

# TOWARDS THE NETWORK OF MOUNTAIN PROTECTED AREAS IN THE BALKANS AND THE DINARIC ARC



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THE BALKANS AND THE DINARIC ARC**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The programme of work on mountain biological diversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recommends establishing regional and transboundary collaboration, and cooperative agreements for mountain ranges<sup>1</sup>, as well as establishing and strengthening adequate, effective national and regional networks of mountain protected areas<sup>2</sup>.

Neighbouring States, which often have different levels of technical expertise, knowledge, capacity and financial resources, can benefit by combining their respective strengths through transboundary co-operation<sup>3</sup>. Protected area networks allow for a more effective and harmonised management of the shared natural heritage, habitats and species as well as for joint preservation and promotion of cultural values of the region.

Protected area networks are usually established on the legal basis of either global or regional Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), such as the Alpine or Carpathian Conventions. The possible MEA for the South-Eastern European region is still in the early phase of its development. But the consultations on the potential for protected area networking in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc should not remain suspended until the opening of the official negotiation procedures on the possible 'Balkan Convention'. The sooner the managers of the protected areas in the SEE region recognize the added values of acting as a network, identify potential benefits and opportunities, consult this idea with their supervisory bodies and colleagues, and jointly manage to find the way to cooperate under such network – the better designed network and the stronger the cooperation could be in the future.

Since 2005, UNEP is coordinating the project entitled "Improving regional cooperation for risk management from pollution hotspots as well as the transboundary management of shared natural resources" supported by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Canadian Development Agency (CIDA), in the framework of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative.

UNEP is also providing the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, contributing to the international Mountain Partnership and to the Environment for Europe process. In that context and as a partner of the Alpine Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity, with which it signed a Memorandum of Cooperation, UNEP is sharing experience and supporting mountain protected areas and regional development in other mountain regions of the world.

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<sup>1</sup> Goal 2.3., *CBD programme of work on mountain biological diversity*.

<sup>2</sup> Action 1.2.5., *CBD programme of work on mountain biological diversity*.

<sup>3</sup> IUCN Draft Code for Transboundary Protected Areas in Times of Peace and Armed Conflict [in:] Sandwith, T., Shine, C., Hamilton, L. and Sheppard, D. (2001). "Transboundary Protected Areas for Peace and Co-operation". IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK.

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The following report by UNEP Vienna Office

- Briefly summarises potential benefits of acting as a protected area network,
- Describes the experience on the development of protected area networks in the mountain ranges directly neighbouring the Balkan / Dinaric region – in the Alps and in the Carpathians,
- Provides a brief overview of the ecological network in particular countries of the South Eastern Europe,
- Describes possible criteria for selection of the potential partners of the sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc and provides their tentative contact list,
- Compares conditions for protected area network initiatives in the Alps, Carpathians and the Balkans,
- Includes recommendations on the necessary first steps towards the proposed network,
- Presents initiatives undertaken under ENVSEC-SEE with the objective to share the Alpine and Carpathian experience, promote and consult the idea for establishing a network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc with the possible stakeholders, and bring this issue to the attention of nature conservation authorities and political decision-makers.



Map 1: Mountains in the Dinaric Arc and Balkan Region.

Europe, and in particular its Balkan region is characterised by many borders that cut across ecosystems and areas of high natural values, often dividing the continent along natural barriers like mountain ranges. Border areas are often the most favoured regions in biodiversity terms, partly as a result of their peripheral location or political factors banning in the past the development of areas adjacent to political borders.

However, natural areas shared by neighbouring countries are not only a common treasure, but also a common responsibility. Ecological problems occurring in border areas cannot be solved by one country alone, and require transboundary and regional cooperation.

The programme of work on mountain biological diversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recommends establishing regional and transboundary collaboration, and cooperative agreements for mountain ranges<sup>4</sup>, as well as establishing and strengthening adequate, effective national and regional networks of mountain protected areas<sup>5</sup>. Furthermore, the CBD work programme on mountains calls “to establish regional and transboundary collaboration and the establishment of cooperative agreements” for mountain ranges.

The CBD programme of work on protected areas recommends to “strengthen existing and establish new TBPA (transboundary protected areas) to enhance conservation of biological diversity, implement the ecosystem

approach, and improve international cooperation”, and in particular to “enter into dialogue to establish, where appropriate, new TBPA with adjacent Parties and countries, bearing in mind the ecosystem approach and the importance of ecological networks”.

Since 2005, UNEP is coordinating the project entitled “Improving regional cooperation for risk management from pollution hotspots as well as the transboundary management of shared natural resources” supported by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Canadian Development Agency (CIDA), in the framework of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative, which is a partnership between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) and the associated North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

UNEP under the ENVSEC initiative promotes raising awareness on the common responsibility for the border regions, thus providing for the greater European integration in nature protection and translating the common European vision into practice.

As the first step, a rapid regional assessment of the general state-of-environment, as well as managerial problems experienced by the

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<sup>4</sup> Goal 2.3., CBD programme of work on mountain biological diversity.

