Memorandum of Cooperation

between
Secretariat of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention)
and
Infrastructure and Ecology Network Europe (IENE)

Considering that the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (hereinafter referred to as the "Carpathian Convention") is a sub-regional treaty aimed at fostering the sustainable development and the protection of the Carpathian region, signed by seven Carpathian countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, and Ukraine) in 2003 and entering into force in 2006, and **recognizing** that the Carpathian Convention constitutes the only multi-level governance mechanism encompassing the entire Carpathian region, providing a platform for comprehensive policies and cooperation to protect and sustainably develop the Carpathian mountain region.

Considering that the Carpathian Convention stands for the improvement of livelihood in the Carpathians while conserving natural values and cultural heritage in the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians with a view to, inter alia, improving quality of life, strengthening local economies and communities, and conservation of natural values and cultural heritage;

Considering that the objective of the Protocol on Sustainable Transport to the Carpathian Convention is to enhance and facilitate cooperation of the Parties for the development of sustainable freight and passenger transport and related infrastructure in the Carpathians for the benefit of present and future generations, with the objective to contribute to the sustainable development of the region while avoiding, minimizing and, where necessary, mitigating and compensating negative environmental and socio-economic impacts of transport and related infrastructure development;

Considering that Infrastructure and Ecology Network Europe (hereinafter referred to as "IENE") is a non-profit association established under French law, registered under SIREN No. 901 831 339, whose Executive Secretariat is currently hosted by and operating from FEHRL (Forum of European National Highway Research Laboratories) in Brussels, Belgium;

Considering that IENE is an international network of experts working with various aspects of transportation, infrastructure and ecology, initiated in 1996 to provide an independent, international, and interdisciplinary platform for the exchange and development of expert knowledge, aimed at promoting safe and ecologically sustainable pan-European transport infrastructure. Through international conferences, workshops, training seminars and

symposia, IENE initiates collaboration projects, and helps answer questions that require joint international expertise[1].

Considering that IENE is guided by its Mission "*To promote the integration of biodiversity conservation in infrastructure development, management and operation through research, knowledge exchange, and collaboration, fostering innovative solutions for ecologically sustainable infrastructure in Europe and beyond*" and its Action Plan 2025–2030, which emphasizes the objectives on achieving IENE's Strategic Orientation on mainstreaming biodiversity in infrastructure policy and decision-making (Goal 1), advancing applied research and innovation (Goal 2), building capacity and sharing knowledge among stakeholders (Goal 3), and strengthening the implementation of best practices (Goal 4);

Highly appreciating the long-standing fruitful cooperation between the Carpathian Convention and IENE;

The Secretariat of the **Carpathian Convention** and **IENE** (hereinafter referred to as "the Signatories") **have reached the following understanding**:

Section 1. Objective

The Signatories express their intention to collaborate in promoting ecologically sustainable transport in the Carpathian region, as well as where appropriate, in other regions of importance for biodiversity conservation.

Such collaboration is expected to be guided by the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework and its Implementation Plan 2027 – 2035 (CBF) and with IENE's Action Plan 2025–2030 Goals. Nothing in this Memorandum shall limit or impair either Signatory's autonomy to independently pursue and implement its respective Mission, Vision, and strategic objectives, including CBF and IENE's commitment to promoting the integration of biodiversity conservation in infrastructure through research, knowledge exchange, and collaboration.

By drawing on the knowledge of transport and ecology experts, both organizations may seek opportunities to strengthen common action plans, foster cross-sector collaboration, and explore joint research and funding initiatives, as appropriate and subject to available resources and priorities.

Through this partnership, the Signatories aim to enhance their collective impact and contribute to transformative change in transport ecology, mainstreaming biodiversity in the transportation sector and emphasizing ecological connectivity within and across the Carpathian region.

Section 2. Scope of Cooperation

With a view to attaining the above objective, the cooperation envisaged by this Memorandum of Cooperation may include collaboration within the framework of the work programs of the two Signatories on the following types of activities:

a) Identifying, documenting, and disseminating successful experience and best practices on sustainable transportation development;
b) Promoting exchange of data and information on sustainable transportation;
c) Mutually recommend experts, upon request, who could contribute technical expertise to related projects. It is understood that the respective Signatory will have the ultimate responsibility to select and appoint the experts;
d) Promoting networks of professional experts in fields related to sustainable transport development;

[1] https://www.iene.info/

e) Promoting, and disseminating innovative approaches, technologies, and nature-based solutions for ecological connectivity and the mitigation of transport-related impacts on biodiversity;
f) Developing joint projects within the scope of their collaboration, mainly (but not restricted to) demonstrating best practice, testing innovations, and training human resources, and jointly identifying financial resources and execution modalities for the implementation of developed projects;
g) Mutually assisting in organizing conferences, seminars, training workshops, outreach and other extension services, and technical meetings on matters related to sustainable transportation development, if appropriate;
h) Communicating the results of their joint work through joint press releases, internet postings, and joint publications in general and professional media;
i) Supporting interdisciplinary education and capacity-building programs, including training for young professionals, and integration with IENE tools such as the Biodiversity & Infrastructure Handbook, if appropriate; and
j) Supporting advocacy for biodiversity monitoring and evaluation standards in infrastructure projects.

Both the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention and IENE will designate focal points to coordinate communication with each other.

Nothing in this Memorandum shall create or imply any financial obligation by either Signatory to this Memorandum. Any financial questions will be regulated by separate letters of arrangement related to possible future projects or joint activities. It is recognized that, for certain activities to be fully implemented, additional resources may be required. The Signatories will endeavor to carry out joint fundraising for this purpose and will collaborate on fundraising strategies and targeting EU programs to support joint activities.

Section 3. Use of Official Logos

The Signatories will not use, in any press release, memo, report, website, or other published disclosure related to this Memorandum of Cooperation, any of the other Signatory's name and logo without the prior written consent of the Signatory concerned (such consent to be sought and granted via e-mail between the focal points, within 14 days for routine uses). Joint publications shall require mutual approval.

Section 4. Disputes

Any dispute about the interpretation or application of this Memorandum will be resolved by consultations between the Signatories and will not be referred to any national or international tribunal or third party for settlement.

Section 5. Amendment

The Signatories may amend this Memorandum by mutual written consent, which will be appended to this Memorandum and become an integral part of it.

Section 6. Termination

This Memorandum may be terminated by the Signatories at a jointly agreed time, or by one Signatory giving three months' notice in writing to the other Signatory.

Section 7. Final Provisions

This Memorandum of Cooperation represents the understanding reached between the Signatories and enters into force on the date of its signature by the Carpathian Convention Secretariat and IENE.

Nothing in this Memorandum of Cooperation will bind any of the Signatories either jointly or severally.

Signed in duplicate in […place…] on […date…] in English.

Signatures

On behalf of the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention	**On behalf of Infrastructure and Ecology Network Europe**
Harald Egerer Head of the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention	Johan Rydlöv President of IENE
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