

Event

Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (COP6)
25 November 2020

Statement by Roland Psenner, Eurac Research President

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Participants,

After hearing the presentations by eminent representatives, observers and strategic partners, allow me to add a specific comment from my view as President of Eurac Research.

The Carpathians, one of Europe's largest mountain ranges are known to be among the most valuable ecoregions of Europe. As Professor of ecology, I'm confronted since more than three decades with one of the biggest environmental problem of our time, the extinction of species, therefore you can hardly overstate the importance of the Carpathian Mountains for the future of our planet.

Eurac Research is proud to be part of the Carpathian Convention and we (first of all Eleonora Musco from our Vienna Office) have collaborated to different initiatives and protocols, that support the overall targets of the Convention. Eurac led for instance the development of the Protocol on Sustainable Transport and the Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development, which entered into force in January 2019 and January 2020, respectively.

Eurac contributed to the development of different EU projects in the Carpathians: [EU SEE Bioregio Carpathians](#), [EU SEE Access2Mountains](#), [EU DTP TRANSGREEN](#), [EU DTP ConnectGREEN](#) and, for instance, [EU CE Centralparks](#), where Eurac is the Lead Partner.

In addition, through the EU CE Centralparks project, Eurac is supporting the work of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA). We also published a booklet on "[Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime in the Danube Carpathian Region](#)", in cooperation with UNEP, Carpathian Convention and WWF, to raise awareness on illegal logging, illegal fishing of sturgeon and caviar trade, poaching of large carnivores and illegal killing of wild birds. It was presented at the EU Parliament in 2017.

Let me end with thanks and look into the future of Eurac involvement into the Convention.

A big thank goes to the Secretariat for the ongoing cooperation and invitation for taking part in the COP6 meeting. I wish to congratulate the Government of Hungary for results achieved during the Carpathian Convention Presidency and welcome the Government of Poland for taking over the Convention Presidency for the next years until COP7.

Our research at Eurac addresses the greatest challenges facing us in the future: people need health, energy, well-functioning political and social systems and an intact environment. Our work embraces three major themes: regions great for living in, the richness of diversity, both social, linguistic and natural and a healthy society.

Today, more than 500 people from over 25 countries work in Eurac Research Institutes, Centers and Labs. At the moment, we are involved in 98 EU projects, in many of them as Lead Partners, together with hundreds of partners across Europe and beyond.

Recently we have become also a seat of the United Nations University (UNU) since the United Nations is focusing on the most important ecosystem services of the world provided by mountains.

Eurac has a long-term strategic cooperation with the Carpathian Convention, that started already before the establishment of the Convention. This cooperation has its profound roots in the long-term cooperation with the Alpine Convention, with which we cooperated since its very beginning. In fact, we are hosting the Secretariat of the Alpine Convention at our Headquarters in Bolzano/Bozen in Italy.

Eurac is supporting the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, with its Vienna Office, since 2004 and it's a very active observer of the Carpathian Convention, providing scientific and technical support to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention. Some of the preparatory meetings for the elaboration of the Convention took place in Bolzano/Bozen.

The cooperation between Eurac and the Convention has continued since then with the organization of several important Carpathian Convention events and the development of implementation strategies, common activities and projects in the Carpathian Region, in which several Eurac Institutes have been involved and have provided their expertise.

Let me again thank the Parties to the Convention for the official recognition of this fruitful cooperation through the adoption of "DECISION COP6/7 Cooperation with Eurac Research", which also refers to the support of our Vienna Representing Office, considered as an integral part of the Secretariat.

I want to re-assure that we will continue to support the Carpathian Convention, by providing technical and scientific expertise for its implementation, and by cooperating with its strategic partners.

Looking forward to a fruitful future cooperation with the Secretariat, the Carpathian Convention Parties and all partners in facing together future challenges (among which the post-COVID19 recovery, the biodiversity and the climate crisis) and with the hope to meet you next year in Poland!

Good luck to the Carpathian Convention and to all of us!