<sup>5</sup> Action 1.2.5., CBD programme of work on mountain biological diversity.



administrative bodies responsible for the protected areas' management was carried out in 2005-2006, based on country-specific reports.

The resulting regional report "Enhancing Transboundary Biodiversity Management in South Eastern Europe" provides an overview of the biological diversity, protected area system, legal and policy framework, existing and planned institutional structures for nature protection, threats to biological diversity, examples of transboundary cooperation as well as socio-economic factors, and recommendations for actions to be taken in particular countries of the region and for the region as a whole.

During the first regional workshop on "Enhancing Transboundary Biodiversity in Mountains of South Eastern Europe" held in Podgorica (Montenegro) in June 2006 representatives of the Governments of the region jointly identified eight potential transboundary protected areas, and selected three of them as "priority areas in focus", perceived as most urgent from the biodiversity point of view.

With the objective to foster transboundary cooperation in the SEE region UNEP developed methodological guidance for designing transboundary protected areas, and in cooperation with the local experts from the SEE countries carried out feasibility studies for the designation of the three "priority areas in focus": Durmitor - Tara Canyon - Sutjeska, Prokletije / Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains, and Sharr / Šar Planina - Dešat - Mt. Korab as transboundary protected areas.

On 29 May 2008 in Bonn, at the "Big Win for Dinaric Arc high-level event" held during the 9. Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP9), the representatives of the Governments signed a joint statement recognizing that "Transboundary co-

operation between the Dinaric Arc countries in the implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas, with the aim to create well managed, and ecologically representative protected area network, is the key to safeguard the Dinaric Arc eco-region's exceptional natural and cultural values". Simultaneously, the Governments declared their national priorities in delivering on the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas in the Dinaric Arc.

It should be noted here that the national priorities declared in May 2008 during CBD COP9 are well matching the outcomes of the ENVSEC-SEE workshop organized by UNEP in June 2006, and provide for developing transboundary cooperation in the "priority areas in focus" selected during this first sub-regional meeting.

UNEP is also providing the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, contributing to the international Mountain Partnership and to the Environment for Europe process. In that context and as a partner of the Alpine Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity, with which it signed a Memorandum of Cooperation, UNEP is sharing experience and supporting mountain protected areas and regional development in other mountain regions of the world.

In June 2009 within the framework of the ENVSEC-SEE Initiative UNEP organized the second sub-regional meeting on "Transboundary Cooperation of Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe: Towards the Dinaric Arc and Balkan Network of Mountain Protected Areas" with the objective to initiate discussion and facilitate future consultations on the potential for establishing a regional network of protected areas in the Balkan / Dinaric Arc region.



The overall objective of this report is to share the experience on the development of protected area networks in the Alps and in the Carpathians with the South Eastern European protected area managers, and inspire them for similar collaborative efforts.

Basing on the lessons learned in the Alps and in the Carpathians - partners aiming to develop the future network of mountain protected areas, e.g. in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc or any other mountain region could design their network in the most appropriate way, adjusted accordingly to their national administrative frameworks, operational capacities and local conditions. Last but not least, the analysis of different aspects of protected area networking and the comparison of the progress achieved so far in the Alps and in the Carpathian Mts. should help them to avoid mistakes made by the others.



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📍 Mountain landscape in the Alps



# PART 1. PROTECTED AREA NETWORKS

## *1.1. Benefits of protected area networking*

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Large mountain ranges of Europe like the Alps, Carpathians or the Dinaric and Balkan Mountains run across a number of countries, irrespective of political borders. All above mountain regions harbour enormous biodiversity values of the common European and global importance.

However, natural areas shared by neighbouring countries are not only a common treasure, but also a common responsibility. In order to apply the eco-regional approach and effectively implement nature protection at the scale of the whole region – involved countries adopt regional Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) aimed at regional and transboundary cooperation in this respect.

Protected area networks usually result from concluding either global or regional MEAs. When several countries with different languages, cultures and capacities are brought together to work on a common topic as complex as environment or nature conservation, it is difficult to coordinate common projects without establishing a functional structure such as a network. Protected area networks allow for a more effective and harmonised management of the shared natural heritage, habitats and species as well as for joint preservation and promotion of cultural values of the region.

The use of common environmental standards, harmonisation of approaches, monitoring and research methodologies, largely facilitated by acting as a network allows for

sharing research results and data on biodiversity, and for development of the common databases, mapping of habitats and species distribution.

Common databases and inventories jointly developed by the network members allow ensuring data compatibility, developing common strategies and planning common biodiversity management and restoration plans, conservation work programmes, research and monitoring projects; implementing joint actions to protect or strengthen biological diversity on the level of species and habitats.

The network of protected areas allows exchange of information, transfer of know-how and experience, resulting in capacity building of member protected area personnel involved in cooperation by e.g. participating in the common thematic working groups or seminars, thus largely facilitates development of skills for the management of natural assets and protected areas.

Furthermore, the network can largely contribute to raising the technical capacity of particular member areas, allow combining skills and sharing e.g. expensive equipment or hardware.

