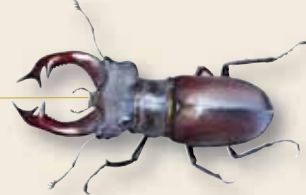




# Carpathian Network of Protected Areas

A contribution to the international cooperation strategy





# Introduction

Since 2001, ALPARC has accompanied the parks of the Carpathians in the project aiming in establishing a network of the protected areas. This support resulted in creating the CNPA (Carpathian Network of Protected Areas) in 2006, and in the first CNPA Conference being held in 2008. After long years of discussions and political negotiations, the Alpine-Carpathian cooperation of protected areas now takes a new turn and becomes more practical, focusing on defined themes of cooperation.

## 2001 - Work Forum in Gran Paradiso National Park

Some directors of Carpathian protected areas invited. The idea of a network of Carpathian protected areas was first raised at this meeting and the process to establish the CNPA (Carpathian Network of Protected Areas) was begun.



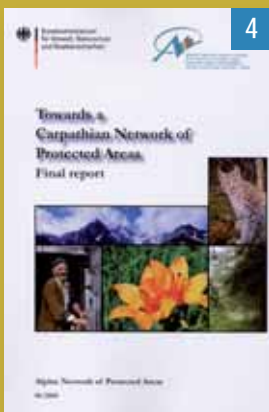
## 2002 - International Year of Mountains

Major conference in Chambéry, France – attended by representatives from 19 countries, including six Carpathian countries. Adoption of the “Declaration on protected areas in European mountain regions”.



## 2003/2004 - Steering Committee of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas Partnership created

In conjunction with ALPARC and UNEP, the Steering Committee set out the Carpathian protected areas and legal framework for nature conservation in the Carpathians. A questionnaire was sent out to all the Carpathian protected area managers to define the priorities for cooperation. Work also began to define the structure of the CNPA: the functions, goals, missions and future structure of the CNPA and of the Steering Committee were set out and the findings of the questionnaire were developed in the final report "Towards a Carpathian Network of Protected Areas". An exhibition presenting the protected areas in the Alps and the Carpathians was created.





## 2004 - Conference on NATURA 2000 and Emerald: Implementation in the Alps and the Carpathians

The conference was held in Neukirchen (Austria) with the help of the Austrian Ministry of the Environment and with the participation of the European Commission. Numerous parks from both massifs attended the meeting. A map and list of all Carpathian protected areas were produced and presented during the conference, as a practical result of the joint activities. All the presentations were published in the proceedings.



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## 2005/2006 - Workshops on Integrated management of protected areas and on Management of tourism and sustainable development in protected areas

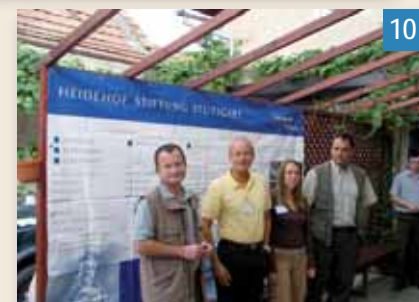
Prior to the workshops, a brochure setting out the priorities for cooperation between the Alpine and Carpathian protected areas was published. The workshop proceedings summarise all the ideas raised during the meeting and also contain the Mala Fatra declaration, which stresses the importance of creating a coordination unit for the CNPA.



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## 2007 - Development of communication tools

Improving communication between the Carpathian protected areas and with the partner institutions, organisations, ministries and the general public was defined as a priority. As a result, a website ([www.carpathianparks.org](http://www.carpathianparks.org)), an information brochure (in English and all 7 Carpathian languages) and a press release (in the Carpathian languages) have been produced. During the Steering Committee meetings, discussions focused on the possibility of creating a permanent coordination unit and on the preparations for the 1st CNPA general assembly (known as the CNPA Conference).



