

Support for the Implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians



Brief Project Description

Title of the Project: Support for the Implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Carpathians (ImplementCarpSusTourStrat)

Region: Carpathians (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, the Slovak Republic and the Ukraine)

Target group: The Governments of the seven Member States to the Carpathian Convention

Duration: August 2015 – December 2017

Project partners:



CEEweb for Biodiversity (CEEweb), Budapest



Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (UNEP-SCC), Vienna

Funding institution: Federal Environment Agency on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety with funds from the Advisory Assistance Programme for environmental protection in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and other countries neighboring the European Union (AAP).

Impl. organization: Ökologischer Tourismus in Europa (Ö.T.E.) e.V.
(Ecological Tourism in Europe, ETE)

Contact person: Michael Meyer, Member of the Board

Postal address: Koblenzer Str. 65, 53173 Bonn, Germany

Telephone - Fax: +49-228-359008, Fax: +49-228-18470820

E-Mail - Internet: m.meyer@oete.de, www.oete.de

1. Background of the project

Guided by the example of the Alpine Convention, the countries in the Carpathian Mountains established in May 2003 a "Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians". The seven Member States of this convention are the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, the Slovak Republic and the Ukraine. The Secretariat of the Convention (UNEP-SCC) is managed by the United Nations Environment Programme in Vienna.

Article 9 of the Convention refers to policies on sustainable tourism in the Carpathians, which were decisions of the following Conferences of the Parties (COP): The first COP (December 2006) decided to establish a tourism working group to develop a Tourism Protocol and a Tourism Strategy. The second COP (June 2008) decided to continue the work on the Protocol on Tourism and the Tourism Strategy.

The association of Ökologischer Tourismus in Europa (Ö.T.E.) e.V. (Ecological Tourism in Europe, ETE) has partnered with the NGO network CEEweb for Biodiversity (Budapest, Hungary) and its Sustainable Tourism Working Group (STWG) since the establishment of the Carpathian Convention; and supported consistently the development of the Tourism Protocol and the preparations for the Tourism Strategy.



*Danube breakthrough, Djerdap National Park
Western Carpathians, Serbia © Ö.T.E. e.V.*

The Tourism Protocol was adopted on the 3rd COP (May 2011). However, due to a lack of capacity at the involved institutions, the Tourism Strategy has not been developed further.

Therefore ETE (as leading partner) and CEEweb, had started a project for the development of the "Strategy for Sustainable Tourism development in the Carpathians" in March 2013, together with UNEP-SCC and the WWF-Danube-Carpathian Programme Office (WWF-DCPO). This project was supported by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety with means of the Advisory Assistance Programme for Environmental Protection in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Finally at the 4th COP in September 2014 in Mikulov (Czech Republic) the Parties adopted the tourism strategy and appreciated the coordination and advisory support provided to the development of the Strategy. This model of cooperation has brought considerable results in the implementation of the Carpathian Convention and its Protocol on Sustainable Tourism. Without this support this important milestone leading to a common approach in sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians would have taken considerably longer to be reached.

In order to continue with the development of sustainable tourism in this mountain region and not to lose the dynamic momentum, it is of great importance to monitor the implementation process and to strengthen and support ongoing consultations in each of the Carpathian

countries. It is necessary to tackle the Strategy with concrete steps and actions and lead the Carpathians to the sustainable tourism development through stable and irreversible process.

In this multilateral context, a project based funding facilitating the coordination of the Parties' efforts. And the support through external expertise will certainly strengthen their efforts and contribute to concrete results on the ground. For that reason ETE applied – finally with success - for a new project supported by the Advisory Assistance Programme. UNEP-SCC and CEEweb are again partner organizations.

High priority is given first to strengthen structural capacities and to further develop the conceptual framework set by the Strategy to secure the further process of sustainable tourism development in the Carpathian countries. Based on the Rules of Procedures of the Carpathian Convention with the Conference of the Parties (COP) being held every three years it is crucial to finish all necessary tasks in this project before end of 2017, when the next COP is foreseen in Hungary.