As emphasised by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN): “Neighbouring States, which often have different levels of technical expertise, knowledge, capacity and financial resources, can benefit by

combining their respective strengths through transboundary co-operation.”<sup>6</sup>.

Acting as a regional network of protected areas provides for a greater lobbying strength to promote the idea of nature protection as well as of transboundary cooperation. Common public relations work based on the common communication strategy for the whole network is more effective and convincing than undertaken by a single individual protected area administration, and provides for raising public awareness and support for nature protection.

The network allows for building transnational awareness on the importance of protecting natural values and cultural assets of particular network member areas, and of the whole region. By operating at the eco-regional level, networks of protected areas also advance the objectives of Natura 2000 and of the Pan European Ecological Network.

By acting as a network member protected areas gain additional tools to promote their tourist and recreational potential, which allows for marketing of tourist services well beyond the borders of their countries, at the regional and European scale. Similarly, the network may serve for bet-

ter marketing and promotion of local agricultural products and handicrafts, e.g. common labelling and marketing of organic food products, at the regional and European scale.

Protected area networks help to represent the interests of their members and of the whole region towards national and European authorities, and international organisations. Acting as network helps to build the common regional identity. Operational networks are also a proof of the readiness and ability to cooperate with the neighbouring countries of the region with great political visibility. Networking provides for the greater European integration in nature protection and translating the common European vision into practice.

Last but not least, operating as a network increases the credibility of common fundraising initiatives to attract international donors and assistance, and allows to cumulate the required ‘critical mass’ (minimum threshold) of own contribution (both cash and in-kind) from numerous project partners, necessary for generating much bigger financial support, from e.g. Interreg financial instruments or EU structural funds. Thus, networking largely facilitates joint fundraising for e.g. conservation or sustainable development projects.

## 1.2. Alpine experience: the Alpine Network of Protected Areas

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Establishment of the Alpine Network of Protected Areas (ALPARC) was the first official government initiative for the implementation of the Alpine Convention (Salzburg, 1991), in particular its thematic Protocol on nature conservation and landscape planning. ALPARC was established in 1995 by the by the first Interna-

tional Conference of Alpine Protected Areas, and is a federation of all protected areas in the Alps, including protected areas of the eight Alpine countries: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, the Principality of Monaco, the Principality of Liechtenstein, Slovenia and Switzerland.

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<sup>6</sup> IUCN Draft Code for Transboundary Protected Areas in Times of Peace and Armed Conflict [in:] Sandwith, T., Shine, C., Hamilton, L. and Sheppard, D. (2001). “Transboundary Protected Areas for Peace and Co-operation”. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK.

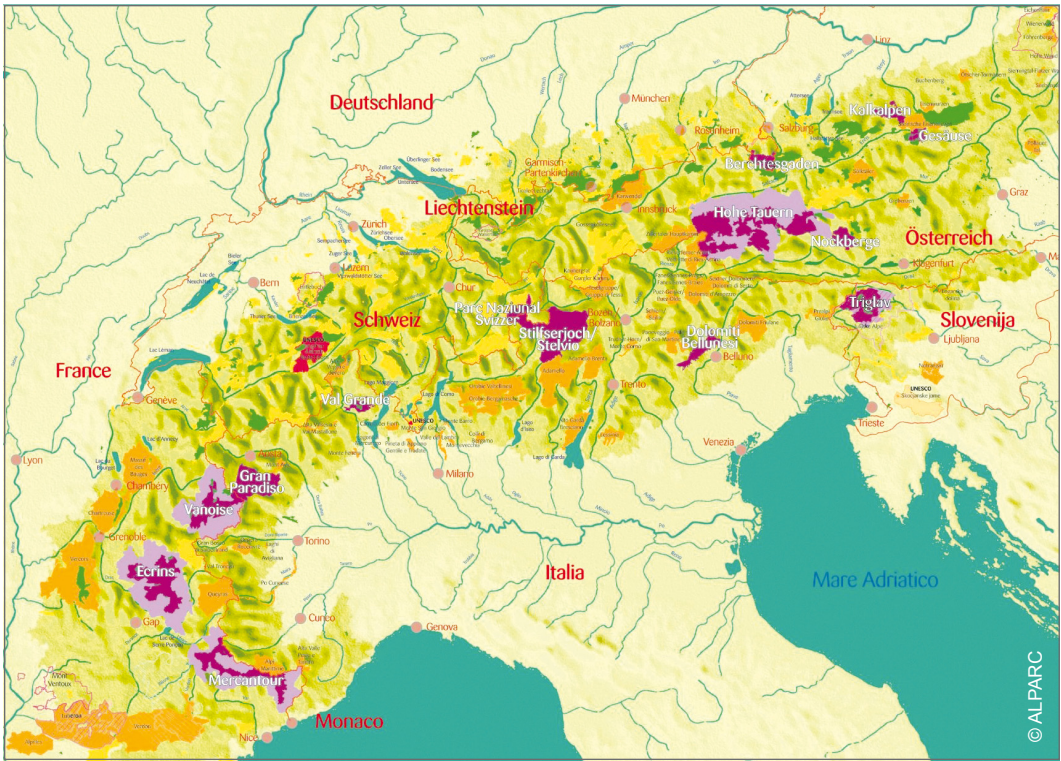


The member protected areas represent different legal protective categories, and include 13 national parks, 59 regional parks or protected landscape areas, 268 nature reserves with the area exceeding 100 ha, eight biosphere reserves (therefore 348 protected areas of the size over 100 ha) and numerous other protected areas in the Alpine region. The total area of ALPARC member protected areas encompasses around 15 % to 20 % of the Alpine territory. Cooperation under the framework of the ALPARC network involves around 2'000 protected area managers and rangers, as well as more than 100 partner scientific institutions.

