Programme of Collaborative Work 2026–2027

between
Secretariat of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians
and
Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions
(Secretariat-level collaboration framework)

1. Purpose and Rationale

The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions are international treaties with the overall objective of protecting human health and the environment from hazardous chemicals as well as hazardous wastes and other wastes. The Basel Convention regulates the transboundary movement of hazardous and other wastes and promotes the minimization of their generation as well as their environmentally sound management;[1] the Rotterdam Convention promotes shared responsibility in the international trade of hazardous chemicals and contributes to the sound use of those hazardous chemicals,[2] and the Stockholm Convention seeks to eliminate or restrict persistent organic pollutants (POPs).[3]

The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention) is a regional treaty that brings together seven Carpathian countries of Central and Eastern Europe,[4] with the objective of ensuring the long-term protection and sustainable development of the Carpathian region.

The Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention and the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) conventions administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) recognize the importance of strengthening cooperation in areas of mutual interest in line with their mandates.

Within their mandates, both Secretariats support their respective Parties in fulfilling treaty obligations, while promoting cooperation and coordination with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in areas of common interest to support the respective Parties to enhance their implementation of the MEAs at the national level.

This collaboration is framed under the decisions of the respective conferences of the Parties (COPs) on international cooperation and coordination with other organizations[5],[6] and contributes to the implementation of relevant COP decisions under respective conventions.

This collaboration at the Secretariat level is geared towards:

- improving mutual understanding of the conventions' provisions and processes,
- sharing information, experiences, expertise and materials with respect to the implementation, compliance and enforcement of the conventions;
- informing each other of their work programme activities of mutual interest

[1] The Basel Convention counts 191 Parties as of 2 June 2026.
[2] The Rotterdam Convention counts 168 Parties as of 2 June 2026.
[3] The Stockholm Convention counts 186 Parties as of 2 June 2026.
[4] Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine.
[5] Decisions BC-17/23, RC-12/10 and SC-12/28.
[6] The Carpathian Convention Decision CC/COP7/5, para 1.

- enhancing the understanding on the interconnections between ecosystems management, waste and pollutants.

This Programme of Collaborative Work (PCW) identifies an indicative list of areas of collaboration and activities for 2026–2027 to be undertaken cooperatively by the Secretariats subject to the availability of resources and, when relevant, through modalities to be jointly agreed upon.

2. Areas of collaboration and activities

A. Scientific and technical collaboration

- **Preliminary assessment of the status of plastic pollution in the Carpathian region:** A preliminary assessment study of plastic pollution in the Carpathian region will be implemented by the Carpathian Convention Secretariat, in coordination with the BRS Secretariat, to establish a baseline and identify key management challenges. This assessment is one of the two activities planned under the Project "*Environmental Sound Management of Plastic Waste in the Carpathian Mountains*" implemented through the internal cooperation agreement between the two secretariats (BRS-ICA-2601), with an implementation period ending on 31 December 2026.

- **Technical collaboration in various fields:** Share information on ongoing and past activities related to the tourism sector, along with practices with cooperating with the private sector. This could be expanded to other fields related to the environmentally sound management of hazardous waste and other wastes and hazardous chemicals for the prevention and control of pollution, including relevant cross-sectoral topics, such as sustainable agriculture, forestry, industry and energy and ecosystem management.

- **Information sharing on activities undertaken by the secretariats to support Parties in developing or updating national legal frameworks for the implementation of the conventions.**

B. Technical assistance

- **Joint pilot project on environmentally sound management of plastic waste in the Carpathian Mountains:** This pilot activity constitutes the second activity of the Project titled "*Environmental Sound Management of Plastic Waste in the Carpathian Mountains*" under the Internal Cooperation Agreement concluded between the two Secretariats (BRS-ICA-2601), with an implementation period ending on 31 December 2026.

C. Awareness and education:

- **Sharing and disseminating educational and awareness-raising materials**: the Carpathian Convention Secretariat will disseminate materials developed by the BRS Secretariat on plastic waste in remote and mountainous areas and provide feedback thereon;

D. Governance and synergies

- **Participation in events:** Collaboration through presentations, contributions to discussions, or participation in relevant Carpathian Convention and BRS meetings and events.

- **Mutual participation in conventions bodies meetings and other events** of mutual interest;

- **Meetings between the Secretariats:** Periodically convene meetings, either online or in person, to address specific technical matters, review progress, and align Secretariat cooperation with evolving priorities.

- **Cross-MEA cooperation:** Exchange experiences on enhancing synergies across ecosystems and chemicals and waste MEAs, through regular exchanges.

3. Implementation, review and reporting

- **Focal points:** Each Secretariat will designate focal points to support the implementation of the PCW.
- **Review:** Progress will be reviewed periodically by the heads of the Secretariats.
- **Reporting:** Cooperation and activities implemented under the PCW will be reported to the relevant governing bodies of the conventions, reflecting activities carried out at the Secretariat level.
