

Carpathian Wetland Initiative

Progress report, work plan of CWI, activities and budget proposal for 2008

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Introduction and background

The Carpathian Wetland Initiative was initiated by Slovakia as a signatory of the Carpathian Convention and Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention on occasion of the World Wetlands Day in February 2004 by the letter of the Slovak minister of Environment L. Miklos to his partners in other Carpathian countries and other potential partners, including non-governmental organisations. In the first stage this was supported by the Slovak-Norwegian project on a “Network of Carpathian protected areas and Ramsar sites” (2004-2005). In the initial workshop in Brezovica (Slovakia, 28-30 April 2004) and the 6th Evian Encounter (Evian, France, 15-17 November 2006) were set the key points for action (see more at http://www.ramsar.org/mtg/mtg_evian_carpathian.htm). The Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI) aims to operate as a Regional Initiative within the framework of the Ramsar Convention, as stated in Annex I of Resolution IX.7 (adopted in 2005) and in the same time as a part of the work of the Carpathian Convention.

The framework for cooperation between the Secretariats of the Carpathian and Ramsar Convention provides the Memorandum of Cooperation signed on 13 December 2006 during Carpathian Convention COP1 in Kiyv, Ukraine by Peter Bridgewater, Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention and Frits Schlingemann, Director, UNEP Regional Office for Europe on behalf of the UNEP Vienna ISCC (see also http://www.ramsar.org/moc/key_carpathian_moc_2006.htm).

The Carpathian Wetland Initiative was included in the Carpathian Convention Programme of work and to the activities of the Working Group on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity (Biodiversity Working Group) under the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (Decisions COP1/4 on conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity, and COP1/5 on sustainable and integrated water/river basin management).

The mission, objectives, partners, implementing bodies of CWI and its guiding principles are agreed in the Terms of Reference for the CWI, which was consulted with Carpathian countries and partners, discussed at the Working Group on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (March 2007) and subsequently adopted by the Extended Bureau of the Carpathian Convention in October 2007.

The background and tool for implementation of the mission and goals of CWI through the Carpathian Convention is also the (draft) Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Biodiversity Protocol), distributed recently for governmental approval procedure before Carpathian Convention COP2.

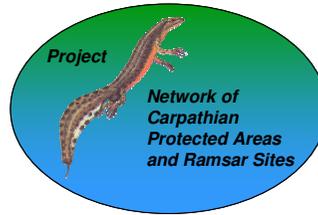
The short report on progress in the initiative was distributed to the Secretariats of the Ramsar and Carpathian Convention, to national Focal Points and partners on 14 February 2007 using as a background the “Action points and responsibilities” agreed during the Evian Encounter in November 2006. This is the second yearly report for consideration of the CCIC using the similar structure.

Progress report on results and achievements 2007-2008:

1. All Carpathian countries (relevant Ministries or agencies) designated by 31 January 2007 their National Focal Points (NFPs) for the Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI) and their names and contact details are in *Annex 1*.
2. In February 2007 all NFPs were invited to participate or distribute information on the International Course on Ecohydrological Approaches to Wise Use, Restoration, Management and Conservation of Wetlands, organized by the Czech National Committee for UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme in cooperation with other organisations and Czech Ministry of Environment in Trebon, Czech Republic in June 2007 and participants from 6 Carpathian countries attended (please read more at http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.czech_ecohydrological2007.htm).
3. Wetlands International and its Black Sea Regional Office in Kiyv were consulted by Tobias Salathé (Ramsar Secretariat) and Jan Kadlecik (CWI) and it was agreed that Wetlands International should expand its Black Sea Programme to the Carpathian region and Vasiliy Kostyushin of the Regional Office confirmed in February 2007 his participation in the CWI. Cooperation of Wetlands International was further discussed and reinforced during the 6th Meeting of Association of Members of Wetlands International in November 2007 in Shaoxing, China and it was included in a work plan at the European meeting of members.
4. The CWI has been coordinated by Jan Kadlecik of the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic, where the activities for establishment of the regional Wetland Centre as coordination unit in consultations with the SNC Headquarters and the Slovak Ministry of Environment have been done and some preconditions for further development of the CWI were made during re-structuring of the SNC in the beginning of 2008 when a new position within the Headquarters of the SNC was established. The contact details of the National Focal Points and partners were distributed to the Secretariats of the Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions and relevant ministries of the Carpathian countries.
5. The operational link with the WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme activities was established through the coordinator of CWI and some CWI Board members who are designated representatives of their countries in the Steering Group of the MAVA project “Protected Areas for a Living Planet” (PA4LP) for implementation of the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas in the Carpathian Ecoregion. They participated in two meetings of the Steering Group in 2007 (January and November 2007) and the CWI coordinator had presentations about the CWI. He was invited by WWF International as a representative of a protected area of the Carpathian Ecoregion also to the Workshop on implementation of the MAVA Protected Areas for a Living Planet project in Rome, Italy (February 2008). The CWI and its necessary funding was reminded and important events of the Ramsar Convention (European Regional Meeting, COP10) were included in the “road map” of the MAVA project for 2008. The coordinator and other CWI contact persons of four eligible Carpathian countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia) were also invited by WWF-DCP and CCIS to the meeting (18 February 2008, VIC Vienna) to identify common objectives and common coordinated activities for projects for the Swiss Cohesion Fund and the CWI was also included in the programme. The Steering Group of the PA4LP project works jointly with the Steering Committee of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) with almost the same composition of national representatives.
6. As a representative of the Slovak CNPA members and member of the Slovak delegations to the meetings of the Biodiversity Working Group of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee the coordinator compiled, submitted, introduced and justified the CWI Terms of Reference and supported its adoption by the Biodiversity Working Group and the Extended Bureau of the Carpathian Convention (March, October 2007), which is now available at <https://www.carpathianconvention.org/framework/02.04.2008.htm> for the meeting of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (2 – 4 April 2008). The