The highest governing body of the Alpine Network is the General Assembly convened

each second year and bringing together representatives of the majority of large-scale alpine protected areas.

The ALPARC International Steering Committee composed of representatives of protected areas from all Alpine countries proposes common actions and projects to the General Assembly, decides on international work priorities, and defines short term tasks of the network. The ALPARC National Steering Committees propose projects at national level and priorities for international co-operation, and facilitate national co-operation between protected areas. The operational structure of the network includes the ALPARC coordination unit and also national and regional coordinators.



► Map 2. Alpine Network of Protected Areas.



The ALPARC coordination unit was initially hosted by the French government, and supported by the French Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development, the French Delegation for Territorial Planning and Regional Actions (DATAR) and the regions Rhône-Alpes and Provence-Côte d'Azur. For many years the ALPARC coordination unit was administratively linked to the Ecrins National Park in the French Alps.

The ALPARC coordination unit is tasked with:

- Facilitation of communication within the network, information exchange and dissemination,
- Continuous updating of databases and websites,
- Logistic and scientific meetings' preparation,
- Assistance in developing and implementation of common programs,
- Assistance in raising funds for common activities, in particular EU funding,
- Facilitating the involvement of local populations and the general public.

The multilingual team of the ALPARC coordination unit provides the following services: continuous updating of databases and websites, dissemination of information to partners and relevant stakeholders, logistical, thematic and scientific preparation for meetings, assistance in the implementation of international programs and projects, and facilitating the involvement of local populations and the general public.

Most recently the ALPARC coordination unit became part of the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention, under the name "Task Force Protected Areas", with the headquarters in Chambéry ( France).

The Alpine Network operates in four languages (French, German, Italian, Slovenian)

and in English, facilitating communication between protected areas in different regions.

ALPARC has also undertaken the task of contributing to the establishment of protected area networks beyond the Alpine region, by sharing experience and communicating with other European mountain ranges such as the Carpathians and the Pyrenees. In November 2002 ALPARC co-organised the first meeting of the European mountain protected areas in Chambéry.

The four priority fields of activity of the Alpine Network of Protected Areas (ALPARC) are as follows:

- Protection and management of the protected areas of the Alps and their natural resources, habitats and species, taking into consideration international conventions and directives, in particular those regulating the implementation of the NATURA 2000 Network;
- Development of controlled tourism compatible with the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, and the local economic development;
- Support for mountain agriculture and forestry contributing to biodiversity conservation;
- Awareness raising, information and education of the local population and the general public on the significance of natural and cultural heritage in the Alps as well as the importance of its conservation, and the actions conducted.

The above tasks are accomplished by:

- Communicating the activities of the protected areas in the network and to the general public through a common website in five languages ([www.alparc.org](http://www.alparc.org)), newsletters, bulletin; and publishing results of common research and monitoring activities in information sheets, dossiers, leaflets and brochures in four Alpine languages;

- Organising seminars, conferences and workshops (more than 100 conference and workshops were held so far) for protected area managers aimed at finding solutions for common management problems;
- Cooperation in 15 common thematic working groups which address specific topics (e.g. habitats, Alpine flora, mountain forests, pastures, raptors, large carnivores, large ungulates, bearded vulture, sustainable tourism, water issues, Alpine cultures, communication and public relations) and are tasked with finding solutions for common management or research problems, and developing common management and monitoring methods and tools;
- Capacity building by organising staff exchanges between protected areas, exchanges between the various alpine regions, study visits and field trips, and coordinating common training for the staff of Alpine protected areas;
- Promoting common methods, tools and forms for nature monitoring and data collection and comparison (e.g. harmonisation of wildlife censusing methods for chamois and the royal eagle);
- Raising public awareness on nature protection issues, in particular by working with the media, organising common events and 'transalpine' exhibits (e.g. the 'travelling Alpine exposition'), publishing common information materials; as well as by involving local stakeholders in managing protected areas, in particular in the context of local and regional sustainable development, thus raising their acceptance of and support for protected areas;
- Coordinating common projects (e.g. on species reintroduction or monitoring), undertaken by several protected areas under twinning or partnership agreements, supported by the EU financial mechanisms.