2. Goals of the Project

Strengthening structures and coordinating processes for the successful implementation of the Strategy in the seven Carpathian countries through regional cooperation and a participatory process by involving the stakeholders from natural and environmental protection, as well as from tourism sector.

3. Expected Results

- The country specific and the common action plan towards the implementation of the Strategy are further detailed, including the identification of measuring methods (indicators). The implementation of key common activities is initiated. In total, 51 measures forming both action plans are detailed through a consultation process and the implementation is ongoing,
- A Carpathian Coordination Platform is established. Terms of Reference for this discussed on the 6th CC-WGST are finalized.
- Common Carpathian online platform on sustainable tourism is designed and functional,
- Processes for better communication and information sharing on sustainable tourism in the Carpathians are developed,
- Selected results of the project (further detailed action plans and the Terms of Reference of the Carpathian Coordination Platform) are presented for approval at the 5th Conference of the Parties in mid-2017 in Budapest, Hungary.

4. Measures to achieve the project's objectives and expected results

- Further detailing and proposing concrete tasks for the implementation of the country specific and the common action plan Identification of measures (Indicators) for monitoring of the strategy's implementation,
- Assisting the actors involved in setting up a Carpathian Coordination Platform for the implementation of the Strategy, including development of its job description and

Terms of Reference. The first work of the Carpathian Coordination Platform will be carried out by the end of the project in 2017,

- Creation of a database on completed and ongoing projects on sustainable tourism in the Carpathians in order to share best practices. The first database should be completed by end of 2016. Further consolidation of data will be done to the end of the project and made available on the common Carpathian online platform,
- Creation of a database of existing finance instruments available for the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians. This database will be kept up to date throughout the project duration and presented on Carpathian online platform,
- Analysis of manuals and guidelines for the components of sustainable tourism applicable in the Carpathians. For this purpose, relevant and up-to-date manuals will be reviewed throughout the project duration.

4. Brief description of the work plan

Work Package I: Action plans and establishment of Carpathian Coordination Center

1. Elaboration of a draft for a nationwide action plan (August 2015 - May 2016),
 - 1a. Consultations nationwide action plan (June 2016 - September 2017),
2. Draft of common and nationwide action plan (August 2015 – May 2016),
 - 2a. Consultations nationwide action plan (June 2016 – September 2017),
3. Elaboration of a coordination platform for the implementation of the sustainable tourism strategy,
 - 3a) Development of work and terms of reference for the platform (August - November 2015),
 - 3b) Consultations about the establishment (December 2015 – April 2016),
- 4) Facility of the platform and ongoing support of the work (May 2016 – November 2017),

Work Package II: Development of indicators

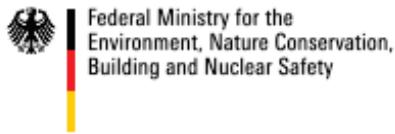
- a) Compilation of suitable measuring instruments (indicators) (November 2015 – March 2016),
- b) Consultations and agreement with delegates of the contracting states, tourism industry, nature and environment protection organizations (April – July 2016),
- c) Revision and completion of the template (August 2016 – February 2017),

Work Package III: Elaboration of databases and planning basics for financial instruments, actual tourism projects, handbooks and manuals

1. Creation of the database of financial instruments (August 2015 – March 2016),
 - 1a. Presentation of database (March 2016),
 - 1b. Continuous update (April 2016 – November 2017),
2. Creation of the data base of tourism projects (August 2015 – February 2017),
 - 2a. Presentation of data base (March 2017),
 - 2b. Continuous update (April – November 2017),
3. Analysis and provision of suitable handbooks and manuals (August 2015 – November 2017).

The prepared drafts of the elaborated documents will be presented and discussed with country experts and NGO delegates and then finally discussed and adopted during meetings of official bodies of the Carpathian Convention.

Ö.T.E., Bonn – Germany
September 2015



This project is supported by the Federal Environment Agency on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety with funds from the Advisory Assistance Programme for environmental protection in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and other countries neighbouring the European Union (AAP). It is supervised by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN).