

Integrated Management of Biological and Landscape Diversity for Sustainable Regional Development and Ecological Connectivity in the Carpathians

BioREGIO Carpathians - Project Partners

Piatra Craiului National Park Administration

Piatra Craiului National Park Administration represents the **Lead Partner (LP)** of the BioREGIO Carpathians project. The organization is formally the final beneficiary of the ERDF funding and the only link between the Programme and the project partnership ensuring the project coordination both administratively and financially. Hence, the Lead Partner is responsible for the division of tasks and coordination of activities among the partners. It is the responsibility of the organization to deliver on the overall objectives of the Operation including budget spend, verification, publicity, actions and activities, outcomes, and delivering within the Programme timeframe.

APNPC performs therewith the needed resources and experience for this major role having previously implemented several international projects and a strong knowledge of the actions to be taken for the development of an integrated management approach in the region. Therefore, the LP contributes to some specific project activities related to the management of protected areas and it forces and enlarges its own experience and network of sustainable regional development and ecological connectivity in the Carpathians.

UNEP Vienna - Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention

Being the Environmental Reference Center of the Mountain Partnership secretariat, UNEP Vienna cooperates with different stakeholder organizations for the further development of the mountain agenda at a global level. UNEP Vienna – ISCC is the responsible Working Package Leader of WP2 – Communication and WP7 – Intergovernmental platform and stakeholder involvement.

It will establish the link between the project and the related Working Groups of the Carpathian Convention in order to facilitate the political follow-up of the project results and outcomes. In order to achieve this a systematic process of stakeholder consultation will be conducted. Several intergovernmental meetings among relevant authorities will take place. UNEP Vienna – ISCC will also ensure the transfer of the project results in the Dinaric Arc and Balkans.

Being responsible for the external communication of the project, UNEP Vienna – ISCC is in charge of the visual identity and the website of the project. It will also coordinate the dissemination of the project results to decision makers and relevant stakeholders.

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WWF - Danube Carpathian Programme

WWF-DCP is contributing to the implementation of the project through the experience gained in other similar projects in the area. In particular, WWF-DCP is further developing the Carpathian Countries Protected Area Clearing House Mechanism (CCPA CHM) developed within the Protected Areas for a Living Planet project (PA4LP) with the aim to establish a Carpathian Joint Biodiversity Information System (CJBIS) incorporating all spatial data and information gathered related to the BIOREGIO project and if available beyond. WWF-DCP is coordinating Work Package 4 containing comprehensive work on regional development opportunities and integrated management measures for protected areas and natural assets. Furthermore, it will organize the 2nd Carpathian Protected Area Conference to promote not only the CJBIS, but also give the opportunity for networking and experience exchange among protected area professionals. The Carpathian Day of Parks is planned to raise awareness of the public on the natural values of the Carpathian ecoregion through events organized by protected area administrations.

Duna-Ipoly National Park Directorate

Duna-Ipoly National Park, the ninth national park of Hungary established on 60,314 hectares in 1997, and includes the Pilis, Visegrád and Börzsöny Hills, the undisturbed sections of the Ipoly Valley as well as parts of the Szentendre Island. The rock-bed of the Pilis Hills stretching from Esztergom to Budapest is made up of limestone and dolomite. Because of the basic characteristics of limestone karst formation, the hills are exceptionally rich in caves. DINPI is Working Package (WP) Leader of WP6 - Pilot Projects.

The National Park is actively involved in the various work packages of BioREGIO Carpathians Programme, especially in the construction of Red Lists by providing data for Hungary (WP3), and in the elaboration of Common Integrated Management Measures (WP4) by working-out and testing a novel method of forest naturalness survey. The Directorate plays an important role in the development of common measures being responsible for coordinating Working Package 6, which focuses on the three cross-border pilot projects.

Szent István University

The activities of Szent István University (SZIU), Institute for Wildlife Conservation, cover all aspects of wildlife research, development, and innovation. SZIU has the needed experience and resources to ensure the collection and analysis of data on species and habitats, and socio-economic data in Hungary. Through its established network, SZIU ensures the involvement of relevant stakeholders at national and regional level in the country. Furthermore SZIU will make use of its experience in the project TESS (Transnational Environmental Support System), that has links with BIOREGIO Carpathians.

SZIU is mainly involved in these project activities where data collection, harmonization and classification is requested. This includes mainly the WP3 – Database development and WP5 – Continuity and Connectivity, but also WP4 – Integrated Management of Carpathian natural assets and protected areas. It will provide basic data from a Hungarian perspective and contribute to the development of a methodology of data collection and harmonization as well as of categorization and classification of threatened species and habitats in the Carpathians. SZIU will take part in the stakeholder meetings to collect the relevant

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information to the Common Integrated Management Measures and in the Pan-Carpathian Day events together with the Duna-Ipoly National Park (WP7).

