

BACKGROUND NOTE

for the workshop on the Carpathian LIFE SNaP proposal preparation

*16th Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Biodiversity
13 May 2025, Veselí nad Moravou, Czech Republic*

INTRODUCTION TO THE CARPATHIAN LIFE SNaP APPLICATION

In December 2022, the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). In October 2023, the Parties to Carpathian Convention adopted the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework (CBF), which seeks to facilitate the implementation of both the KMGBF and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 within the Carpathian region (Decision CC COP7/1, paragraph 3). It is supported by the Carpathian Vision 2050, which aligns with the global vision of living in harmony with nature and includes 8 Strategic Objectives for the region.

Funding the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework through EU LIFE SNaP

The EU LIFE mechanism, LIFE Strategic Nature Project (LIFE SNaP), is a potential opportunity for providing long-term, large-scale funding for the joint CBF implementation. Should the Carpathian LIFE SNaP proposal be approved, the project implementation can probably commence already in late 2026 and continue throughout the next 8 to 10 years (until e.g. 2035). The proposed budget is around EUR 40 million (total), which significantly surpasses the funding available through other programs.

The EU Member States and Ukraine are fully eligible as partners of the project consortium, while Serbia can participate as a third country (subject to specific conditions of eligibility). Hence, a transnational LIFE SNaP for the Carpathians provides a unique opportunity for actively involving all the Parties (including Ukraine and Serbia) in jointly addressing key environmental challenges in the Carpathians.

Developing the Carpathian LIFE SNaP Application

The Carpathian LIFE SNaP should focus on nature and biodiversity aspects, including mainstreaming them into other policies. Therefore, the joint SNaP proposal should include activities corresponding to the priorities of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 in alignment with relevant CBF Strategic Objectives.

As part of the full proposal for SNaP, a CBF Action Plan—with specific targets, actions, timeline and budget to be implemented during the proposed Carpathian LIFE SNaP timeframe—will be developed and submitted by March 2026. This CBF Action Plan will be the key foundation for developing the Carpathian LIFE SNaP application and later implemented.

OBJECTIVE OF THE SESSION

The interactive session and moderated discussion on the development of the CBF Action Plan, scheduled to take place the afternoon of 13 May 2025, aims to facilitate proposals by members of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Biodiversity (WG Biodiversity) on relevant activities to be included in the CBF Action Plan. More specifically, the workshop aims to:

- Collect practical feedback for concrete activities to be directly integrated into the CBF Action Plan
- Foster collaboration between experts and organizations that can support the CBF Action Plan's implementation.

To accomplish this, the session will focus on 2 main topics:

1. Developing the LIFE SNaP consortium and identifying stakeholders for implementing the LIFE SNaP/CBF Action Plan
2. Developing the LIFE SNaP concept note
 - a. Thematic clusters and concrete activities for the CBF Action Plan
 - b. Dissemination and replication based on best practices
 - c. Mainstreaming biodiversity into other sectors

WORKSHOP FORMAT

15:15 - 15:35 Presentation: Introduction to the Carpathian LIFE SNaP Proposal

Presentation on the Carpathian LIFE SNaP proposal and development process thus far

15:35 - 15:55 Interactive Session: Consortium & Stakeholders for the Carpathian LIFE SNaP

The LIFE SNaP drafting team has received the following National Coordinators¹ to be part of the project consortium in some capacity:

- Czech Republic: Ministry of the Environment
- Hungary: Ministry of Agriculture, Bükk National Park Directorate, and Duna-Ipoly National Park Directorate
- Romania: National Forest Administration-ROMSILVA and Research and Development Institute for Wildlife and Mountain Resources
- Slovakia: Ministry of the Environment
- Ukraine: Institute of Ecology of the Carpathians of the National Academy of Sciences

During the workshop, WG Biodiversity members and observers will be asked:

- Which organizations or institutions should be project partners in the LIFE SNaP / CBF Action Plan for implementation?
- Which additional stakeholders should be involved in its implementation (not as project partners)? Which local, regional, or international organizations are most critical?
- Which specific networks or partnerships should be strengthened?

15:55 - 16:05 Presentation: Introduction to Carpathian LIFE SNaP Concept Note

Presentation on the proposed content of the concept note (which is part of the LIFE SNaP application) and introduction to the workshop objectives and format. The presentation and workshop (below) will focus on three main themes:

1. Thematic clusters and concrete activities for the CBF Action Plan (see Annex I)
2. Dissemination and replication based on best practices
3. Mainstreaming into other sectors (see Annex I, complementary actions)

16:05 - 16:55 Interactive Session: Workshop of the Carpathian LIFE SNaP

For each topic, participants will discuss the following questions for 15 minutes before rotating.

¹ National Coordinators are nominated by the Carpathian Convention National Focal Point to be a potential Carpathian LIFE SNaP project partner, actively contribute to the application process, and be the main contact point for their country's stakeholders for providing inputs to the application.

1. *Thematic clusters and concrete activities to be included in the CBF Action Plan*

It is important to collect specific activities that are implementable within the timeframe of the proposed project (8-10 years). During the workshop, WG Biodiversity members and observers will be asked the following questions:

- What topics or challenges should be addressed in the CBF Action Plan (according to CBF Strategic Objectives 1, 2, 5 and 8 - see Annex I)?
- What practical solutions and approaches can be implemented within the project timeframe to address these challenges?

2. *Dissemination and replication based on best practices*

Activities in the CBF Action Plan must be disseminated and/or replicated across different sectors, governance levels, and/or types of target groups. During the workshop, WG Biodiversity members and observers will be asked:

- How could activities be disseminated and/or replicated to various sectors, governance levels, or stakeholders?
- For certain activities, what kind of dissemination could be employed, e.g. pilot projects, experience exchanges, communication activities, etc.?

