

S4C Recommendations For WG Tourism

Based on 8th Forum Carpathicum 2025

Recommendations from young scientists

- SCCS Europe
- ProBioTIC Project

Forum Carpathicum 2025



Science for the Carpathians

Key Messages and Recommendations from Science for the Carpathians for the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee

based on Forum Carpaticum 2025
“Taking stock and building partnership for
sustainable development of the mountain and
rural areas”
Bratislava, Slovakia, 9th-11th September 2025

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S4C Recommendations For WG Tourism

Based on 8th Forum Carpaticum 2025

COP7/1 Implementation of the Carpathian Convention

COP7/2 Cooperation with regional and local authorities and relevant stakeholders

COP7/11 Sustainable and integrated water/river basin management

COP7/12 Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development

COP7/15 Sustainable tourism

COP7/19 Awareness raising, education and public participation

S4C Key Messages

Recommendations

DECISION COP7/1 Implementation of the Carpathian Convention

*Session: Transboundary Strategies for Strengthening Carpathian Integrated Landscape Management Governance
(Isidoro De Bortoli)*

The Carpathian Convention has the unique role of convening member states to.

- ✓ *harmonize approaches,*
- ✓ *pilot transboundary solutions, and*
- ✓ *ensure that ecological connectivity, forest protection, **sustainable tourism**, and hazard resilience are **addressed as interdependent pillars** of a sustainable mountain future.*

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- *The Tourism WG can **strengthen eco-tourism** which helps and supports intact ecosystems*
 - ***Joint pilot projects across WGs** will demonstrate solutions and build political momentum.*

S4C Key Messages

Recommendations

DECISION COP7/1 Implementation of the Carpathian Convention

Session: Session on Ukraine

(Tamara Mitrofanenko, Mariana Melnykovich)

- *The Carpathians require **urgent protection from poorly regulated industrial projects (wind, tourism, etc.)**.*
 - *Science must inform decisions before — not after — projects are approved.*
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- ***Promote cross-border and inter-municipal cooperation on forestry, biodiversity, tourism, education and sustainable energy.***
- *Communicate to municipalities availability to **access online trainings prepared within RURACTIVE project** on “Empowering rural communities to act for change”*
 - ✓ *The trainings (MOOC) are focusing on 6 rural development drivers: Sustainable agri-food systems and ecosystem management, incl: Nature-based and cultural tourism; Culture and cultural innovation... Local services... <https://www.ruractive.eu/project/approach> (MOOC will be online in Sept 2026).*
- ***Promote twinning** between Ukrainian Carpathian municipalities and those in other Carpathian countries and foster collaboration*
- ***Promote mandatory EIA/SEA** for all reconstruction ... and tourism projects in the Ukrainian Carpathians.*

S4C Key Messages

DECISION COP7/2 Cooperation with regional and local authorities and all relevant stakeholders

*Session: Accessibility, Development Paths and Windows of Opportunities in Core-Periphery Systems: Challenges of Local and Regional Development in the Carpathians
(Krzysztof Wiedermann)*

- *Development of local tourism infrastructure leads to an **increased number of mountain accidents**.*
- *Tourism development creates a **need to build greater rescue and medical support capacity** in small communities - implemented via cooperation of local authorities, investors and local rescue services.*
- *SAFETY is one of the elements of the SUSTAINABLE tourism: sustainable tourism development should **be linked also to safety pre-plans** taking into consideration mountain accidents and rescue missions of the local rescue teams*



S4C Recommendations

DECISION COP7/2 Cooperation with regional and local authorities and all relevant stakeholders

Session: Accessibility, Development Paths and Windows of Opportunities in Core-Periphery Systems: Challenges of Local and Regional Development in the Carpathians

- *Obligate local authorities and stakeholders (e.g. ski resorts' owners) within **general law regulations** to evaluate together with rescue services, if **local medical and mountain rescue solutions** fit increased tourism and its special needs.*
- *Establish a **technical assistance programme for under-resourced local and regional authorities** to support tailored interventions addressing environmental vulnerability, which must be integrated with existing strategic planning documents*