coordinator was also involved in preparation of the draft Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity to the Carpathian Framework Convention.

7. National Focal Points of the CWI were invited by the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) to participate and provide input to the final workshop on wetlands of the UNDP/GEF Danube Regional Project held in April 2007 in Tulcea, Romania and representatives of most Carpathian countries participated. A presentation on CWI was included in the programme as well. One of the results of the workshop was the declaration – Appeal for the Development of the Danube River Network of Protected Areas. The short report can be seen at www.ramsar.org/mtg/mtg_danube_regional_2007.htm and more details at www.undp-drp.org/drp/en/activities_6_meetings_2007_18-19April_Wetlands.html.
8. All National Focal Points of the CWI were invited to the study tour of transboundary Ramsar sites organized by the Czech Ministry of Environment (Libuse Vlasakova) in cooperation with the Ramsar Secretariat. This took place in Austria, Hungary, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina from 28 April to 5 May 2007 and 18 participants from 3 Carpathian countries, IUCN Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe in Belgrade and the Ramsar Convention Secretariat visited 8 interesting sites. Results and recommendations can be found at www.ramsar.org/w/w.n.transboundary_study_2007.htm.
9. Information on the CWI was presented and consulted also during the meeting of the Slovak-Hungarian Working Group on Nature and Landscape Protection and meeting of the Hungarian Ramsar Committee and celebration of the World Wetlands day on 1-2 February 2007 in Josvafo, NP Aggtelek, Hungary (bilateral Ramsar Site Domica-Baradla). Activities of CWI were included in the work plan of this Working Group. The INTERREG funded project on cooperation, joint monitoring and ecotourism development along the river Ipel/Ipoly (SK-HU) was recently accomplished.
10. A special presentation on CWI was done also during the General Assembly of the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative (CERI) in Poprad, Slovakia in November 2006. Consultations with CERI and some projects (e.g. for wetlands inventory and conservation in Ukraine, development of ecological network in the Carpathians) were done.
11. The work plan and project ideas were consulted with the Czech Ministry of Environment (Mrs. Libuse Vlasakova) and Slovak State Nature Conservancy during the special meeting in the Administration of Velka Fatra NP in Vrútky (28-30 January 2008). The funding possibilities were mostly discussed and specified at the end of 2007 and beginning of 2008 when some funding possibilities have been identified after opening of EU and Swiss funds.
12. The CWI Overall Work Plan, Work plan for 2009-2011, plan of proposed activities in 2008 and budget were prepared and consulted with CWI Board members and partners and are enclosed to this document as annexes. Based on this the proposal for consideration by the Ramsar Standing Committee and COP10 for the regional initiative in the framework of the Convention on Wetlands was developed and distributed for comments and will be submitted to the Ramsar Convention Secretariat by 31 March 2008.