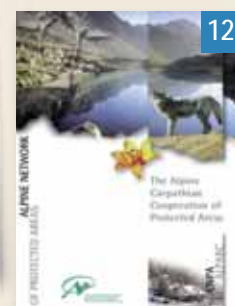
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## 2008 - Preparation of strategic documents for the CNPA and the first CNPA Conference

In their discussions, participants at the conference focused on the priorities for cooperation, CNPA strategies and the work programmes for the coming years. The draft strategic documents were discussed and are being amended in the light of those discussions. Four documents will be published: Medium-term strategy, Work plan 2009, Work programme 2010-2015 and the Alpine-Carpathian cooperation plan. The official CNPA logo was discussed and adopted in the Steering Committee meetings and first drafts of the internal rules of the Steering Committee, CNPA Conference and the CNPA Unit have been produced.



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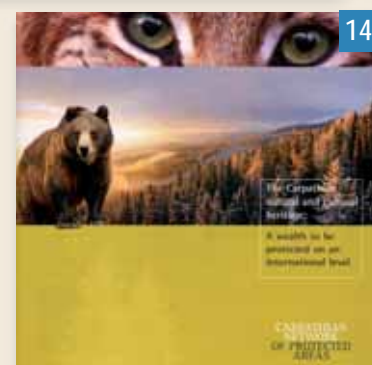
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## Background

As one of the largest European mountain ranges, the Carpathians contain an extremely rich natural and cultural heritage and also have the potential to be an ecological bridge between Eastern and Western Europe. As this richness is particularly fragile, the natural resources are protected by different instruments in different countries. Consequently there is a growing need for international cooperation between the protected areas in all seven countries in order to coordinate the nature conservation activities at international level and to contribute to the work of the Carpathian Convention.

On 22 May 2003 in Kiev, Ukraine, the environment ministers of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine signed the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians. The Carpathian Convention provides a framework for cooperation and multi-sectoral policy coordination, a platform for joint strategies for sustainable development, and a forum for dialogue between all stakeholders.

**The Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA)** was officially established by the First Conference of the Parties (COP1) to the Carpathian Convention in December 2006 in Kiev, Ukraine. The preparatory work towards the establishment of the CNPA was supported at the outset by certain Alpine countries, in particular Germany, France, Principality of Monaco and the Free State of Bavaria but also by Norway. A number of private sponsors also contributed to the activities in recent years (Danone-Evian Group, France; Foundation Heidehof, Germany). The whole process and associated activities were coordinated by the following organisations: ALPARC (Alpine Network of Protected Areas), WWF (Worldwide Fund for Nature) and CERI (Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative). The United Nations Environment programme (UNEP) provided intergovernmental support.

The CNPA constitutes a regional thematic network of cooperation for mountain protected areas in the Carpathian region. The CNPA contributes for implementing the Carpathian Convention within the protected areas in close cooperation with the other Convention bodies (Working Group on conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity, Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee). Moreover, the Network encourages cooperation in the management of protected areas within and between the Carpathian countries and other mountainous regions.

The CNPA's objective is to contribute to conservation and sustainable development in the Carpathians – in particular accomplishing the goals set out in Article 4 of the Carpathian Convention – and to support the activities of the Working Group on the conservation of biological and landscape diversity.

The principal aim of the CNPA is to make an active contribution to coordinating nature protection and conservation of the Carpathians, to support joint initiatives undertaken by the protected areas and to create a joint communication strategy for all the protected areas. Members of the CNPA Steering Committee represent the Carpathian protected areas in all internal and external forums.

