Carpathians Unite – mechanism of consultation and cooperation for implementation of the Carpathian Convention

Future of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians
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International Conference of the Swiss-Slovak Cooperation Programme „Nature Based Tourism and Regional Development “
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www.karpatylacza.pl
Only two multilateral agreements worldwide focus on a single mountain range both adopted and implemented in Europe for the benefit of the two neighbouring mountain regions - the Alps and the Carpathians.
alpenkonvention • convention alpine
convenzione delle alpi • alpska konvencija
The Alpine Convention

The Framework Convention on the Protection of the Alps

- signed on 7 November 1991 in Salzburg
- entered into force on 6 March 1995
- ratified by Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Lichtenstein, Monaco, Slovenia, Switzerland and the European Union.
The Carpathian Convention

The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians

• signed on 22 May 2003 in Kyiv
• entered into force on 4 January 2006
• ratified by seven countries of the region: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the Republic of Serbia, the Slovak Republic, and Ukraine.
Thematic protocols to the framework Convention facilitate the integration of conservation and sustainable development objectives into different sectoral policies of the Parties.

Four Protocols have so far been adopted:

- on conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity (Bucharest, 2008),
- on sustainable forest management (Bratislava, 2011),
- on sustainable tourism (Bratislava, 2011),
- on sustainable transport (Mikulov, 2014).
Third Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians

DECISION COP3/6
Sustainable tourism
Article 9 of the Carpathian Convention

The Conference of the Parties

4.  *Adopts* the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians;

In a week from now (on 30 June 2015) the Protocol shall enter into force for Serbia.
The Protocol on sustainable tourism is accompanied by the Strategy for sustainable tourism development adopted by the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP4) to the Carpathian Convention in 2014.
Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians

DECISION COP4/6
Sustainable tourism
Article 9 of the Carpathian Convention

The Conference of the Parties

3. **Adopts** the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of the Carpathians to the Carpathian Convention, **welcomes** the Background Document and **takes note** that the Strategy aims at the implementation of relevant paragraphs of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism adopted at COP3;
What does it mean „sustainable tourism”?

There are many different definitions of „sustainable tourism” available worldwide…

But, as we are discussing the future of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians we should probably take into account the definition of sustainable tourism present in the international agreement on the Carpathians, ratified by all „Carpathian countries”
Carpathian Convention, Protocol on Sustainable Tourism, Article 3 (t): “Sustainable tourism” means tourism which

• *provides for sustainable use of environmental resources, prevents threats to the biological and landscape diversity on which it is intrinsically dependent and minimizes adverse environmental, ecological, cultural and social impacts*;

• *provides educational opportunity increasing knowledge of and respect for natural ecosystems and biological resources*;
Carpathian Convention, Protocol on Sustainable Tourism, Article 3 (t): “Sustainable tourism” means tourism which

- respects the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities conserving their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, contributes to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance,

- contributes to ensuring **viable, long-term economic operations**, providing socio-economic **benefits** to all stakeholders **that are fairly distributed**, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.
Question: can the Carpathians compete with the Alps in the traditional „alpine” domains, such as downhill skiing?

despite that the skiing infrastructure in the Alps has been developed throughout more than the last 100 years…
despite that the climate is changing, and that nowadays the snow cover in the Carpathians (lower than the Alps) does not last long…
despite that glaciers which allow skiing all year round in the Alps are generally absent in the Carpathians…
despite that the Alps, centrally located in Europe, are better accessible by public transport than the vast majority of Carpathian tourist destinations…
Question: would the focus on seasonal downhill skiing ensure viable, long-term economic operations?

Question: would the (costly) development of winter sport infrastructure concentrated in few selected most attractive, most visited and best-accessible locations:

- provide for fair, equal distribution of benefits from tourism employment and income-earning opportunities among all Carpathian communities?

- prevent threats to the biological and landscape diversity and minimize adverse environmental, ecological, cultural and social impacts?
Question: would such tourist development be sustainable?

Carpathian Convention, Protocol on Sustainable Tourism, Article 9.2. *The Parties shall cooperate on the identification of the specific Carpathian competitive advantages for sustainable tourism development over the other European mountain regions, which could provide for the unique selling proposition of the Carpathian regional sustainable tourism products, services and packages in the European and global tourist markets.*
Carpathian Convention, Protocol on Sustainable Tourism, Article 8.1.

Each Party shall take measures with the objective to promote the Carpathian region as the destination for sustainable tourism based on the unique common natural, cultural, traditional and historical heritage of the Carpathians.
Regional / local products are also perceived important:

Carpathian Convention, Protocol on Sustainable Tourism, Article 11.2. *The Parties shall cooperate on developing, adopting and implementing the common Carpathian policy for the promotion, labeling and certification of local products and local producers’ networks, in particular of traditional arts and handicrafts, and local goods including agricultural products utilizing local breeds of domestic animals and cultivated plant varieties.*
Protocol on Sustainable Tourism, Article 12.2.

aims at managing tourist traffic in the Carpathians simultaneously for the benefit of the environment and sustainable local economic development:

*With the objective to mitigate the impacts of tourism on fragile mountain ecosystems of the Carpathians* and to provide for a *more equal distribution of the tourist traffic in the Carpathian region,*
each Party shall take measures in its national territory with the objective to disperse, redirect and channel part of the tourist traffic out of the current main tourist destinations and sensitive sites such as protected areas, to the areas being less ecologically sensitive, less developed and less explored by tourism, but having sufficient potential to absorb and accommodate part of the tourist traffic.
Such dispersal, re-direction and chanelling of the tourist traffic can reduce the current pressures and footprint of tourism on the ecologically most sensitive sites (e.g. protected areas) and allow for more equal sharing of benefits and revenues from the tourist services sector by all municipalities of the Carpathian region enhancing the sustainability of tourism development.
WELCOME

The Carpathians are one of Europe's largest mountain ranges, a unique natural treasure of great beauty and ecological value, and home of the headwaters of major rivers. They also constitute a major ecological, economic, cultural, recreational and living environment in the heart of Europe, shared by numerous people and countries.