3. *Mainstreaming biodiversity into other sectors*

Activities in the CBF Action Plan should influence and be shaped by programmes of other sectors. Such activities can be aimed at strengthening mechanisms of the Carpathian Convention for transnational cooperation and consultations, and at enhancing the implementation of the Convention. This includes activities utilizing Carpathian Convention mechanisms for mainstreaming nature and biodiversity conservation aspects into other sectoral policies. During the workshop, WG Biodiversity members and observers will be asked:

- Which sectors are of highest priority—and most feasible—for mainstreaming biodiversity within the Carpathian region?
- How do you imagine the input of such activities to other sectors?
- Which mechanisms of the Carpathian Convention can be utilized for mainstreaming activities?

16:55 - 17:15 Presentation: Workshop Summary and Next Steps

Presentation of short summaries from the discussion groups by the group facilitators and outlook for the next steps in the Carpathian LIFE SNaP development.

HOW TO PREPARE INPUTS FOR THE WORKSHOP

Representatives of the WG Biodiversity can prepare their activity proposals by:

- Liaising with their respective country's Carpathian Convention National Focal Point and National Coordinators (listed above) for the LIFE SNaP application development
- Consulting the suggested activity ideas in the [CBF Action Plan Info Document](#)
- Consulting the suggested activity ideas already [submitted and proposed by National Coordinators](#)
- Considering which national authorities competent for nature and biodiversity should/could be involved in the project from your country, and which key stakeholders should be involved in the LIFE SNaP project

Considerations for Activities for the CBF Action Plan

The types of activities that can be supported by the Carpathian LIFE SNaP must be transnational and transboundary in nature. Thus, activities for the CBF Action Plan should fulfill one of the following four categories:

- **common activities aimed at strengthening implementation and mechanisms of the Carpathian Convention** for transnational cooperation and consultations (e.g. activities utilizing CC mechanisms for mainstreaming nature and biodiversity conservation aspects into other sectoral policies, such as WG Forestry);
- **transboundary cooperation activities**, meaning joint activities with the geographic scope limited either to areas located across the state boundaries (e.g. transboundary protected areas) or the wider border zones, areas or regions of neighbouring Parties;
- **transnational cooperation activities**, meaning coordinated and/or harmonized activities undertaken by all or some Parties, but with no explicit transboundary context;
- **most relevant single country priority activities that can be justified as best-practice** demonstration or pilot projects, feasible for replication and/or upscaling in other Carpathian countries (thus, requiring experience exchanges, communication activities etc.).

Additionally, it is relevant that activities must:

- be measurable and achieved during the project's lifetime;
- have the potential to trigger further investments or replications. These so-called "complementary actions" also need to be listed and quantified.

Considerations for the Project Consortium

The project consortium for the LIFE SNaP should include the national authorities competent for nature and biodiversity from each Member State involved in the project implementation, as well as other relevant partners agreed with the Ministries.

It is important not to have too many partners for the project. It is estimated that a partnership of a maximum of 21 partners (about 3 per country) is realistic for a transnational LIFE SNaP.

The types of possible roles in the project consortium include:

- **Coordinating Beneficiary** = contact point towards granting authority. They sign the Grant Agreement (GA)
- **Beneficiaries** = other entities that participate as beneficiaries. They sign the GA
- **Affiliated entities** = similar to beneficiaries. Legal/capital link (beyond implementation of the action), but respective beneficiary remains responsible. They do NOT sign the GA
- **Associated partners** = implement certain tasks but do not have the right to charge costs nor claim contributions. They do NOT sign the GA

In the LIFE SNaP application, there is a dedicated chapter that must be provided on identifying additional key actors to include in the project implementation. Additional key actors include:

- Supporters = Provide support letters to be attached to the application
- Stakeholders = Further actors crucial to implement activities

ANNEX I

The proposed structure for implementing the CBF Action Plan through the Carpathian LIFE SNaP includes the following work packages:

Work Package Title	Alignment with CBF Strategic Objectives (SO)
Project Management	
Knowledge Gaps	
Direct Conservation & Restoration Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 1: Enhance biodiversity conservation, restoration, and sustainable use in the Carpathians through coordinated efforts on habitat maintenance, species protection, and ecosystem restoration. • SO 2: Sustainably manage and protect Carpathian forests by enhancing forest health, conserving biodiversity, protecting virgin forests, restoring natural forests, and mitigating climate change. • SO 8: Strengthen cooperation with Ukraine to protect and sustainably develop the Carpathian region, addressing war impacts on the environment and nature protection services.
Governance & Mainstreaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 3: Ensure sustainable tourism in the Carpathians by enhancing cooperation to maximize benefits for biodiversity, ecosystems, and development, while mitigating negative impacts. • SO 4: Develop sustainable transport and infrastructure in the Carpathians to support regional development, while minimizing and mitigating negative environmental and socio-economic impacts, especially in sensitive areas. • SO 5: Sustainably maintain and develop Carpathian agriculture, preserving traditional practices, natural resources, and cultural heritage to support thriving rural communities. • SO 8
Cross-cutting Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 6: Strengthen the Carpathian region's resilience through climate change mitigation and increased regional adaptation actions.
Capacity Building & Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 7: Strengthen public awareness of the Carpathian Convention's sustainable development objectives, integrate lifelong learning and global education, and enhance cross-sectoral cooperation to support regional partnerships. • SO 8
Replication & Transfer EU and non-EU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 8
Dissemination & Public Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 7
Complementary Actions	
Monitoring	