21 : M. Filipek  
Ligularia virgaurea  
Biele Karpaty

22 : M. Verghelet  
Dianthus callizonus  
Piatra Craiului

23 : Vanatori Neamt  
Panoramic view of the park  
Vanatori Neamt



# Objectives of the CNPA

The CNPA is designed to guarantee the conservation and sustainable use of the Carpathians' natural and cultural resources and to promote sustainable sources of income. These objectives are accomplished primarily through joint activities undertaken by the protected areas with a view **to conserving biodiversity, enhancing the cultural heritage** of the Carpathians and **increasing sustainable development**. The implementation methods can be grouped into four types of activities:

**I. Institutional networking:** ensuring recognition for the CNPA within the Carpathians (by the protected areas, national and international institutions, stakeholders and other conservation organisations);

**II. Thematic networking:** promoting exchanges of know-how, experiences and staff between the protected areas and other CNPA partners; also the creation of international cooperation tools and preparing and executing international projects. This is the main area in which the CNPA is active;

**III. Ecological networking:** providing more dynamic nature protection and conservation in the Carpathians by creating a spatial network of protected areas and other natural habitats with the aim of facilitating genetic exchanges and species migrations;

**IV. Communication networking:** this works at three levels: **internal communication facilitating communication** between the protected areas, **external communication** targeting the general public in order to raise awareness about the work of protected areas and their cooperation and environmental issues and **involving the general public, local stakeholders and other interested parties** in the decision-making process.

## I. Institutional networking

The CNPA is designed to facilitate and support conservation and sustainable development in the Carpathian region and to ensure sustainable human, social, cultural and economic development. It promotes cooperation between the protected areas in order to: ensure the successful implementation of the Carpathian Convention; achieve sustainable development in the region by building on its rich natural, environmental, cultural and human resources; and preserve that natural and cultural heritage for future generations. The CNPA's role as an international organisation needs to be further developed in order to coordinate this cooperation.

### Principal activities

- Strengthening the role and policy of protected areas vis-à-vis all the stakeholders, in particular the local residents,
- Establishing close cooperation with governmental and non-governmental environmental organisations and with other Carpathian Convention bodies,
- Enhancing the role of protected areas as the point of contact regarding ecology and communication through joint cross-regional projects and more knowledge and know-how transfers,
- Extending the competences of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas in the areas of nature conservation and protected area management through cooperation with all stakeholders,
- Developing the CNPA's role in representing the Carpathian protected areas to national and international authorities and organisations,
- Ensuring that all Carpathian Network projects also contribute to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention.

## II. Thematic networking

One of the CNPA's most important tasks is to establish a thematic network in order to promote exchanges between the protected areas within the Carpathians and with other mountain ranges. International events, study travel and staff exchanges are organised with a view to developing these thematic network exchanges. Other aspects of thematic networking including creating and developing tools for the international cooperation, preparing and heading up international projects, the publication of handbooks, guidelines, thematic reports and newsletters and developing online tools such as the website and an information database platform.

