in the region in cooperation with Wetlands International (Latorica, Tisa SK-UA, Orava river, Wetlands of Orava Basin SK-PL).
- Trainings, capacity building activities, www.cwi.sk
- Cooperation with European Coalition of RRI, Danube Wild Islands RRI, with other partners
- Operation and governance – development of the new CWI Strategy 2025-2030 , review ToR; fundraising/fees

Carpathian Wetland Initiative



Thank you very much for your attention!

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www.cwi.sk



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