

# Carpathian Convention Working Group on Biodiversity Work Plan and Mandate 2024–2026

While conducting its activities, the WG Biodiversity will follow its Terms of Reference<sup>1</sup> and the strategic objectives established therein. As main reference documents, the Working Group will use the relevant decisions adopted at the Carpathian Convention COP7 in 2023 and the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework<sup>2</sup>, which outlines the Vision 2050 for the Carpathians and the Strategic Objectives, as well as comprehensive tasks and activities to achieve it, while contributing to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Timeline: unless otherwise specified, the envisaged activities are to be implemented continuously / completed by COP 8 in 2026.

<b>1) <u>Carpathian Biodiversity Framework</u></b>
<b>Support the implementation of the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework</b>
Mandate: COP7 Decision COP7/6 para 1 and COP7/9 para 2
<p>COP7/6 para 1: Recognizing that the Carpathian Convention provides a regional mechanism for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its new Kunming-Montreal Global Framework in the Carpathians to advance on addressing biodiversity loss and ecosystem restoration with benefit to all interlinked processes, <b>welcomes the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework and requests the Parties to use it as a key tool to implement the Carpathian Convention and its Protocols contributing to the achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework</b>, by taking joint and synergistic actions with the involvement and cooperation of all relevant actors and stakeholders; and requests the Secretariat to facilitate the implementation process</p> <p>COP7/9 para 2: Welcomes the implementation of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Biodiversity Work Plan 2021–2023 and <b>requests the WG Biodiversity to revise it for the following implementation period 2024-2026 taking into account the provisions of the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework</b>; in this respect invites the Parties, WG Biodiversity, relevant other Working Groups and stakeholders, with support of the Secretariat, to implement it.</p> <p>COP7/9 para 8: Further to DECISION COP7/9 paragraph 1, encourages the Parties, WG Biodiversity and relevant stakeholders to consider and integrate learnings from the <b>NaturaConnect project into the implementation of the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework</b> and the revision of the Action Plan on Conservation of Large Carnivores and Ensuring Ecological Connectivity in the Carpathians 2021-2026, as appropriate.</p>
Envisaged activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Act upon CBF Strategic Objective 1 while considering its connections to other Strategic Objectives, implementing ongoing activities and proposing new initiatives accordingly</li><li>- Consider the annex of the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework, which outlines actions for implementing the GBF in the Carpathian region. These actions contribute to each relevant Global Target and support the achievement of the Vision 2030 for the Carpathians and the Strategic Objective by 2030</li><li>- Consider and integrate the results of the NaturaConnect project into the implementation of the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework</li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> Terms of Reference for the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape (WG Biodiversity) adopted by the CC COP7 in 2023

[http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl\\_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/03%20Meetings%20and%20Events/Working%20Groups/Biodiversity/12%20meeting/13010WG%20Biodiversity%20ToR%202021FINAL.pdf](http://www.carpathianconvention.org/tl_files/carpathiancon/Downloads/03%20Meetings%20and%20Events/Working%20Groups/Biodiversity/12%20meeting/13010WG%20Biodiversity%20ToR%202021FINAL.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Carpathian Biodiversity Framework adopted by the CC COP7 in 2023

[http://www.carpathianconvention.org/cop7/docs/officialdocuments/CC%20COP7%20DOC7\\_Carpathian%20Biodiversity%20Framework\\_ADOPTED.pdf](http://www.carpathianconvention.org/cop7/docs/officialdocuments/CC%20COP7%20DOC7_Carpathian%20Biodiversity%20Framework_ADOPTED.pdf)

- Support the development and implementation of the LIFE Strategic Nature Project for the Carpathians by providing expertise and inputs in terms of the project scope and activities, as well as stakeholders to be involved in the project implementation (*Timeline: as needed, in line with the submission/deliverable deadlines*)

### Inclusion of the Carpathian Convention into the revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs)

Mandate: COP7 Decision COP7/6 para 2

COP7/6 para 2: Invites the Parties to include the relevant aspects of the Carpathian Convention activities within the revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) under the CBD, to mutually strengthen the implementation of both conventions, help avoiding isolated approaches and making the best use of limited financial and human resources.