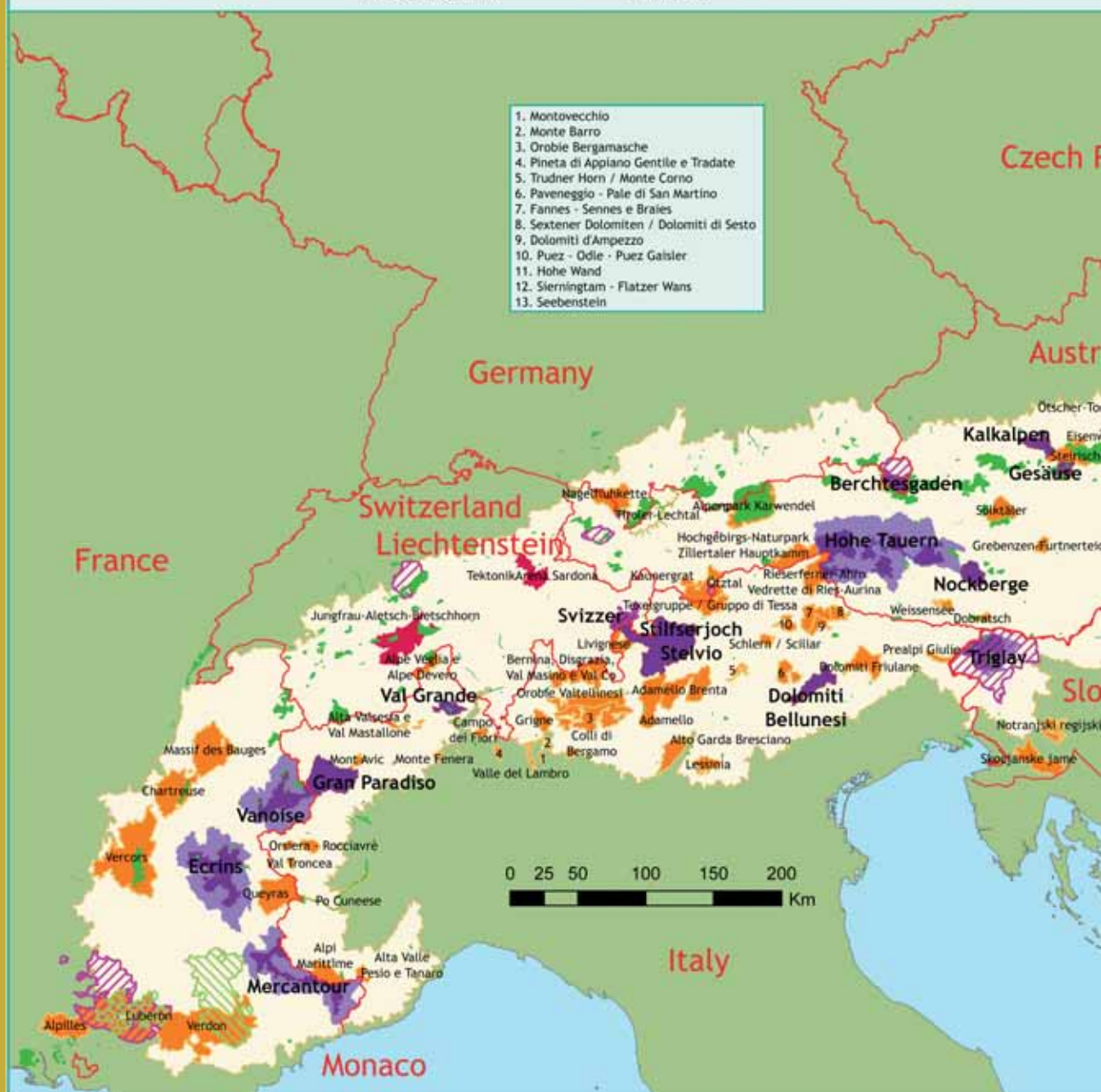






## Grands espaces protégés des Alpes et Großflächige Schutzgebiete der Alpen und der Karpa Large Alpine and

Parc national Parco Nazionale Nationalpark Narodni park National park	Zone périphérique Zona periferica Außenzone Robno območje Buffer zone	Patrimoine mondial naturel de l'UNESCO UNESCO Patrimonio naturale mondiale UNESCO Weltnaturerbe UNESCO svetovna naravna dediščina UNESCO World heritage site	Réserve naturelle géologique Riserva naturale geologica Geologisches Naturdenkmal Geološki naravni rezervat Geological reserve
Parc naturel régional Parco Regionale o Naturale Regionaler Naturpark Regijski park Regional nature park	Paysage protégé Paesaggio protetto Landschaftsschutzgebiete Zavarovana krajina Protected landscape area	Réserve naturelle Riserva naturale Naturschutzgebiet Naravni rezervat Natural reserve	Réserve de biosphère Riserva della Biosfera Biosphärenreservat Biosferni rezervat Biosphere reserve



des Carpates - Grandi aree protette delle Alpi e dei Carpazi  
 ten - Zavarovana območja z veliko površino v Alpah in Karpatih  
 Carpathian protected areas