European Academy Bolzano/Bozen

The EURAC Institute for Regional Development and Location Management puts in Work Package 5 “Ecological Connectivity and Continuum in the Carpathians” its focus on determining physical, legal and socioeconomic barriers. It is the objective to give recommendations to restore or sustain ecological corridors to enable dispersal between the large natural areas in the Carpathians.

The methodological approach for the identification of ecological-corridors is adapted from the Alpine Space project Econnect. The derived corridors on which animals spend less energy on dispersal are modeled for each umbrella species (Bear, Wolf, European otter, Western Capercaillie, Lynx, Chamois, European Hare). The results will be accessible on a Web GIS application for the interested community. Recommendations on the consequences of the detected physical, legal and socioeconomic barriers for ecological networks should bring these aspects to the attention of the intergovernmental platform within the stakeholder meetings to be organized in WP7. That should help to attain political support to set relevant measures for enhancing ecological connectivity.

Maramures Mountains Nature Park Administration

Maramureş Mountains Nature Park is situated at the border with the Carpathian Biosphere Reserve in Ukraine. The partner can build on the experience of the project UNDP-GEF Medium-Size Project (MSP). APNMM is mainly involved in WP6 – Pilot projects. Together with the Ukrainian partner it will explore and identify fields of cooperation and related common activities. It will organize a stakeholders meeting to involve stakeholders mainly from both the Ukrainian and the Romanian side. APNMM is also involved in WP5 by contributing to the data collection from a Romanian perspective.

It will finance the activities of the State Agency for Protected Areas of Ukraine (SAPA) related to the further development of a transboundary Carpathian Biosphere Reserve and the implementation of the Common Integrated Management Measures (CIMMM). Furthermore, it will finance the activities related to the data collection and analysis and the stakeholder’s involvement in Ukraine to ensure that the project will cover all the Carpathian area.

Iron Gates Natural Park Administration

Iron Gates Natural Park is a protected area since 2000. Since then it has been known like one of the most important, mostly because of the biodiversity and landscape values, but also because of the fact that it is situated at the border with Serbia, which also has a protected area along the Danube. In the meantime in this area were declared three NATURA 2000 sites, 2 special protection areas and 1 site of special community interest. The Park administration submitted also the documentation for the declaration of the Ramsar site, further highlighting the importance of this area, from the biodiversity and habitats point of view. APNPF is – together with Djerdap National Park in Serbia – one of the pilot sites in WP6 – Pilot project. It will identify fields of cooperation and common activities in order to foster the

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transboundary cooperation among the two protected areas. Specifically, it will focus on the implementation of the Common Integrated Management Measures (CIMMM) elaborated at transnational level. Furthermore, it will contribute to the data collection and stakeholders involvement activities in Romania.

Environmental Protection Agency Sibiu

The Environmental Protection Agency Sibiu is a Romanian public governmental institution, under the jurisdiction of the National Environmental Protection Agency, a decentralized public service funded from the state budget. EPA Sibiu fulfils the responsibilities of the National Environmental Protection Agency at regional level in the following domains: implementation of environmental policies, legislation and current regulations and coordinates the elaboration of action plans at regional level.

EPA Sibiu organizational structure ensures at regional level, the coordination of environmental protection activities, through specialized departments: Environmental Permitting, Protected Areas, Waste Management, Monitoring of Environment.

The Regional Environmental Protection Agency Sibiu (EPA Sibiu) is the institution which is responsible for environmental protection in a large area in the Carpathians - it is monitoring the 7 Centre Regions in Romania. Within BioREGIO Carpathians project EPA Sibiu will provide collected data of this important mountain area. EPA Sibiu will facilitate collaboration and communication with stakeholders involved in management of protected areas. Also EPA Sibiu's involvement in the project will strengthen its relationships with the protected areas managers. EPA Sibiu's experience with awareness raising on environmental issues within local communities can be shared with other project partners. Staff experience and good knowledge of the Carpathian region ensures an important contribution to the project outputs and results. This project facilitates the knowledge transfer among relevant stakeholders in the Region, and REPA Sibiu will participate in this collaboration with data held on protected areas in the Carpathians and information about those who manage it.