The recently launched ECONNECT ("Improving Ecological Connectivity in the Alps") project implemented under the Alpine Space Programme established in the framework of the Interreg IVB aims at creating a transnational ecological network in the Alps by improving and restoring the ecological corridors in six pilot Alpine regions. This involves identifying barriers to the movement of various groups of species and formulating recommendations for such barriers to be eliminated. Another task is to compare the legal basis for ecological networks and to make improvements where possible. The project involves 16 partners from all the countries of the Alps. ECONNECT has a three-year project duration period and a budget of € 3.2 million.

To summarise - ALPARC

- Reinforces international cooperation on protection of the Alps and sustainable development, and contributes to the implementation of the NATURA 2000 Network concept;
- Harmonises activities in different types of protected areas and facilitates establishing spatial linkages between neighbouring protected areas by ecological corridors, with the objective to reach the 'ecological continuum' in the Alps;
- Provides for an intensive experience exchange between Alpine protected areas in different fields of science and protected area management, also through supporting and facilitating the activities of 15 thematic working groups and organising some 20 thematic conferences and workshops per year;
- Allows common communication of the alpine protected areas - between protected areas and for the general public;
- Allows participation of local players in international activities.

### 1.3. Carpathian experience: the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA)

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As one of the largest European mountain ranges, together with the Alps and the Balkan Mountains, the Carpathians form an ecological bridge between Western, Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, allowing migrations of animal populations and genetic exchange. Slightly bigger in terms of the territory than the Alps - the Carpathians cover some 209'000 square kilometres, which is almost exactly the total area (207'903 sq. km) of the ENVSEC-SEE project region.

The history of transboundary cooperation on protected areas in the Carpathians dates back to 1924 when the Governments of Czechoslovakia and Poland decided on designation of a bilateral Nature Park in Pieniny Mountains. Established in 1932 it became the first transboundary protected area in Europe. The World's first UNESCO-MaB trilateral transboundary Biosphere Reserve was also designated in the Carpathians – the “East Carpathians” BR involving Poland, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine (since 1992 bilateral, since 1998 trilateral BR).

Depending on the country and its national legislation, there is a wide range of protected area designations in the Carpathians, e.g. national park, national nature park, nature park, national nature reserve, strict nature reserve, nature reserve, landscape park, regional landscape park or protected landscape area, to mention only the most common ones, usually established on larger areas. Some of them are also bearing international designations like the UNESCO-MaB Biosphere Reserve or the Ramsar site. Since the accession of five Carpathian

countries into the European Community many protected areas in the Carpathian mountains became part of the Natura 2000 network.

The protected area system in the Carpathians includes more than 460 protected areas bigger in size than 100 hectares supplemented by countless smaller protected areas, sites and natural monuments. The above number includes 135 protected areas exceeding the size of 1'000 hectares, and such cover some 27'000 <sup>7</sup> square kilometres of the Carpathians, which is roughly twice the size of Montenegro, more than the territory of the FYR of Macedonia, or not much less than the territory of Albania.

It is worth mentioning here, that as for 2010 there are eleven transboundary protected area complexes in the Carpathians where either the protected areas or their officially designated external buffer zones are adjacent across the state border of two or more countries, thus providing for the ecological continuity and connectivity on the local scale. Such geographically defined transboundary ‘complexes of protected areas’ in the Carpathians encompass up to nine adjacent protected areas, and six out of these eleven complexes exceed 1'000 square kilometres in size.

The first attempt towards establishing a network protected areas in the Carpathians dates back to 1991, when the “Association of Carpathian National Parks and Protected Areas” (ACANAP) was registered with the headquarters in Tatranská Lomnica (Slovakia), by the initiative and under the leadership of Prof. Ivan

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<sup>7</sup> Database of CNPA large-scale protected areas. [in:] ANPA (2004) “Towards a Carpathian Network of Protected Areas” Final Report, Alpine Network of Protected Areas, Gap, France.

Table 1. Transboundary complexes of adjacent protected areas in the Carpathian Mountains.

TBPA No	PA No	Country	Protected area (PA) name	Category international designations	PA size in ha	TBPA size in ha
1	1	CZ	Bilé Karpaty	PLA / BR	71 291	114 810
	2	SK	Biele Karpaty	PLA	43 519	
2	3	CZ	Beskydy	PLA	117 319	160 288
	4	SK	Kysuce (western part)	PLA	42 969	
3	5	SK	Kysuce (eastern part)	PLA	24 682	134 277
	6	PL	Żywiecki	LP	35 870	
	7	PL	Babiogórski	NP / BR	3 392	
	8	SK	Horná Orava	PLA	70 333	
4	9	PL	Tatzański	NP / BR	21 164	94 895
	10	SK	Tatransky	NP / BR	73 731	
5	11	PL	Pieniński	NP	2 346	60 489
	12	SK	Pieninsky	NP	3 750	
	13	PL	Popradzki	LP	54 393	
6	14	PL	Magurski	NP	19 962	*279 373
	15	SK	Východné Karpaty	PLA	25 307	
	16	PL	Jaślicki	LP	20 911	
	17	PL	Cišniańsko-Wetliński	LP / BR	51 146	
	18	PL	Doliny Sanu	LP / BR	33 480	
	19	PL	Bieszczady	NP / BR, ED	29 202	
	20	SK	Poloniny	NP / BR, ED	** 29 805	
	21	UA	Uzhansky	NNP / BR	39 159	
	22	UA	Nadsyansky	RLP / BR	19 428	

Table continued on page 18

\* With / \*\*without the Poloniny NP buffer zone of 10 973 ha also included into the trilateral East Carpathians BR.

