



# Evian Encounter 2006 The Carpathian Wetland Initiative



## Results of the 6<sup>th</sup> Evian Encounter

15-17 November 2006, Evian, France

An activity of the Ramsar Convention project financed by the Danone Group

## The Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI)

Priorities for 2007 & 2008

### Introduction

The Carpathian region contains some of the least disturbed headwaters of major rivers and important wetland sites in Europe. Carpathian waters flow to the Black and Baltic Seas via four large river catchments: Danube, Dnister, Vistula and Oder. Carpathian waters and wetlands are often shared by neighbouring countries. They require joint efforts for their wise use and to solve common problems. To this end, the experts (cf. list below) participating in the 2006 Evian Encounter propose to develop a programme of action for a Carpathian Wetland Initiative.

The key points for action agreed during the Evian Encounter are based on the outputs adopted by the CWI workshop in Brezovica (Slovakia, 28-30 April 2004), held as part of the Norwegian-Slovak project on a "Network of Carpathian protected areas and Ramsar sites".

Through these activities, the Carpathian Wetland Initiative aims to operate as a **Regional Initiative** within the framework of the Ramsar Convention, as stated Annex I of Resolution IX.7 (adopted in 2005). Furthermore, the CWI aims to be included in the work programme of the Carpathian Convention through the establishment of a **Working Group** at COP1 (Kyiv, December 2006), as outlined in conference document UNEP/CC/COP1/6.

To this end, the Carpathian and Ramsar Convention secretariats agreed during the Evian Encounter, to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to provide a framework for cooperation between the two conventions and to guide further cooperation for the Carpathian Wetland Initiative according to the key points listed below.

## **Key points to be developed by the Carpathian Wetland Initiative**

### **1. Information on wetland ecosystems**

Information on wetland ecosystems and their services varies greatly between Carpathian countries. Wetland information and data need to be harmonized throughout the region. Such harmonization can be largely based on the ongoing work of the Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative (CERI) and through national projects developing the Natura 2000/Emerald networks.

### **2. National focal points**

To improve exchange of wetland-related information, inter-sectoral cooperation and international collaboration, the Carpathian countries will identify national focal points (NFP) for the Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions, specifically focusing on the Carpathian Wetland Initiative. These NFPs will facilitate effective cooperation between the environmental, water management and other relevant sectors. Their tasks include ensuring that existing institutional capacities at national level contribute fully to the development of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative, building on information compiled by wetland organisations, expert networks and institutions, *inter alia* the Danube Commission (ICPDR) and the Biodiversity Convention.

### **3. Designation of additional Wetlands of International Importance**

The Carpathian wetland inventory and assessment work may lead to the designation of additional Ramsar Sites, including transboundary sites, according to the vision and guidelines provided in the Strategic Framework for the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance. Wetland monitoring, restoration and sustainable use will help maintain the existing Ramsar Site network in the Carpathians. The secretariats of the Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions will work cooperatively to ensure the network of globally important sites is fully representative of wetland ecosystems in the Carpathian region.

### **4. Integrating wetlands into river basin management**

The provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD), to be implemented by Carpathian EU Member and Accession States, and throughout all countries in the Danube River Basin under the coordination of the ICPDR, will be an important guiding tool for some aspects of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative. In part, using the WFD approach, the Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions will actively promote and contribute 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. This work will be guided in part by Ramsar guidance (Handbook 7 “River Basin Management”) and the EU WFD Guidance Document 12 “The Role of Wetlands in the Water Framework Directive”.

In the context of river basin management, the Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions will work in particular for the issues of:

- a. retention of water resources in the uplands of catchment basins (in forests, mires, river floodplains and aquifers);
- b. limitation of river sediment removals;
- c. conservation of natural river morphology; and
- d. recognition of the ecological services provided by Carpathian rivers and related wetlands in all sectoral policies.

## **5. Wetland restoration**

The Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions will identify and develop specific wetland restoration projects in major Carpathian river catchments.

## **6. Transboundary wetland ecosystems**

Many Carpathian wetland ecosystems and river catchments are shared between neighbouring countries – indicating that transboundary management will be a critical element of the Initiative. The Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions will focus specifically on identifying potential transboundary wetland ecosystems and possibilities for their joint management.

## **7. Species and habitat monitoring**

The Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions will aim to harmonise the 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.