Envisaged activities:

- Support the Parties and respective bodies in integrating the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework into NBSAPs revisions (*timeline: depending on the in-country situation*)
- Consider and use, at national level, the [Guidance Document for Streamlining the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans](#) and its [Annex I: Table with example policy actions relevant for the Carpathians for more information on the process](#) while undertaking the revision of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) (*Timeline: by the time of finalized revisions of NBSAPs, depending on the in-country situation*)

### Support the implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the CBD, the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention renewed in the light of the Global Biodiversity Framework

Mandate: COP7 Decision COP7/6 para 3

COP7/6 para 3: Welcomes the signing of the trilateral [Memorandum of Cooperation between the CBD, the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention renewed in the light of the Global Biodiversity Framework](#), which shall enhance synergies and initiate common activities for the implementation of the new framework and guide the way for effective mountain biodiversity protection in the Alpine and Carpathian regions and beyond, supporting experience and knowledge sharing with other mountain regions of the world, in this respect, invites the Parties, the relevant Secretariats and stakeholders to **initiate implementation activities and support the process.**

Envisaged activities:

- Initiate and support activities implementing the Memorandum of Cooperation between the CBD, the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention renewed in the light of the Global Biodiversity Framework

## 2) Implement the International Action Plan on Conservation of Large Carnivores and Ensuring Ecological Connectivity

### Asses the progress and revise the Action Plan

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/9 para 1

COP7/9 para 1: Welcomes the progress made in the implementation of the Action Plan on Conservation of Large Carnivores and Ensuring Ecological Connectivity in the Carpathians 2021-2026 with support of relevant projects, encourages the Parties, the WG Biodiversity and other stakeholders, with support of the Secretariat, to further implement the Action Plan, **to assess the progress made by COP 8 and suggest possible revision of the Action Plan, with the consideration of relevant project results, for the consideration by the COP 8.**

COP7/9 para 8: Further to DECISION COP7/9 paragraph 1, encourages the Parties, WG Biodiversity and relevant stakeholders to consider and integrate learnings from the **NaturaConnect** project into the implementation of the Carpathian Biodiversity Framework and the **revision of the Action Plan on Conservation of Large Carnivores and Ensuring Ecological Connectivity in the Carpathians 2021-2026**, as appropriate.

Envisaged activities:

- Assess the progress made in implementing the Action Plan and revise it, as necessary, taking into account the results of relevant projects, particularly the [LECA](#), [ForestConnect](#) and NaturaConnect projects (*timeline: 2Q of 2026 – in time ahead of COP 8*).

**Support the implementation of the LECA project**

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/9 para 3

COP7/9 para 3: Welcomes with appreciation the approval and implementation of the new project LECA (Interreg Central Europe) led by the Mendel University in Brno, Czech Republic, on supporting the coexistence and conservation of the Carpathian large carnivores, and **encourages the Parties, WG Biodiversity and relevant stakeholders to contribute to the project implementation** particularly, to the envisioned by the project **thematic guidance on monitoring, poaching investigation and conflict prevention, as well as the “Recommendations for the implementation of the Carpathian Convention on large carnivores”** to be taken into consideration in the revised Action Plan as per DECISION COP7/9 paragraph 2; requests the Secretariat to support the process.

Envisaged activities:

- Contribute to the development of the thematic guidance on monitoring, poaching investigation and conflict prevention and the recommendations for the implementation of the Carpathian Convention on large carnivores by actively consulting and providing expert inputs to the documents (*timeline: upon request, by 03/2026*).

**Support conservation of the Carpathian lynx**

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/9 para 19

COP7/9 para 19: Takes note of the development and submission of a proposal on Concerted Action for the Eurasian Lynx under the CMS Convention

[Proposal for a Concerted Action for the Eurasian Lynx \(\*Lynx lynx\*\) Proposed for Listing on Appendix II of the CMS Convention](#)

[Proposal for the Inclusion of the Eurasian Lynx \(\*Lynx lynx\*\) in Appendix II and Balkan Lynx \(\*Lynx lynx balcanicus\*\) in Appendix I of the CMS Convention](#)

Envisaged activities:

- Develop, endorse and implement a Strategy for the conservation of the autochthonous population of the Carpathian lynx in Europe (Carpathian Lynx Strategy) in close cooperation with the Range States and relevant bodies of Bern Convention and CMS to inform the development and implementation of related National Action Plans (*to be developed further, upon consultation with Bern Convention and CMS*).
- Enhancing synergies and strengthening cooperation between the Carpathian Convention, CMS and Bern Conventions, to form a strategic partnership for the lynx conservation, and possibly other relevant species in the future (*timeline: according to the strategy development and implementation plan*).