Carpathian Wetland Initiative National Focal Points and contacts for CWI

<i>Country</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Postal address</i>	<i>e-mail</i>	<i>Office telephone Fax</i>
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	Jana Durkosová	Ministry of the Environment Department of Nature Conservation	Námestie L. Štúra 1 812 35 Bratislava	jana.durkosova@enviro.gov.sk	+421 2 5956 2211 Fax: +421 2 59562533
UKRAINE	Igor Ivanenko Grygoriy Parchuk	State Agency for Protected Areas of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Ukraine	35 Uritskogo str. Kiev 03035	ecoland@menr.gov.ua parks@menr.gov.ua	+380 44 206 3119
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Other contacts					

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	Jan Seffer Anna Guttová	Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative Executive Secretary	Podunajska 24 821 06 Bratislava Slovakia	jansefi@changenet.sk , jansef@daphne.sk , guttova@changenet.sk	+ 421 2 455 24019
	Peter Whalley	UNDP / GEF Tisa Project	Austria	pdwhalley@btinternet.com	+43 1 26060 4023
	Mike Baltzer Andreas Beckmann David Strobel	WWF International Danube-Carpathian Programme	Mariahilfer Str. 88a/3/9 A-1070 Vienna Austria	mbaltzer@wwfdcp.org abeckmann@wwfdcp.org dstrobel@wwfdcp.org	+43 1 524 547013 +43 1 524 547016 Fax: +43 1 524547070

CWI Overall Work Plan

Key points for the CWI work plan are agreed in the results of the 6th Evian Encounter (2006), in the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ramsar and Carpathian Conventions (2006) and in the adopted Terms of Reference for the CWI (2007).

Relevant activities:

1. Information on wetland ecosystems, including transboundary wetland ecosystems

Wetland information and data need to be harmonized throughout the region.

Activities:

I. Platform of basic data on wetlands

- Organising of the first Carpathian wetland conference to establish priorities in research, inventory and management of wetlands in the Carpathians and to agree on the basis for further cooperation and development of the initiative (2009).

Outputs: International conference with participation of relevant experts, national authorities, international partners and NGOs from all Carpathian countries, with proceedings published.

- Development of harmonised classification system of wetland habitats compatible with EU (Natura 2000) system, compatible protocols for wetland inventory, guidelines for evaluation and interpretation of data for all Carpathian countries (using experience and work of the BBI-Matra/CERI project and Natura 2000/Emerald network development). (from 2009)

Outputs: Guidelines for inventory, evaluation and interpretation of data

- Training and workshop on field manual use, field mapping, storing of data, digitizing.

Outputs: Trained specialists for coordinated field mapping and database

- Collection and harmonisation of data for Overview of Carpathian Wetlands – inventory in all countries, GIS polygons, identification of wetlands of international importance and of sites in need of restoration, as well as trans-boundary wetland sites in cooperation with neighbour institutions. (from 2010)

Outputs: Database, publication on the Carpathian wetlands - preparation of texts and maps, database and visualisation of data on wetland habitats in the Carpathians;

Web page with data on the Carpathian wetlands of various types.

- Involvement in the 2012 PA4LP Carpathian Clearing House Mechanism.

Outputs: Data available for both the projects.

Possible funding sources: Structural funds, Swiss Cohesion Fund

2. National Focal Points support

NFPs were established during 2004-2006 to improve exchange of wetland-related information, inter-sectoral cooperation and international collaboration. In ToR for CWI their role is specified in the Board.

Activities:

II. Platform for cooperation

- Organizing of meetings and electronic communication of members of the CWI Board, using preferably other relevant events and support of travel expenses if necessary. (from 2008)

Outputs: At least one meeting face-to face per year with reports of the meeting, reports of electronic and/or telephone communication.

- Facilitation of effective cooperation between the environmental, water management and other relevant sectors in respective Carpathian countries, coordination of national teams, expert networks and institutions. (from 2009)

Outputs: Meetings, agreements between sectors and institutions.

- Regular reporting to the Secretariats of the Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions and to the CWI Board. (from 2008)

Outputs: Annual Reports, electronic bulletin progress reports as required.

Possible funding sources: national governments

3. Designation of additional Wetlands of International Importance, species and habitats monitoring

Activities:

III. Platform for wetland assessment and monitoring

- Assessment of results of national wetland inventories with selection of the most valuable sites, leading to the designation of additional Ramsar sites, including trans-boundary sites, according to the vision and guidelines provided in the *Strategic Framework for the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance* to ensure the fully representative network of globally important sites of wetland ecosystems in the Carpathian region; (mostly from 2011)

Outputs: List of potential sites of international importance fulfilling criteria for designation.

- Development of harmonised wetland monitoring methodologies of Carpathian wetland ecosystems and their key species, with particular regard to habitats and species listed in the annexes of the EU Habitats and Birds Directives, as well as indicators developed for broader use within the Ramsar and Biodiversity Conventions; Translation of general guidelines on wetland restoration and sustainable use into national languages. (from 2011)

Outputs: Guidelines for harmonised wetland habitats and species monitoring published and placed on the web;
Guidelines on wetland restoration and sustainable use translated into national languages published and placed on the web.