## **8. Capacity building and public awareness**

The Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions will work especially to increase wetland management capacity in Carpathian countries and public awareness on the role of wetland services in human wellbeing, including the establishment of a regional Wetland Centre. To this end, they will organise information, education and training activities.

## Action points and responsibilities

### 11-13 December 2006

During the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention:

- ORGANISE a side event on the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas and the Carpathian Wetland Initiative: *Jan Kadlecik*;
- INCLUDE the Carpathian Wetland Initiative in the Carpathian Convention programme of work and establishment of a Working Group: *all Carpathian delegations*;
- SIGN a Memorandum of Understanding between the Carpathian and Ramsar Convention secretariats: *Harald Egerer and Peter Bridgewater*.

### By 31 December 2006

- DESIGNATE NFPs for the Carpathian Wetland Initiative in all seven Carpathian countries to fulfil the tasks outlined in Point 2 above: *all Carpathian countries*;
- REQUEST Wetlands International to expand its Black Sea Programme to include the Carpathian region and to become an active partner in the CWI: *Tobias Salathé*;
- CONFIRM the set up of a coordination unit for the further development of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative, communicate the contact details of the NFPs to the secretariats of the Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions: *Jan Kadlecik*;
- ESTABLISH an operational link with the WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme activities in the Carpathians, notably on protected areas, and communicate this to the NFPs and convention secretariats: *Georg Rast and Jan Kadlecik*.

### March/April 2007

- INVITE the NFPs to participate and provide inputs to the final wetland workshop of the Danube Regional Project: *Peter Whalley*;
- LINK the NFPs concerned with the Tisza river basin project: *Peter Whalley*.

### May/June 2007

- INVITE NFPs to the study tour on the management of transboundary wetland sites: *Libuse Vlasáková*;
- DEVELOP and circulate among NFPs and the convention secretariats a plan of proposed activities and for fund-raising: *Jan Kadlecik*

### October 2007

- PROVIDE a progress report, work plan and budget proposal for 2008 to the Ramsar Secretariat for recognition as a Regional Initiative: *Jan Kadlecik*.

### Early 2008

- OBTAIN recognition by the 36<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee as a Regional Initiative: *Jan Kadlecik and Tobias Salathé*.

### 28 October - 4 November 2008

During the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention:

- OBTAIN recognition as a Ramsar Regional Initiative and an incentive programme co-financement from the Ramsar budget: *all Carpathian delegations*.

## Experts participating in the 6<sup>th</sup> Evian Encounter

### *Carpathian Countries*

#### CZECH REPUBLIC

Ms **Libuse Vlasáková**, Ministry of Environment, Ramsar Convention Standing Committee and NFP

#### HUNGARY

Mr **András Schmidt**, Ministry of Environment and Water, Ramsar Convention NFP

#### POLAND

Mr **Dariusz Piechowski**, Ministry of the Environment, Ramsar Convention NFP

#### ROMANIA

Mr **Mircea Verghelet**, National Forest Administration, Ministry of Environment

Mr **Cristian Mițitelu Raileanu**, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority

#### SERBIA

Ms **Alexandra Doslić**, Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection, Carpathian Convention NFP

#### SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Mr **Jan Kadlecik**, State Nature Conservancy, Ministry of the Environment, *Carpathian Wetland Initiative Coordinator*

Mr **Ivan Koubek**, State Nature Conservancy, Ministry of the Environment

Mr **Róbert Oružinský**, Ministry of the Environment, Ramsar Convention NFP

#### UKRAINE

Mr **Igor Ivanenko**, State Agency for Protected Areas, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Ramsar and Carpathian Conventions NFP

Mr **Bohdan Prots**, National Academy of Sciences

### *Organisations*

Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention

Mr **Harald Egerer**

Ramsar Convention Secretariat

Mr **Peter Bridgewater**, Secretary General

Mr **Tobias Salathé**, Senior Adviser for Europe

Ms **Dorothea August**, Assistant Adviser for Europe

Danube Protection Commission (ICPDR)

Mr **Peter Whalley**, Danube Regional Project, UNDP-GEF

Ms **Thomas Hein**, Danube Regional Project, UNDP-GEF

Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative (CERI)

Ms **Anna Guttova**

WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme

Mr **Georg Rast**