**Reestablish the Large Carnivores Expert Group within the WG Biodiversity**

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/9 para 3, COP7/9 para 19

COP7/9 para 3: Welcomes with appreciation the approval and implementation of the new project LECA (Interreg Central Europe) led by the Mendel University in Brno, Czech Republic, on supporting the coexistence and conservation of the Carpathian large carnivores, and **encourages the Parties, WG Biodiversity and relevant stakeholders to contribute to the project implementation** particularly, to the envisioned by the project **thematic guidance on monitoring, poaching investigation and conflict prevention, as well as the “Recommendations for the implementation of the Carpathian Convention on large carnivores”** to be taken into consideration in the revised Action Plan as per DECISION COP7/9 paragraph 2; requests the Secretariat to support the process.

COP7/9 para 19: Takes note of the development and submission of a proposal on Concerted Action for the Eurasian Lynx under the CMS Convention

Envisaged activities:

- Update the list of Large Carnivores Expert Group within the WG Biodiversity (*Timeline: by mid-September 2024 and regularly updated, as needed*)
- Large Carnivores Expert Group actively involved in development and implementation of LECA thematic guidances and other project activities, as well as of Carpathian Lynx Strategy.

### Increase interregional cooperation on large carnivores

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/9 para 4

COP7/6 para 4: Welcomes the exchange on large carnivores' conservation and management practices and perspectives, particularly with the Dinaric-Balkan-Pindos Large Carnivore Platform region and the Platform Large Carnivores, Wild Ungulates and Society (WISO) of the Alpine Convention, and invites the relevant stakeholders to organize an interregional workshop on the topic for knowledge sharing and identifying possible synergies and cooperation opportunities.

Envisaged activities:

- Consider and use the results of the Joint Conference of the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions on large carnivores, organized within the frame of the LACA project in March 2024 in Slovenia, and based on it, suggest and develop joint activities between the Carpathian and Alpine regions, not limited to other regions, for improving the conservation and management practices of large carnivores in the respective regions and in Europe

### Implement the Joint Declaration "Achieving functional biodiversity in the Danube-Carpathian Region by mainstreaming ecological connectivity"

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/9 para 6

COP7/9 para 6: Welcomes the endorsement of the Joint Declaration "Achieving functional biodiversity in the Danube-Carpathian Region by mainstreaming ecological connectivity"<sup>12</sup> as the basis for upcoming work on connectivity in the region in collaboration with the EUSDR PA4, PA5 and 6, and the ICPDR, invites the Parties, WG Biodiversity and relevant stakeholders, together with the Secretariat, to support the process and initiate related activities.

Envisaged activities:

- Initiate and implement activities supporting the implementation of the Joint Declaration "Achieving functional biodiversity in the Danube-Carpathian Region by mainstreaming ecological connectivity".

### Support implementation of NaturaConnect project building a resilient ecological network of conserved areas across Europe

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/9 para 7

COP7/9 para 7: Welcomes with appreciation the approval and implementation of NaturaConnect project (EU Horizon Europe) led by the International Institute of Applied System Analysis (IIASA), Austria, on building a resilient ecological network of conserved areas across Europe, including supporting development of the Trans-European Nature Network (TEN-N), encourages the Parties, WG Biodiversity and relevant stakeholders to support the project implementation, and to promote and use the results of the project, as appropriate welcomes closer collaboration with the ICPDR, WWF-CEE, WWF Hungary, WWF Romania and the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU) within the frame of the NaturaConnect project and its Danube- Carpathian case study, and requests the Secretariat to support this process.

Envisaged activities:

- Contribute to and support the project activities relevant for the Carpathians by providing expert inputs and consulting project documents and tools, as requested.
- Participate and contribute to the workshops and webinars organized within the frame of the NaturaConnect project, which aims to provide relevant data and tools for establishing a robust ecological network comprising green and blue infrastructure, with consideration for potential financing mechanisms within the Carpathian region.
- Promote and use the project results, as appropriate.

