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Second Conference of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas and BioREGIO Carpathians Mid Term Conference

Tatranská Javorina/VIENNA 29 April 2013 (UN Information Service) - The Second Carpathian Network of Protected Areas Conference (CNPA) was held from 23-26 April 2013. The Conference was organized by World Wildlife Fund Danube-Carpathian Programme (WWF DCP) and the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic back to back with the BioREGIO Carpathians Mid Term Conference organized by UNEP Vienna Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (ISCC).

Representatives of protected areas and other stakeholders acting in the Carpathian Region met in Slovakia to exchange experiences and ideas for future cooperation. Participants discussed the governance of protected areas, the science behind conservation and the role of Non-Governmental Organizations. Additionally, a number of workshops on different topics, such as sustainable financing and connectivity and continuity, was organized.

The Conference brought together 160 participants from at least 10 nations, including protected areas professionals mainly from the Carpathians but also from the Alps, experts from the USA, Italy and Austria, the European Commission, IUCN, Alparc, several Carpathian Convention Focal Points etc.

and was a dynamic joint venture of WWF, the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic, and of the Carpathian Convention, and financially supported by the BioREGIO Carpathians project, WWF, UNEP, UNDP Visegrad Fund, and Alparc, amongst others. The Conference was a real success by making the CNPA Management arrangement operational on an interim basis until the end of 2014, which will be performed by UNEP Vienna ISCC with the support of Pronatur (Banska Bystrica) and the Romanian Association of Protected Areas located at Piatra Craiului National Park, Romania. It approved a programme of work including a "project development engine" for CNPA cooperative projects and servicing the interested parks and protected areas, which will be animated by the ISCC - CNPA interim Management Unit.

The Conference adopted a Declaration, which among other points welcomes "the fruitful cooperation with the international partners (ALPARC, EURAC, Science for the Carpathians Initiative (S4C), UNEP, WWF DCP, and others)", and expresses the wish "to continue and to strengthen this cooperation".

Background Information

Funded under the EU SEE Programme, the BioREGIO Carpathians Project in its three years focused on the challenges to biodiversity in the Carpathian Region. 16 international, national, and local authorities, organizations and scientific institutions have joined forces to contribute to the protection and development of the Carpathian mountain region, situated in the heart of Europe. They are convinced that protection and regional development in the Carpathians can go hand in hand if natural assets are managed in an integrated way and relevant stakeholders are involved. It builds on the existing framework of the Carpathian Convention, its Biodiversity Protocol and other related transnational networks and initiatives. It is an EU project which is co-funded by the ERDF within the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme.

Integrated management and regional development of Carpathian natural assets and protected areas

One of the main aims of the BioREGIO project is the development of management approaches that facilitate coordination and cooperation between the institutions, regional and local authorities, and other stakeholders of protected areas and natural assets. A special focus is given to the development of a methodology for integrated forest management and on integrated wetland management.

Strategic project in the field of integrated management biological and landscape diversity

The findings of the BioREGIO project as well as the pan-European perspectives of biodiversity have been discussed with representatives from the European Commission as well as with participants from other international institutions attending the BioREGIO mid-term conference. Its outcomes are not only of strategic relevance for the coordinated development of biodiversity in the Carpathian region but with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme the BioREGIO results and experience can also be shared with other mountain regions, such as the Balkans.

Further information on the BioREGIO Carpathians project can be found at <http://www.bioregio-carpathians.eu>

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