- biologique  
 ologica  
 schutzgebiet  
 ervat
- Protection particulière  
 Protezione particolare  
 Sonderschutzform  
 Posebna zaštita  
 Particular protection
- Limite d'Etat  
 Confine di Stato  
 Staatsgrenze  
 Državna meja  
 State boundary
- Zone d'application de la Convention alpine  
 Limite di applicazione della  
 Convenzione delle Alpi  
 Anwendungsgebiet der Alpenkonvention  
 Območje izvajanja konvencije  
 Alpine Convention application limits
- Limites du KEO (Carpathian Environment Outlook)  
 Perimetro del KEO (Carpathian Environment Outlook)  
 Grenzen des KEO (Carpathian Environment Outlook)  
 Meje KEO (Carpathian Environment Outlook)  
 KEO limits (Carpathian Environment Outlook)

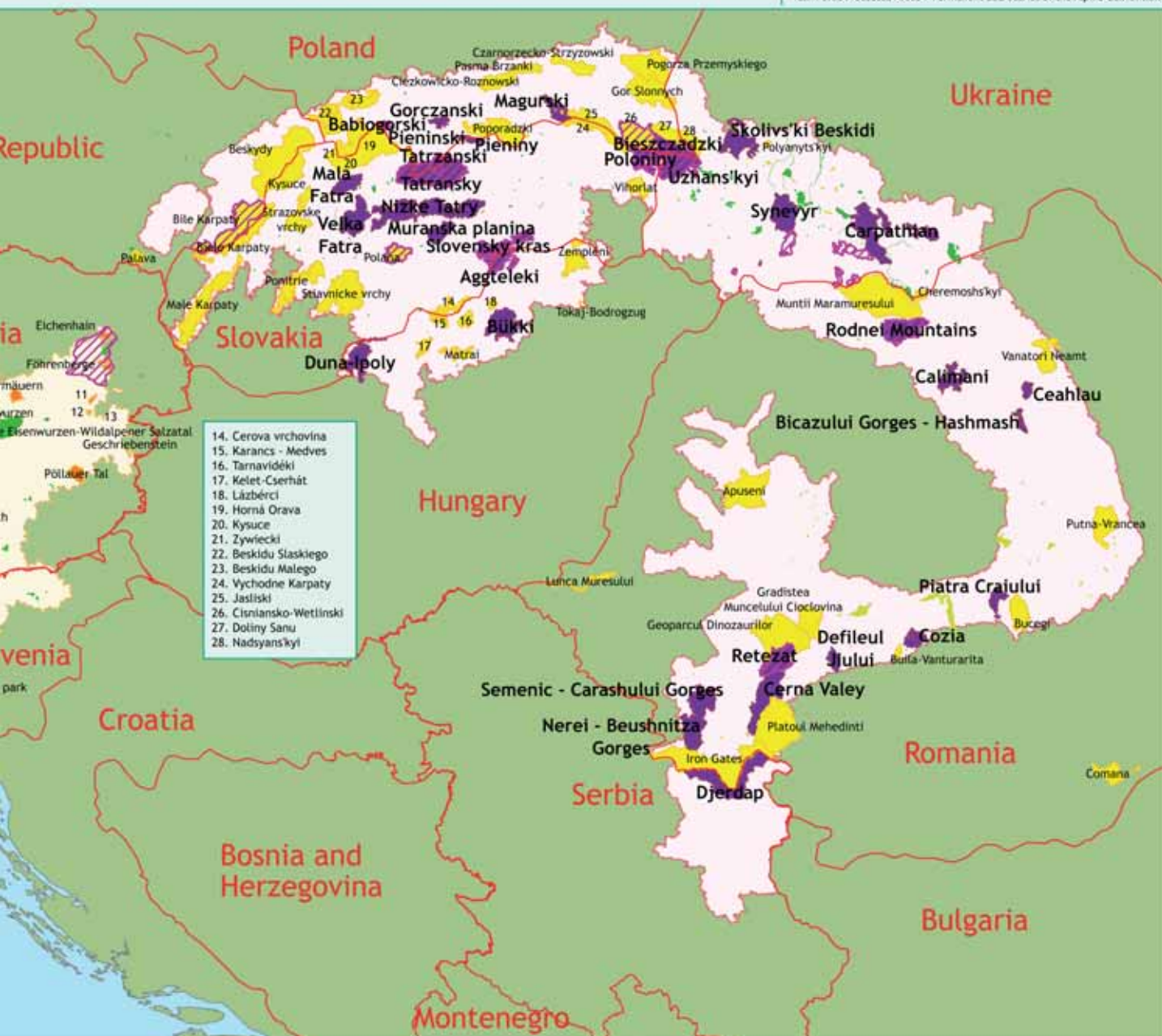


This map is not exhaustive.  
 Contact: info@alparc.org  
<http://www.alparc.org>  
<http://www.carpathianparks.org>

This map is compiled from different official sources.  
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 02 / 2009



Task Force Protected Areas / Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention





### Principal activities

- Harmonising management methods within the Carpathian protected areas,
- Developing an integrated approach to the protected area management and promoting the creation of an integrated management plan for the protected areas,
- Developing cooperation in the following areas:
  - Protected area management – project management, fundraising, GIS use, human resources management,
  - Fauna, flora, forest, water and habitat: conservation, protection, management methods, Natura 2000,
  - Tourism and sustainable development: impact of tourism on natural habitats, range of products and services on offer for tourists within the parks, potential for sustainable regional development,
  - Economy of mountain and protected areas: use and protection of the natural and cultural landscape by guaranteeing environmentally-friendly agriculture and forestry practices,
  - Monitoring climate change, measures and changes within the protected areas,
  - Raising public awareness and environmental education activities.

## III. Ecological networking

The planned spatial network will be formed by an ecological network that extends beyond the borders of the protected areas and their biotope connections. The CNPA will work with the leading bodies of existing projects in order to include the protected areas in their project plans. The protected areas are key territories for biological diversity. In addition to the ecological continuum within the Carpathian range, a connection between the Alps and the Carpathians is needed to allow natural migration between the two mountain ranges. By facilitating the migration of species to other bioclimatic zones or altitudes, the ecological continuum will help to limit the impact of global climate change. This is considered an adaptation strategy.