### Make use of available tools to improve ecological connectivity in the Carpathians

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/9 para 5, COP7/9 para 9,

COP7/9 para 5: Welcomes the results of the project SaveGREEN (Interreg Danube Transnational Programme), led by WWF CEE, on safeguarding the functionality of transnationally important ecological corridors in the Danube region, particularly the "Methodology on Monitoring structural and functional ecological connectivity" and its related application toolbox for field data collection and encourages their use.

COP7/9 para 9: Welcomes the results of the ConnectGREEN project (Interreg Danube Transnational Programme, led by WWF Romania, on restoring and managing ecological corridors in mountains as the green infrastructure in the Danube basin, and encourages the Parties, WG Biodiversity and relevant stakeholders to consider and use them, as appropriate, while implementing the Carpathian Convention

Envisaged activities:

- Use and promote the results of the project SaveGREEN on safeguarding the functionality of transnationally important ecological corridors in the Danube region, particularly the "Methodology on Monitoring structural and functional ecological connectivity" and its related application toolbox for field data collection.
- Use and promote the results of the ConnectGREEN project, particularly:
  - [Methodology for identification of ecological corridors in the Carpathian countries using large carnivores as umbrella species](#)
  - [Guidelines on how to Use Spatial Planning Tool in Integrative Management of Ecological Corridors.](#)

### 3) Cooperate with partner initiatives

#### Cooperation with the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/9 para 10, 12,13

COP7/9 para 10: Welcomes and endorses the results of the project Centralparks (Interreg Central Europe Programme) led by Eurac Research, on building management capacities of Carpathian protected areas for the integration and harmonization of biodiversity protection and local socio-economic development, including the support given to the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) activities, and encourages the Parties, WG Biodiversity and relevant stakeholders to consider and use them, as appropriate, while implementing the Carpathian Convention.

COP7/9 para 12: Welcomes the organization of the conference "Transnational cooperation for the sustainable future of the Carpathian region" - final conference of the Centralparks project, held on 23-24 March 2022 in Wieliczka, Poland, and thanks the Secretariat and Eurac Research for organizing the round table discussion between the protected area networks, including the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas, the Alpine Network of Protected Areas, the DANUBEPARKS, the Parks Dinarides and the Carpathian Wetland Initiative, on the significance of networks for effective protected area management and nature-based sustainable development, and based on the discussion results, encourages closer cooperation and exchange between the networks and identifying topic of mutual importance for further work.

COP7/9 para 13: Recognizing the support given by the Centralparks project to CNPA, welcomes the recommendations of the CNPA Steering Committee meeting<sup>17</sup>, held on 18 November 2021 in Krakow, Poland, the outcomes of the CNPA SC meeting, held on 24 March in Wieliczka, Poland, and subsequent CNPA questionnaire 2022 that resulted in great interest expressed by CNPA Members in establishing an association of protected areas in the Carpathians, to provide better governance model for CNPA, in this respect, invites the CNPA SC, and relevant protected areas, to consider making necessary arrangements with support of the Secretariat.



Envisaged activities:

- Support better governance and operational functions of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas
- Support closer cooperation and exchange between the networks of protected areas and identifying topic of mutual importance for further work, if relevant.
- Use and promote the results of the project Centralparks while implementing the Carpathian Convention, particularly:
  - [Carpathian strategy for enhancing biodiversity and landscape conservation outside and inside Protected Areas](#)
  - [Strategy for local sustainable tourism development based on natural and cultural heritage of the Carpathians](#)
  - Guidelines on communication between protected areas and local communities in the Carpathians Carpathian

**Cooperation with the Carpathian Wetland Initiative**

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/9 para 14

COP7/9 para 14: Appreciating the work of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI) in strengthening synergies between the Ramsar Convention and the Carpathian Convention, welcomes close cooperation of CWI with the Secretariat and relevant WGs, especially the WG Biodiversity and the WG Climate Change, in raising the importance of the Carpathian wetlands and initiating concrete activities, including development of a project proposal on relevant topics, encourages the relevant WGs and the Secretariat to support the process and the project's implementation, if successful, and invites the Parties, the CWI Board, CNPA SC and relevant stakeholders, with support of the Secretariat, to make arrangements for better governance model for CWI, and to update the Terms of Reference of the CWI accordingly.