Abbreviations used:

For names of countries: CZ = Czech Republic, H = Hungary, PL = Poland, RO = Romania,

SK = Slovak Republic, UA = Ukraine. For PA categories / legal status: NP = National Park,

NNP = National Nature Park, NtrP = Nature Park, NNR = National Nature Reserve,

LP = Landscape Park, RLP = Regional Landscape Park, PLA = Protected Landscape Area.

For PA international designations: BR = UNESCO MaB Biosphere Reserve, ED = European Diploma holder.

Table 1 (continued). Transboundary complexes of adjacent protected areas in the Carpathian Mountains.

TBPA No	PA No	Country	Protected area (PA) name	Category international designations	PA size in ha	TBPA size in ha
7	23	PL	Gór Słonnych	LP	51 392	121 890
	24	PL	Pogórze Przemyskiego	LP	61 862	
	25	UA	Verchniodnistrovske Beskidy	RLP	8 636	
8	26	H	Aggteleki	NP / BR	20 169	54 780
	27	SK	Slovenský Kras	NP / BR	34 611	
9	28	H	Karancs-Medves	PLA	6 709	23 480
	29	SK	Cerová vrchovina	PLA	16 771	
10	30	H	Duna Ipoly	NP	30 688	30 909
	31	SK	Kovacovske kopce (northern part)	NNR	221	
11	32	RO	Portile de Fier	NtrP	128 160	191 768
	33	SRB	Djerdap	NP	63 608	

Vološčuk, the former director of the Tatra National Park in the Slovak Republic.

According to the statutes for the Association, the goal of this organisation was to bring together administrations of national parks, reserves and other protected areas to develop on principles of common interest of nature protection of Carpathian Mountains. ACANAP organised several thematic scientific conferences on Carpathian nature, published the first interdisciplinary description of protected areas of the Carpathians<sup>8</sup>, and the "CARPATHI" bulletin, communicating conservation and research activities undertaken in the Carpathian region.

However, due to the legal status of the ACANAP association this non-governmental organisation could receive no financial support from the side of the Governments responsible

for the member protected areas, while no other sources like the current EU support funds (e.g. Interreg) were available in early 1990s.

Therefore, funding for planned Pan-Carpathian activities was limited to small amounts coming from member fees paid by several Carpathian protected areas, and support from other sources, like the Slovak National UNESCO-MaB Committee, the Ecological Society of the Slovak Academy of Sciences and Tatra National Park administration.

Due to the limited capacities - ACANAP activities were also limited, mainly to promoting scientific cooperation, by organising annual scientific conferences and several common publications on the Carpathian protected areas. The UNESCO-MaB report<sup>9</sup> published in 2003 stated: "Although several people mentioned

<sup>8</sup> Vološčuk, I., (ed.) (1999) *National Parks and Biosphere Reserves in Carpathians - The Last Nature Paradises*. ACANAP Tatranská Lomnica

<sup>9</sup> UNESCO. (2003). *Jardin.M., Fall, J., Thiry, E. "Five Transboundary Biosphere Reserves in Europe". Biosphere Reserves Technical Notes. UNESCO, Paris.*



this organisation as a positive contributor to co-operation in the area, it is unclear whether this is still operating.”.

Thus, a “lesson to be learned” by the initiators of any other future protected area networks is that the major disadvantage of the ACANAP is/was its legal status, providing for no financial support from the side of the Governments, which resulted in missing capacity to network park administrations.

Another important step towards networking in the Carpathians was the “Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative” (CEI, currently CERI) launched in 1999 as an informal international consortium of more than 50 partners (governmental, non-governmental, funding, scientific and academic organisations) from six countries of the Carpathian region, facilitated by WWF International, with the common “CEI Vision” aiming to achieve “the conservation of nature in the globally important Carpathian mountains and, at the same time, supporting local economy and culture for the lasting benefit of the people living in the heart of Europe”.

The Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative was the first common project focusing on the whole Carpathian region. Its activities included common studies and inventories of region’s resources, natural values and economy; establishing common GIS databases, The CEI published the “Status of the Carpathians” report providing the overall view on the Carpathian region and the “Carpathian List of Endangered Species”, as well as seventeen theme reports and several smaller fact-sheets on the Carpathians, in English and in Carpathian languages.

Furthermore, the CEI identified thirty priority areas for biodiversity conservation in the Carpathians encompassing some 15.6 per cent of the Carpathian Mountains area, basing on

outcomes of common biodiversity assessment on the “eco-regional” scale – which resulted in developing a vision for future protected areas in the Carpathians.