Possible funding sources: Structural funds, Swiss Cohesion Fund

4. Integrating wetlands into river basin management

Provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive will be an important guiding tool for some aspects of the CWI. Promotion and contribution to the collaboration between relevant national authorities at river basin level, assuring thus wetland management and water allocation to wetlands are integrated into river basin management.

Activities:

IV. Platform for integrated river basin management, especially in shared catchments

- Involvement in the preparation of the protocol or other relevant documents on sustainable and integrated water/river basin management within the Carpathian Convention in cooperation with other partners and involvement in relevant projects (EU Interreg, ICPDR/UNDP/GEF Tisa River Basin) which include water/river basin management, communication and consultations with Carpathian Convention Secretariat and ICPDR. (from 2009)

Outputs: Documents, agreements on participation in relevant projects

- Organising of national seminars/workshops for relevant stakeholders and national authorities at river basin level on wetland management and water allocation to wetlands within the river basin management plans using Ramsar guidance (Handbook 7 “*River Basin Management*”) and the EU Water Framework Directive Guidance Document 12 (“*The Role of Wetlands in the Water Framework Directive*”). (from 2010)

Outputs: Series of workshops or seminars for relevant stakeholders on wetland management and water allocation to wetlands when developing river basin management plans;
Principles of the Ramsar and WFD guidance translated into the national languages and published.

- Facilitation of bilateral consultations and meetings on integrating wetlands into river basin management in shared wetlands and catchments, bilateral agreements on recognizing common objectives and principles of their management and wise use, based on experience of successful case studies. (from 2010)

Outputs: Meetings of experts and relevant stakeholders on integrating wetlands into river basin management in shared wetlands and catchments, bilateral agreements.

- Develop/prepare handbooks and/or brochures, leaflets on
 - retention of water resources in the uplands of catchment basins (in forests, mires, river floodplains and aquifers);
 - guidance and interpretation document on importance of river sediments and limitation of river sediment removals;
 - guidance on conservation of natural river morphology and preparation of unified / harmonised classification system of river morphology with illustrated interpretation manual/wordbook of morphological elements in national languages;
 - recognition of the ecological services provided by Carpathian rivers and related wetlands in all sectoral policies

Outputs: Handbooks, brochures, leaflets, interactive CD on river morphology.

- Cooperate on development of a project of best practice in retention of water resources in the uplands of catchment basins. (from 2011)

Output: Project proposal.

Possible funding sources: EU Interreg, UNDP/GEF, LIFE

5. Wetland restoration

Identify and develop specific wetland restoration projects in major Carpathian catchments.

Activities:

V. Platform for wetland restoration activities

- Develop wetland restoration strategies/policies for montane/submontane wetlands in a number of Carpathian countries. (from 2009)

Output: Wetland restoration strategy/policy in a number of Carpathian countries.

- Identify priority sites for restoration from results of national wetland inventories, especially in the Tisa River Basin (demonstration projects). (from 2010)

Output: List of priority sites for wetland restoration for future restoration projects.

Possible funding sources: UNDP/GEF, national governments, EU funds

6. Capacity building and public awareness

To increase wetland management capacity in Carpathian countries and public awareness on the role of wetland services in human wellbeing, including establishment of a regional Wetland Centre, organise information, education and training activities.

Activities:

VI. Platform for capacity building and public awareness

- Preparation, distribution and evaluation of a questionnaire on training priorities and needs and development of training modules and training programme according to results of the questionnaire. (2009)

Outputs: Questionnaire results; training module, training programme.

- Organisation of training courses for trainees from the Carpathian countries focused on priorities. (from 2010)

Outputs: Two training courses for trainees from Carpathian countries.

- Establish web page of CWI and publish information on wetlands and their role and function in the landscape and for human wellbeing in the Carpathians. (2009)

Output: Web page on CWI

- Establishment of a database of educational and training institutions and experts aimed at wetlands and communication with them. (2009)

Outputs: database, information.

- Development and production of brochures, leaflets, postcards and posters or a short documentary film on the Carpathian wetlands and their functions and services for human wellbeing and for biodiversity to support campaigns, and their presentation on web page. (from 2009)

Outputs: brochures, leaflets, stickers and posters on the Carpathian wetlands and their functions and services in national languages and in English (hard copy and electronic versions).