The Carpathian Convention is a subregional treaty to foster the sustainable development and the protection of the Carpathian region. It has been signed in May 2003 by seven Carpathian States (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Ukraine). Read more

QUICK LINKS

Bodies
Partners
Documents
Projects
Carpathian Heritage

NEW

Future Imperfect - Climate change and adaptation in the Carpathians - Report online

NEWS

Serbia has ratified the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management and the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism to the Carpathian Convention!

The Proceedings Volume of the Forum Carpathicum 2014 is available!
Forum Carpathicum, which is the most important meeting of the Science of the Carpathians (G4C), gathered for the third time in September in Lviv. The Proceedings Volume of the Forum Carpathicum 2014 contains extended abstracts of
The Convention is serviced by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Vienna Office – Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention. They cooperate on a permanent daily basis with UNEP/GRID-Warsaw.
Environmental Information Centre
UNEP/GRID-Warsaw

UN-affiliated agency established in 1991 on the basis of the agreement signed between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Ministry of the Environment of Poland
UNEP/GRID-Warsaw is currently implementing the project Carpathians Unite – mechanism of consultation and cooperation for implementation of the Carpathian Convention supported by Switzerland through the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme
“Carpathians Unite” project

implemented in the Polish part of the Carpathians by the consortium of six partner organizations coordinated by UNEP/GRID-Warsaw Centre in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment of Poland, nature conservation authorities, regional and local authorities, and NGOs.
Honorary Patronages:

- Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Minister of Sport and Tourism
- Chief Nature Conservator

Media Patronages:

- Cracow division of Polish national TV (TVP S.A.)
- Rzeszów division of Polish national TV (TVP S.A.)
- Polish Radio Rzeszów
- „Gazeta Wyborcza” (Cracow)
Action: Traditional shepherding in the Carpathians
Action: Carpathian Informatorium
www.konwencjakarpacka.pl is the main source of information on the Carpathian Convention available in Polish language
The Carpathian Informatorium contains an interactive tourist map.
Action: Implementation of the Carpathian Convention - platform of consultation and cooperation
Action: Implementation of the Carpathian Convention - platform of consultation and cooperation

The contribution of the “Carpathians Unite” project to the development of a new thematic Protocol for the implementation of the Convention and the support by Switzerland have explicitly been acknowledged in COP4 decision:
Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians

DECISION COP4/7
Cultural heritage and traditional knowledge
Article 11 of the Carpathian Convention

The Conference of the Parties

2. Notes the progress achieved towards the development of the draft Protocol on Cultural Heritage, and the work done under the auspices of the Working Group on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge;

5. Expresses its gratitude to the Ekopsychoologia Association and UNEP/GRID-Warsaw Centre within the project “Carpathians Unite – mechanism of consultation and cooperation for implementation of the Carpathian Convention”, supported by Switzerland through the Swiss Contribution to the enlarged European Union, for their contribution to the development of the Protocol;
Action: Regional strategy of sustainable tourism development
Action: Regional strategy of sustainable tourism development

A pilot action for the implementation of the CC Protocol on Sustainable Tourism involving local authorities (of 38 rural communities from among 200 municipalities within the scope of Convention application in Poland) in the elaboration and implementation of a sustainable tourism development strategy.
Action: Regional strategy of sustainable tourism development

The area in focus does not encompass famous tourist destinations, spectacular landscapes or well-recognized natural attractions.

Probably all Poles know Mt. Rysy (2 499 m asl) as the highest peak of the Polish part of the Tatra Mts. while only few would know Mt. Lackowa (997 m asl) the highest in the area covered by the strategy.
The geographical scope of the „Regional strategy of sustainable tourism development” prepared under the Carpathians Unite project
Action: Regional strategy of sustainable tourism development

Therefore, the communities in focus are much less developed and much less explored by tourism than the vast majority of communities located in higher, better recognized and more visited mountain ranges of the Polish Carpathians.
Action: Regional strategy of sustainable tourism development

But, these communities do have high natural, cultural and historical heritage values (e.g. 616 protected historical monuments, including five UNESCO World Heritage Sites Magura National Park, 4 Landscape Parks, 27 Natura 2000 sites, numerous nature reserves) which translates into their high potential for sustainable tourism development.
Action: Regional strategy of sustainable tourism development

Thus, communities in focus of the strategy have high potential to absorb and accommodate a considerable part of the tourist traffic re-directed from currently more popular, more visited and simultaneously more ecologically sensitive areas of the Polish Carpathians which is the objective of Article 12.2. of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism.
Thank you for attention.

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