On the motion of the CEI the Carpathian-Danube Summit was convened in 2001 in Bucharest, attended by nine Heads of State and high level officials from five other countries, Ministers of Environment from eight countries, and high-level representatives of e.g. the World Bank, UNECE, UNDP, UNEP and the European Commission, as well as NGOs from the Carpathian and Danube regions.

The Summit adopted a “Declaration on Environment and Sustainable Development in the Carpathian-Danube region”, giving green light for the proposed regional multilateral agreement focusing on the Carpathians.

Also in 2001 the idea of establishing a network of protected areas in the Carpathians as the potentially official inter-governmental initiative had been raised for the first time at the meeting held by the Alpine Network of Protected Areas with the participation of invited Carpathian protected area managers from Poland, the Slovak Republic and Romania in October 2001 in Gran Paradiso National Park (Italy).

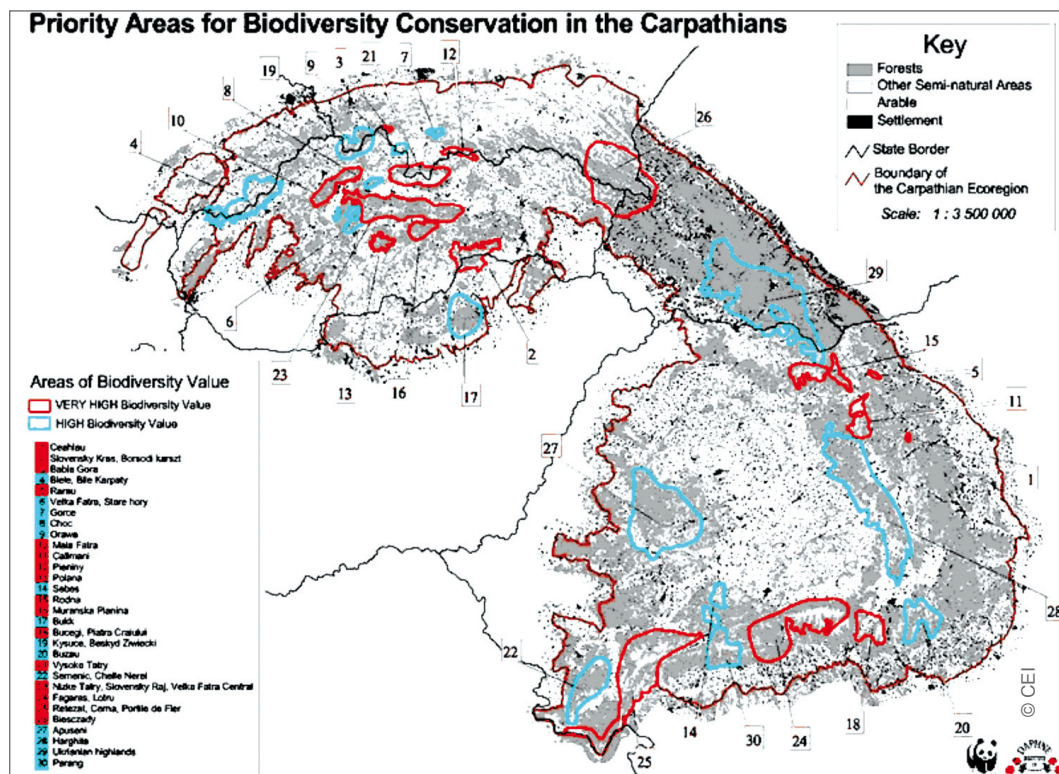
As the follow up of the Carpathian-Danube Summit, aware of the fact that efforts to protect, maintain and sustainable manage the natural resources of the Carpathians cannot be achieved by one country alone and require regional cooperation, and of the added value of transboundary cooperation in achieving ecological coherence; furthermore recognizing the experience gained in the framework of the Convention on the Protection of the Alps (Salzburg, 1991) as a successful model for the protection of the environment and sustainable development of mountain regions, providing a sound basis for new

partnership initiatives and further strengthening of cooperation between Alpine and Carpathian states - seven Carpathian countries decided to conclude a regional environmental agreement focusing on the Carpathians.

The official negotiation process facilitated by UNEP-ROE took only six months (from October 2002 to March 2003). Already at the Fifth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Kyiv, May 2003) seven Carpathian countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine) adopted the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (further as "the Carpathian Convention"), signed and later ratified by all seven Carpathian countries.

The Carpathian Convention provides the legal framework for international cooperation and multi-sectoral policy coordination, a platform for implementing joint strategies for nature protection and sustainable development in the Carpathians, and a forum for dialogue between all stakeholders involved. UNEP-ROE has been requested to act as the interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (ISCC).

In the course of official negotiations on the future regional agreement the Carpathian countries recognized the experience of the successful Alpine Network of Protected Areas established under the framework of the Alpine Convention and decided to follow this pattern of good practice.



► Map 3. Priority Areas for Biodiversity Conservation in the Carpathians.