### Principal activities

- Establishing a methodology for the creation of an ecological network including the Natura 2000 sites,
- Creating a catalogue of measures including all existing measures in national and regional legislations. The catalogue should also take into account the results and experiences of existing projects,
- Defining pilot areas, where defined measures will be applied, tested then subsequently adapted,
- Defining measures for establishing ecological connections between the Alps and the Carpathians.

## IV. Communication networking

The CNPA activities are also relate to the field of communication; communication tools will be developed at three levels: **Internal communication:** facilitating exchanges of data, know-how and staff between the Carpathian protected areas and providing the CNPA members with tools for efficient communication and discussion,

**External communication and awareness-raising activities:** raising environmental awareness, making the public aware of nature conservation activities and improving public access to information about conservation and sustainable development in the Carpathians. The main purpose of these activities is to highlight Carpathian natural and cultural heritage through publications, exhibitions, films, public events, the Internet and other media. **Involving public authorities, local and other stakeholders** in the decision-making process in relation to conservation and sustainable development in the Carpathians (governance).

The common identity of the Carpathian region will be promoted by highlighting the values shared by the protected areas. The CNPA will use a range of tools to raise awareness of the Carpathian Convention among residents and visitors to those areas.

### Financing the CNPA:

The basic funding for the CNPA should come from contributions from the Parties to the Carpathian Convention, more precisely from the relevant ministries and nature conservation agencies. The CNPA's activities and projects are all designed to work towards its long-term goal of implementing the Carpathian Convention. External financial resources for the activities of the CNPA will also be required, which will be raised through joint fundraising applications to European funds and/or other funding mechanisms and programmes.