State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic

The State Nature Conservancy of Slovak Republic is the central expert organization for nature and landscape conservation in Slovakia for the past twelve years. The main tasks include work on legislation level (elaboration of policy documents, guidelines and resource materials for development of legislation and elaboration of nature conservation documentation) as well as on expert level (expert management of protected parts of nature, surveys and research provision and habitats monitoring). It also provides for environmental education and awareness activities, promotion and editorial work, operation of information centers as well as international cooperation and implementation of tasks arising from international conventions and agreements. SNC SR is the Working Package (WP) Leader of WP 3 - Database development. SNC SR is in charge of development and maintenance of databases on species and habitats on the national level. This experience supports the work of the SNC SR in database development and elaboration of the Red List of Threatened Carpathian Species and Habitats as well as List of Invasive Species in the Carpathians, for which the SNC SR took responsibility within the project BioREGIO on the whole Carpathian level.

SNC SR also coordinates international cooperation and is represented in the coordinating bodies of the Carpathian Convention. Elaboration of the Carpathian Red Lists of Threatened Species and Habitats and the List of Invasive Species within the project BioREGIO in cooperation with the CC Working Groups is a first step towards its adoption as set in the Chapter III, Article 8, Point 1 of the Biodiversity Protocol of the Carpathian Convention.

National Forest Centre

NFC is semi-budgetary forestry agency established by the SR Ministry of Agriculture on 1 January 2006. The Centre reports directly to the Department of Forestry and Wood-processing of MA SR.

NFC aims to take the lead in the development and promotion of sustainable forest management and its implementation in practice. It strives to provide forestry practice, forest owners and other stakeholders with new knowledge on forests and practical solutions enhancing stewardship of existing forest resources. In addition, it supports transfer of appropriate know-how to state and municipal authorities on forestry, nature conservation, environment, rural development and urban planning. Its ambition is to provide fully-fledged services relevant to and supporting strategic priorities and interests of forestry. NFC is mainly involved in these WP related to data collection, harmonization and analysis. This includes WP3 – Database development and WP5 – Continuity and Connectivity.

NFC will contribute to project outputs and results through its database about forest ecosystems for the whole forested territory of the Slovak Republic, their experts on data collection and analysis on forest ecosystems, and the detailed phytocoenological forest types maps elaborated. NFC will develop the methodology and then elaborate Forest Habitats Red List for Carpathians. It will also contribute to the development of the Common Integrated Management Measures (CIMMs) in WP4. Furthermore, NFC will work in strong cooperation with the Slovak State Nature Conservancy and contribute to the organization of a stakeholder consultation meeting in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia (WP7). NFC will mainly provide direct contacts with the forest land owners and managers including private and public sphere.

GRID Warszawa

Environmental Information Centre UNEP/GRID-Warsaw, established on 17 September 1991 pursuant to the official agreement signed between the Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Polish Government (Ministry of the Environment, Forestry, and Natural Resources), is a specialized centre in charge of collecting and processing environmental information concerning Poland and Central and Eastern Europe.

Areas of activity and expertise include: environmental data processing, environmental reporting, computer thematic environmental mapping (from data collection through data analyses, editing activities and professional cartographical approach to data visualization), database and meta-database creation and maintenance (UNEP/GRID-Warsaw owns and/or has access to dozens GIS databases with a broad range of corresponding attributes, mainly consisting of statistical data), geographic information system (GIS) analyses and programming, image processing, analysis of socio-economic data, web-based applications, multimedia presentations, and environmental education

Public Enterprise Djerdap National Park

Located on the Danube River where it borders Romania in eastern Serbia, the Djerdap National Park contains impressive natural beauty and archeological sites. The main feature of the national park is the Djerdap Gorge, known as the Iron Gate. The gorge stretches nearly 100 kilometers alongside the slopes of the Carpathian Mountains. Where the river narrows to 150 meters, at Kazan, cliffs rise up over 300 meters and makes impressive view.

The park has great biodiversity within one ecosystem. It has diversified plant and animal life as well as being home to the 8,000 year-old archeological site of Lepenski Vir.

Djerdap National Park will mainly be involved in WP6 – Pilot projects. Together with Iron Gates Nature Park in Romania it forms one of the project's pilot areas which will develop common activities that enhance the transboundary cooperation among the two protected areas. Specifically, it will focus on the implementation of the Common Integrated Management Measures (CIMMM) elaborated at transnational level with the other BIOREGIO Carpathians.

In WP3 – database development and WP5 – Continuity and Connectivity, JP NPDF will provide data related to the Serbian part of the Carpathians. It will also be the host of one stakeholder meeting that will involve stakeholders from both, the Romanian and the Serbian side of the Iron Gate (WP7).

Carpathian Biosphere Reserve

The Carpathian Biosphere reserve will ensure the involvement of relevant protected areas managers in Ukraine in the project activities, and will be engaged into the development of the transboundary cooperation activities with Maramures Nature Park (WP6 – Pilot activities). Furthermore, it will ensure the contacts with competent experts on data collection and analysis in Ukraine for the establishment of a solid database covering all the Carpathian region.