Envisaged activities:

- Support better governance and operational functions of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative
- Support development and implementation of relevant projects

**Cooperation with the Science for the Carpathians**

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/8, para 2 and 3

COP7/8 para 2: Welcomes stronger involvement of the S4C in the implementation of the Convention, based on the Memorandum of Understanding, its contribution to the COP6 and COP7, other relevant Convention meetings, recognizes the effort by the Secretariat, the S4C and respective Carpathian Convention working groups to coordinate activities and requests the Secretariat to pursue closer collaboration with the S4C.

COP7/8 para 3: Welcomes the outcomes of the 6th Forum Carpaticum: "Linking the Environmental, Political and Societal Aspects for Carpathian Sustainability, held on 21-25 June 2021 in Brno, Czech Republic, and the 7th Forum Carpaticum "Carpathian Futures – Critical Transitions", held on 25-29 September 2023, Kraków, Poland, thanks the S4C for the elaboration of the recommendations for the Carpathian Convention, invites the S4C to further support the Carpathian Convention with its sound scientific knowledge and expertise, and requests the Secretariat and the Parties to take S4C recommendations into close consideration when prioritizing, planning and implementing Convention activities.

Envisaged activities:

- Take into account the S4C Recommendations when prioritizing, planning and implementing Convention activities
- Support development and implementation of relevant projects

**Cooperation with the Alpine Biodiversity Board**

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/5, para 5, COP7/6 para 3:

COP7/5 para 5: Welcomes the close cooperation with the Alpine Convention on various topics, particularly in respect to the organization of series of events promoting mountain biodiversity, including the Mountain Biodiversity Day on 13 January 2021, the Alpine and Carpathian Biodiversity Forum on 15-16 December 2021, and the conference Mountain Biodiversity 2002-2022: achievements and next challenges at global and regional level on 16 September 2022, thanks the Alpine Convention Permanent Secretariat and the Alpine Biodiversity Board, the Secretariat and other partners for facilitating the preparations and invites them to further strengthen the cooperation in fields of common interest, including institutional

cooperation, the exchange of information and experience, the development and implementation of common projects, and raising awareness of the significance of sustainable development of mountain areas in Europe and other mountain regions of the world

COP7/6 para 3: Welcomes the signing of the trilateral Memorandum of Cooperation between the CBD, the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention renewed in the light of the Global Biodiversity Framework, which shall enhance synergies and initiate common activities for the implementation of the new framework and guide the way for effective mountain biodiversity protection in the Alpine and Carpathian regions and beyond, supporting experience and knowledge sharing with other mountain regions of the world, in this respect, invites the Parties, the relevant Secretariats and stakeholders to initiate implementation activities and support the process.

#### Envisaged activities

- Strengthen the cooperation in fields of common interest, including institutional cooperation, the exchange of information and experience, e.g. on nature restoration, in view of the new EU regulation on nature restoration
- Support the development of common projects and the implementation of the recently approved EU Alpine Space project "AlpsLife - Protect Alpine Life by monitoring and managing Alpine biodiversity for the future. "Observing globally, acting locally"!", which foresee an exchange of best practices on biodiversity monitoring among mountain regions

### Cooperation with the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) Priority Area 06 "Biodiversity & Landscape"

Mandate: COP7 Decision: COP7/3 para 6

Decision: COP7/3 para 6: Welcomes the continuing cooperation with EU Macro-Regional Strategies, especially the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) based on the Memoranda of Cooperation with respecting EUSDR Priority Areas [...] EUSDR PA 06 "Biodiversity & Landscape"), welcomes the Policy report Biodiversity cross-cutting issues through Priority Areas of the European Strategy for the Danube Region and requests the Secretariat to further facilitate this cooperation and contribute to the implementation of the revised EUSDR Action Plan.

- Provide regular updates on the ongoing activities
- Identify areas of common interest and develop joint or mutually supportive activities

#### 4) Improving landscape protection and spatial planning

##### Developing relevant activities

Mandate: COP7 Decision COP7/9

Decision COP7/9: Encourages the Parties, the WG Biodiversity and relevant stakeholders to propose and develop activities and projects on landscape protection and spatial planning, which in line with the Carpathian Convention provisions, will support sustainable land management and landscape planning that optimize human activities with biodiversity protection and enhancement of measures.

#### Envisaged activities

- Consider development and implementation of a project or any other initiatives addressing the topics of landscape protection and spatial planning
- Organize and participate in workshops, webinar and seminar on this topic