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24 : Luba, Wolf

25 : Luba, Aegolius funereus

26 : G. Plassmann  
Ursus arctos  
Bayerisches Wald27 : M. Pavlik,  
Tourism in Piatra Craiului 2006



# Relationship with other bodies and mountain areas

The Carpathian Network of Protected Areas should also benefit from the strong network of institutions created under the Carpathian Convention, which brings together national authorities, international organisations and conventions, non-governmental organisations and other observers. Additional links are planned in the framework of European initiatives such as NATURA 2000, the Emerald Network/and the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS), which the Carpathian protected areas are also involved in.

The collaboration with international and Carpathian NGOs (such as the WWF, IUCN, CERI) and with other international organisations and institutions (for example UNEP office, RAMSAR Convention, Biodiversity Convention) is crucial in order for the CNPA to function effectively.

One particular field of activity is external cooperation with neighbouring mountain regions, especially with the Alps. External cooperation is one of the strategic activities of ALPARC (Alpine Network of Protected Areas). This cooperation was reinforced by the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation between the Alpine and Carpathian Convention in 2006, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Alpine, Carpathian and Biodiversity Convention in 2008. This external cooperation will be developed further through the planned creation of a CNPA Unit in the near future. To this end, the priorities for cooperation between the two mountain ranges and their protected areas will be formally agreed. Some of these priorities have been defined since 2003 following a questionnaire sent to the Carpathian protected area managers to survey expectations regarding the future CNPA. Those topics or priorities have been developed during the last few years in several projects.



## *Proposed priorities for Alpine-Carpathian cooperation*

The proposed cooperation themes are focused on the principal aims of and challenges facing the protected areas in the Alps and in the Carpathians. Different backgrounds and historical developments have led to a variety of approaches to protected area management and one way to ensure effective nature protection is to compare several of these approaches then adapt them to the local conditions. This will be facilitated by an in-depth discussion between the protected areas in each massif of different topics. The main fields of cooperation are:

### 1. Integrated management, management plans, management indicators

Each park has its own specific management approach and these visions vary from one country to another. For this reason, it is vital that we facilitate exchanges of skills and experiences in order to harmonise the measures and policies designed to promote nature conservation and sustainable development as far as possible.

### 2. Wildlife management, large carnivores' management

There is a great diversity in wildlife management strategies in the two mountain ranges. Of particular significance is the difference in approaches to managing large carnivores. The survival of bears, wolves and lynx in the Alps is currently under threat. Support from the Carpathians and learning from their experience will allow these populations to be maintained and developed. International multidisciplinary cooperation is essential for the conservation of populations of large carnivores, especially in the context of large-scale migrations between the Alps and the Carpathians.



### 3. Forest management

The Carpathians are one of Europe's biggest natural forested regions. Historical and political developments, especially in the 20th century, have influenced today's forest management. Grazing, mountain agriculture, forest exploitation, but also tourism have long shaped the mountain forests and their impact varies from one mountain range to the next. Different cultures and farming techniques in different countries in both ranges can be shared in order to maintain natural forest habitats and threats can be countered by pooling information about conservation measures and sustainable use of resources.

### 4. Tourism management

Each national government determines conservation policy, but also defines the tourism priorities. These strategies can sometimes be contradictory and the challenge is to find a viable compromise, as tourist activities play an important role in mountain economies. Conservation policies have to be taken into account when drawing up tourism management plans. Pooling information about management methods and sharing know-how will help us to find a balance between nature conservation and tourist activities.



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## 5. Local communities, mountain population and economy - agriculture and grazing activities

The mountain economy is closely linked to tourism, but also with more traditional activities such as agriculture and grazing. The latter are of growing interest for protected area managers. The challenge is to ensure effective conservation by maintaining the local communities, mountain populations and their traditional activities. By developing common strategies for the conservation and promotion of these communities and activities, the protected areas will contribute to limiting the decline of mountain populations and their income. The fundamental issues are the same in both mountain ranges, although the social and economic situation is very different.

## 6. Water management

Water is one of our most important natural resources. Shared by everybody, water does not recognise national borders. The mountain regions represent the biggest water reservoir and there is a whole raft of approaches to conserving this valuable resource. The preservation of natural resources should be guaranteed within the protected areas in both mountain ranges. A joint strategy could be developed as a European approach (European water directive) so as to move beyond overly sectoral and regional policies.

## 7. Public awareness, education and communication

One very forward-looking element in nature conservation is environmental education. The protected areas have a range of excellent educational tools and they are well-positioned to engage in public awareness activities. All sorts of activities have been developed and a good selection of best practices can be found in protected areas in both mountain ranges. Exchanges between the two massifs in this field should be particularly fruitful.

## 8. NATURA 2000 areas

Most of the Carpathian and Alpine countries are members of European Union and are therefore subject to European directives. The key nature conservation directive establishes the network of NATURA 2000 sites. Different approaches exist as regards the implementation of this directive and the protected areas have a crucial role to play in this process. Comparing experiences in this field is particularly valuable, especially in terms of creating a real spatial network of NATURA 2000 sites linking the member states.

## 9. Establishing an ecological continuum between the Alps and Carpathians

This ecological network, linking mainly protected areas as biodiversity hotspots, will allow the introduction of a more dynamic nature protection model, which will facilitate migration movements for numerous species and allow for more effective conservation of biodiversity. It is essential to connect the two mountain ranges at several places in order to maintain biological diversity on European level. The continuum will provide a logical framework that reflects the spatial link between the two massifs.

## 10. Monitoring global climate change and special measures promoted by protected areas

The protected areas have a number of tasks relating to this important issue and these will vary as the impact of global warming is different from one region to the next. The protected areas have the capacity, specialized staff and extensive data sets to observe the consequences of climate change. The exchange of information, pooling monitoring methodologies, sharing results and comparisons are essential in order to address this major threat. A whole range of measures for limiting the impact of climate change exist and by sharing results, the parks will be able to increase their effectiveness and thereby reduce damage to ecosystems. One very big challenge is to create the ecological continuum mentioned above – this is one of the major adaptation strategies for mountain regions. A common approach and cooperation on reducing the impact of climate change seems logical given that this is a global phenomenon.

As the issues addressed by the parks and described above are common to both mountain ranges, the benefits of creating in-depth cooperation on these topics are obvious. By collaborating on different issues, common measures and tools are created, saving time and money and making nature conservation more effective. Moreover, harmonising methods means that data and results can be shared and compared in order to identify the most effective policies.

28 : M. Verghelet  
Sheep  
Piatra Craiului

29 : M. Verghelet  
Lolaia waterfall  
Retezat

30 : M. Chrien  
Dumbier  
Nizke Tatry

31 : M. Pavlik  
Shepherd's cottage  
Piatra Craiului

32 : SNC SR  
Strazovske vrchy

33 : Bukki Nemzeti  
Beech forest  
Bukki Nemzeti



# Conclusion

The CNPA contributes to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention, including its first Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity, and operates under other bodies of the Carpathian Convention (i.e. Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee - CCIC, the thematic sub-working groups and the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention).

The principal aim of the CNPA is to establish an international approach to nature protection and sustainable development between the protected areas and their managers. By combining traditional conservation approaches with sustainable development models, spatial networking and thematic networking in the Carpathians, we shall create a dynamic and more integrated approach to environmental policies for protected areas and make them more effective.

Although this is a very important phase in the development of the CNPA, a key body is still noticeable by its absence. The need to establish a CNPA Unit was identified several years ago, but its creation has not yet been approved. This should be the priority for the Steering Committee and the protected areas in next few years.

According to the classification of European Union, the Carpathians are part of the same biogeographical region as the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Dinaric Alps and the Balkans. These mountain ranges have several similar ecosystems and face similar problems and threats to nature conservation. The protected areas in these mountains should be examples of well-managed regions, where human activities work in harmony with nature protection and conservation. Cooperation is an effective means of achieving this balance, and should be developed at an international level in accordance with international conventions like those of the Carpathians, the Alps and the Convention of Biodiversity.



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