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Recommendations

DECISION COP7/11 Sustainable and integrated water/river basin management

*Session: Plastics in the Mountains
(Joanna Zawiejska)*

- *Prioritise research on the delivery and fate of plastic in the environment*
- *Identify tourism-related sources of plastic delivery*
- *Local waste management strategies (for both municipal and tourism related waste) need to be updated and enforced to limit further delivery of plastics to mountain environments, particularly rivers.*

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Key Messages Recommendations

*DECISION COP7/15 Sustainable tourism
Article 9 of the Carpathian Convention*

*Session: Empowering communities to act for change
(Mariana Melnykovich)*

- *Rewilding and cultural landscapes can become sustainable tourism assets.*
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- *Integrate rewilding landscapes and pastoral heritage into low-impact tourism strategies*





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Key Messages

Recommendations

*DECISION COP7/15 Sustainable tourism
Article 9 of the Carpathian Convention*

Session: Transboundary Strategies for Strengthening Carpathian Integrated Landscape Management Governance

- *Tourism and Regional Development (HUMANITA, Slovakia Tourism):*

Tourism must be embedded in regional development plans and governance frameworks, using participatory monitoring and communication strategies to reduce ecological impacts and enhance local benefits. Visitor awareness, shared heritage narratives, and responsible financing of EU funds are critical for sustainability

Session: Innovative Methods and Tools for Integrating Economic, Social and Environmental Aspects to Bridge Science-Policy Interface for Better Decisions in Forestry

(Simone Martino, Maria Nijnik, Mariana Melnykovich, Sam Poskitt, Katy Joyce)

- *Explore the use of digital tools to show hotspots of recreational uses*
- *Investigate the cultural reasons that motivate the emergence of recreational patterns, including the role of social functions into smart forestry concepts.*

S4C Recommendations

*DECISION COP7/15 Sustainable tourism
Article 9 of the Carpathian Convention*

Session: Transboundary Strategies for Strengthening Carpathian Integrated Landscape Management Governance

The Tourism WG should strengthen eco-tourism development which supports intact ecosystems, utilizing frameworks such as the Carpathian Peace Parks network as a model for transboundary nature-based tourism.

Potential approaches may include:

- *developing cross-border eco-tourism routes and interpretive programs;*
- *establishing joint certification standards for sustainable tourism operators in protected area networks;*
- *creating collaborative marketing platforms that highlight transboundary conservation values;*
- *building local community capacity to deliver authentic, low impact tourism experiences.*

S4C Key Messages

*DECISION COP7/15 Sustainable tourism
Article 9 of the Carpathian Convention*



Session: Accessibility, Development Paths and Windows of Opportunities in Core-Periphery Systems: Challenges of Local and Regional Development in the Carpathians

- *Economic revitalization requires **integrated approaches** that balance local entrepreneurship development, particularly in green and creative economy sectors leveraging mountain-specific resources, with youth retention strategies and improved connectivity.*
- *Cultural heritage and local products can drive tourism development. Sustainable mountain tourism and ecotourism are important determinants of the area's development*
- *The transboundary nature of the Carpathian region **necessitates cross-border cooperation** to address demographic decline and economic stagnation...*



S4C Recommendations

*DECISION COP7/15 Sustainable tourism
Article 9 of the Carpathian Convention*

Session: Accessibility, Development Paths and Windows of Opportunities in Core-Periphery Systems: Challenges of Local and Regional Development in the Carpathians

- *Sustainable tourism development in mountain regions must **integrate safety infrastructure planning** alongside environmental protection.*

Local authorities, tourism investors, and rescue services should collaboratively establish emergency response capacities and safety protocols as essential components of tourism planning, ensuring that increased visitor flows are matched by adequate rescue, medical, and risk management systems within the Convention's framework for sustainable mountain tourism.

S4C Recommendations

DECISION COP7/12 Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development

Session: Accessibility, Development Paths and Windows of Opportunities in Core-Periphery Systems: Challenges of Local and Regional Development in the Carpathians

- *Establish Carpathian cultural heritage trail networks to integrate intangible heritage preservation with sustainable tourism and local product development.*
- *Consider The Wallachian Culture Trail as a model of cross-border heritage management and a tool for sustainable development in the Carpathian Region. Three aspects particularly relevant to the creation of Wallachian Culture Trails include;*
 - 1) *model of heritage protection, ensuring authenticity and community stewardship*
 - 2) *Impact on economic development and entrepreneurship, tools supporting traditional crafts and food production enterprises*
 - 3) *Platform for cross-border cooperation.*
- *Taylor region specific policy recommendations to the main characteristics of each region;*
- *Encourage Synergy with existing European strategies (like the EU Demographic Toolbox; or the Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas) or initiatives (like the Smart Village Network) should be encouraged*

S4C Recommendations

*DECISION COP7/12 Sustainable Agriculture and Rural
Development*

*Session: Historical Ecology and Geography: New Perspectives
for Conservation and Management
(Ewa Grabska, Dominik Kaim)*

- Create **flexible forest/agriculture/tourism management strategies** that accommodate the varying timelines and conditions of environmental change across different Carpathian sub-regions
- Support the **recognition and protection of traditional cultural landscapes** shaped by seasonal mountain economy as areas of high natural and cultural value

S4C Recommendations

DECISION COP7/19 Awareness raising, education and public participation

*Session: Education for Sustainable Development: Session of the Carpathian ESD Expert Network (CESDEN)
(Tamara Mitrofanenko, Boglarka Kurka Ivanegova, Elena Matei)*

- *Integrate relevant information about tourism development in pre-service and in-service teacher training and vocational education to help align them with the Carpathian Convention and local sustainable development needs*
- *Facilitate networks for researchers and practitioners to share best practices in ESD, citizen science, and ecotourism.*
- *Address bureaucratic obstacles that hinder ecotourism and educational collaboration across borders.*



Recommendations from young scientists

- SCCS Europe
- ProBioTIC Project



Student Conference on Conservation Science SCCS Europe 2025, Hungary

Biodiversity and Tourism

- addressing implementation of CBF Strategic Objective 3

Key Recommendations:

- Limit or ban tourist activities in sensitive habitats.
- Limit quads and mud bikes on nature trails. Instead, promote nature friendly tourist schemes like hiking, biking etc
- Provide information on eco-friendly / sustainable housing options to tourists instead of hotels.
- Collaboration with local stakeholders on biodiversity management

Names of contributors

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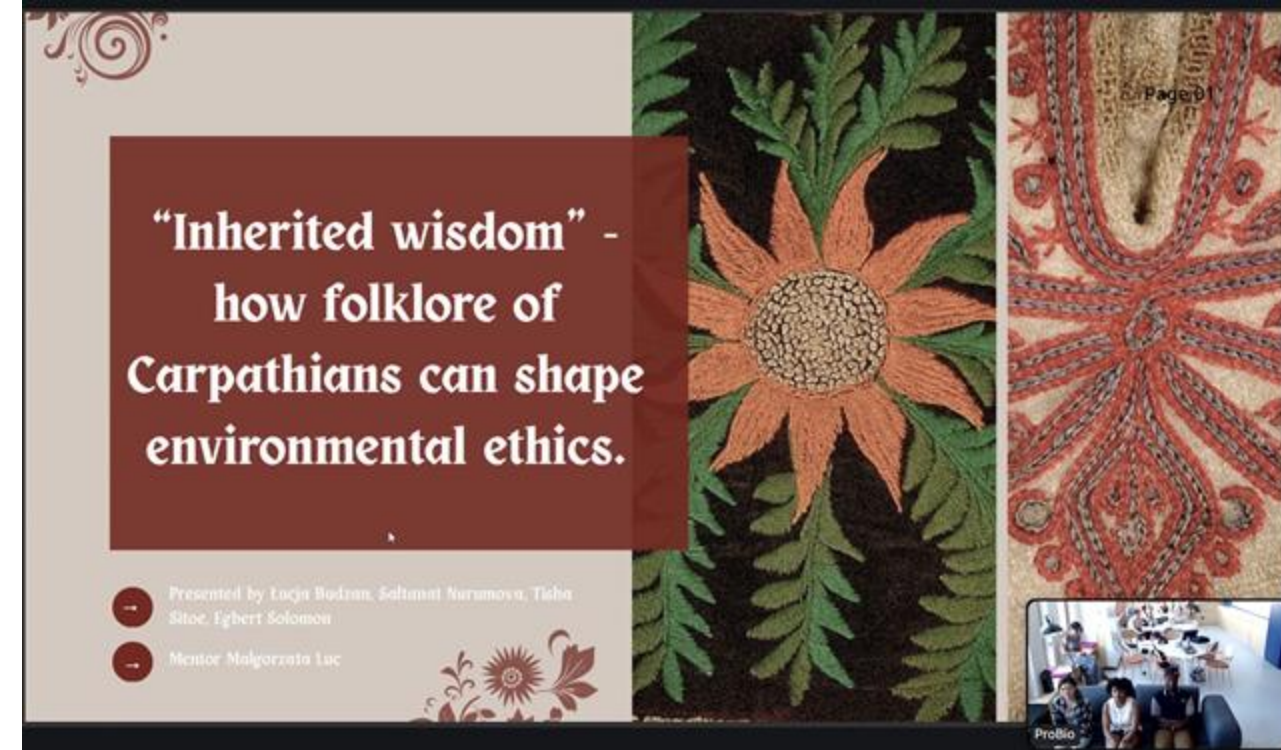
**Jagiellonian University
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Key Recommendations:

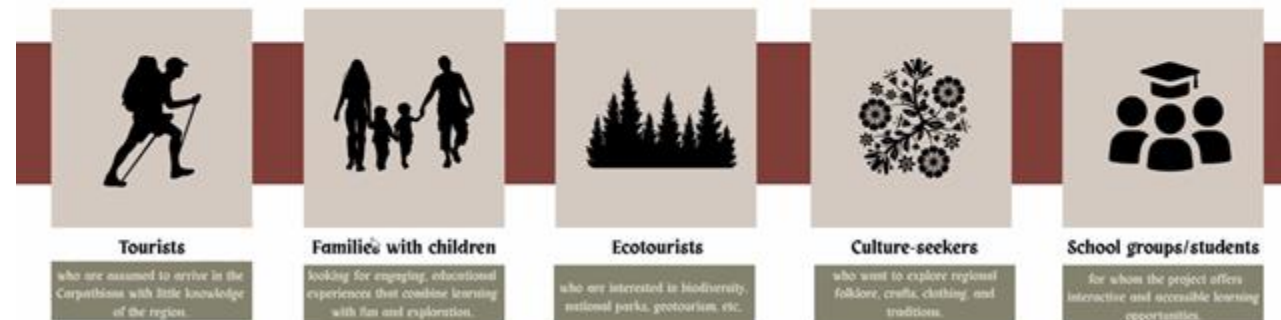
- Create permanent or rotating exhibits linking folk motifs with the plant species they represent.
- Develop certified “Culture–Nature Learning Routes” including guided tours, mobile self-guided maps, and storytelling trails.
- Expand the ActionBound app (app designed by students) route and integrate quizzes that encourage exploring botanical gardens, open-air museums, and trails.
- Introduce biodiversity-branding labels for crafts that use traditional plant motifs to encourage pride and awareness (students designed the labels).

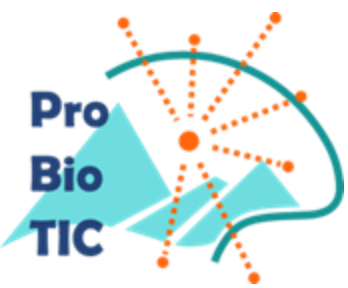
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TARGET AUDIENCE:





- Enhance eco-tourism programs to increase biodiversity stewardship among both hosts and guests.
- Ensure continued communication between the science and tourism sectors
 - to respect areas of high scientific value and manage eco-friendly tourism.
- Create a support and certification package for eco-friendly hostels (pilot among initially 20 guesthouses before scaling up)
- Support access to grants for eco-upgrade on hostels
 - small grants and subsidized loans for eco-upgrades.
 - tax breaks or reduced local fees for certified eco guesthouses.
 - procurement incentives for buying local materials and services.
 - a fund to provide consultancy on retrofits, sustainable business planning,
- Create a standardisation and certification scheme.
 - This would require certified guesthouses to report simple annual indicators (occupancy, energy use, % local procurement, waste volumes).
 - This scheme could publish a regional Sustainable Tourism Scorecard across the Carpathians countries.