- Establishment and support for regional Wetland Centre and its activities (coordination, information transfer, education, information sources collection, fund raising, harmonisation with the CC Protocol on Biodiversity, Working Group on Biodiversity of the Carpathian Implementation Committee, WWF project 2012 Protected Areas for Living Planet and the Clearing House Mechanism, Carpathian Network of Protected Areas, CERI, etc.), based on the lessons learnt from the study tour focused on Wetland Centres in Europe. (from 2009)

Outputs: report of the study tour, educational and public awareness activities, information transfer, web page maintenance, meetings, supplement of library with new publications, CDs, DVDs, maps, programme and yearly plan for work.

Possible funding sources: EU structural funds, Swiss Cohesion Fund, national governments

CWI Work Plan and budget for 2008

1. Report and Work Plan for consideration of the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention and Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention.

T: January - February 2008
R: J. Kadlecik, L. Vlasakova
B: documents development
F: SNC, MoE CZ (1,000 EUR)

2. Participation in the next meeting of the Implementation Committee of the Carpathian Convention and the meetings of the Steering Group of the project 2012 PA4LP and the Steering Committee of the CNPA to report on the results of the CWI and to facilitate further support of the Carpathian Convention partners, consultation on work plan and funding.

T: March/April 2008
R: J. Kadlecik
B: Travel expenses to the meeting (Sibiu, Romania)
F: Carpathian Convention Interim Secretariat / MAVA project (1,000 EUR)

3. Facilitation of the Working group during the 6th European Ramsar Meeting – meeting of the partners in the Carpathian Wetland Initiative (Sweden).

T: 3-7 May 2008
R: J. Kadlecik, national focal points
B: travel expenses to the meeting (Stockholm, Sweden)
F: relevant governments, Ramsar Secretariat (2,000 EUR)

4. Preparation of a proposal for consideration by the Ramsar Standing Committee 37th Meeting and COP10 for the regional initiative in the framework of the Convention on Wetlands and preparation of resolution on CWI for endorsement by the Ramsar COP10.

T: March - June 2008
R: J. Kadlecik, L. Vlasakova
B: Travel expenses to the 37th SC meeting (Gland, Switzerland)
F: Ramsar Secretariat, MoE CZ (2,000 EUR)

5. Report on CWI progress to the COP2 of the Carpathian Convention and inclusion of the CWI to the work plan and budget of the Carpathian Convention for the next triennium, meeting of the CWI Board (Romania).

T: 17-19 June 2008
R: J. Kadlecik and Board members
B: travel expenses to the COP2 (Bucarest, Romania)
F: Carpathian Secretariat, national governments (2,000 EUR)

6. Refining the documentation on CWI for Ramsar COP10 and recognition of CWI as the Ramsar Regional Initiative at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention, meeting of CWI Board members (South Korea).

T: March – June 2008; 28 October – 4 November 2008
R: J. Kadlecik and Board members, T. Salathé
B: travel expenses for the Ramsar COP10 (Changwon, South Korea)
F: Ramsar Secretariat, national governments (10,000 EUR)

7. Involvement into development of the new EU Interreg project for the Carpathian Convention in cooperation with CC IS which will include a subject of water/river basin

management and wetlands in cooperation with ICPDR, involvement in the working group on spatial planning.

T: March – December 2008

R: Board members

B: communication, travel expenses

F: national governments (1,000 EUR)

8. Prepare a project on implementation of the Work Plan of the CWI.

T: March – April 2008

R: J. Kadlecik and Board members

B: communication, travel expenses

F: national governments (1,000 EUR)

9. Development of database of wetland education and training possibilities, experts, institutions and NGOs.

T: March - December 2008

R: J. Kadlecik

B: communication

F: national governments (1,000 EUR)

10. Establishment of the CWI webpage with links to the Carpathian Convention, Carpathian Network of Protected Areas, the Ramsar Convention, Wetlands International, WWF-DCP, CERI and other partners.

T: December 2008

R: J. Kadlecik

B: web page designer

F: MoE CZ (500 EUR)

11. Development of a leaflet on CWI and its publicity in the web page and in hard copy.

T: December 2008

R: Board members

B: editing, printing

F: national governments (2,000 EUR)

12. Involvement in the Carpathian Clearing House Mechanism.

T: January - December 2008

R: Board members

B: communication

F: national governments (1,000 EUR)

13. Development of training programme for wetland sites managers.

T: December 2008

R: J. Kadlecik, L.Vlasakova

B: communication, travel expenses

F: national governments (1,000 EUR)

Explanatory note:

T: term, dates

R: responsibility

B: budget line

F: funding