The text of the Framework Convention contains an explicit commitment of the Parties to establish and support the future Carpathian Network of Protected Areas:

Carpathian Convention, Article 4 (5): "The Parties shall cooperate in developing an ecological network in the Carpathians, as a constituent part of the Pan-European Ecological Network, in establishing and supporting a Carpathian Network of Protected Areas, as well as enhance conservation and sustainable management in the areas outside of protected areas."

In 2003 the "Carpathian Network of Protected Areas Partnership Steering Committee" was officially established, composed of representatives nominated by relevant Ministries of all Carpathian countries. This Committee met in June 2003 in Berchtesgaden (Germany) and adopted its internal rules of procedure. Later the Committee launched the first common activities (e.g. the survey among the Carpathian protected areas investigating expectations of the future network members).

At the second meeting held in October 2003 in Smolenice (the Slovak Republic) the CNPA mission, goals and functions were drafted and other common activities (list and the common GIS map of Carpathian protected areas, and the ANPA technical report <sup>10</sup>) were considered.

The Steering Committee agreed that the cooperation within the CNPA is most likely to occur between active protected areas, i.e. those, which have their own staff, or a responsible administrative body, which can represent them; and that each partner protected area should be larger in size than 100 ha.

Two options for the structure of the future CNPA were considered. One option was to have a central and independent Management Unit, which would be located in one of the Carpathian countries, working in close collaboration with National Coordinators and directly with protected areas of the CNPA.

The other proposal was that the operational structure should be based on decentralised Management Unit/s, possibly several offices located in different Carpathian countries, working in collaboration with the National Coordinators. The Management Unit/s would facilitate communication and networking and report on CNPA issues to the Interim Secretariat in Vienna.

The third meeting held in May 2004 in Zakopane (Poland) was the last preparatory meeting where e.g. the recommendations to the Carpathian Convention Intergovernmental Committee on the official establishment of the network were drafted.

The preparatory work towards the establishment of the CNPA was facilitated by UNEP and supported by the Alpine countries, in particular Germany, France, Principality of Monaco, but also Norway and organisations such as ALPARC remaining the key partner of the CNPA, as well as the private business sector.

Pursuant to Article 4 on conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathian Convention - the First Conference of the Parties (COP1) to the Carpathian Convention held in Kyiv in December 2006 officially established the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) and the CNPA Steering Committee, serviced by the interim Secretariat.

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10 "Towards a Carpathian Network of Protected Areas. Final report." ANPA, June 2004.

Decision COP1/4 (12): “The Conference of the Parties decides to establish the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas, constituting a thematic network of cooperation of mountain protected areas in the Carpathian region, and to designate one CNPA Focal Point in each Party to start up and encourage cooperation in the management of protected Areas within and between the Carpathian countries”.

Decision COP1/4 (13): “The Conference of the Parties decides to establish the CNPA Steering Committee composed of the CNPA Focal Points of each country”.

Decision COP1/4 (15): “The Conference of the Parties requests the interim Secretariat to service the CNPA and its Steering Committee, and to coordinate the activities of the CNPA with the other bodies of the Carpathian Convention (the Working Group on conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity and the Conference of the Parties), pending the establishment of a Permanent Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention”.

Soon after COP1, in January 2007 the CNPA Steering Committee met in Vienna (Austria) and drafted the Terms of Reference for the CNPA (further “CNPA ToRs”). Mr. Mircea Verghet from Romania was elected as an informal chair to represent the CNPA SC in the ALPARC meetings as an observer.

The CNPA ToRs were prepared in consultation between the CNPA Steering Committee and the Carpathian Convention Working Group on conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity (further as “the CC Biodiversity Working Group”).

In October 2007 the Carpathian Convention Bureau adopted CNPA ToRs, thus providing the legal basis for the network. The CNPA shall

report to the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee through the Secretariat, which means that the CNPA is therefore made accountable for achieving the goals set up for this network under the Carpathian Convention.

The CNPA ToRs provide the legal mandate for the network and its member protected areas to contribute to and be involved in implementation of the first thematic Protocol to the Framework Convention - the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity, as well as other relevant future Protocols to the Framework Carpathian Convention.

The CNPA ToRs define the goals of the network and list possible activities to be included in the CNPA work programme. Pursuant to the CNPA ToRs this network “aims to contribute to the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians, and in particular to accomplishing goals listed in Article 4 of the Convention, and supporting the work and activities of the Working Group on the conservation of biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathian Convention”. CNPA shall contribute to and be involved in implementation of the thematic Protocols to the Framework Convention.

Resulting from the CNPA ToRs, the goals of the CNPA are as follows:

- Promotion of cooperation on protection, restoration of nature and sustainable use of natural and cultural resources of the Carpathians;
- Promotion of sustainable livelihoods and sustainable development of the Carpathians;
- Implementation of the relevant provisions of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity;
- Implementation of decisions and recommendations undertaken by the bodies estab-

lished under the Carpathian Convention as well as of other applicable relevant international legal instruments.

The CNPA ToRs adopted by the Carpathian Convention Bureau provide also official guidelines for the future work programme and activities of the network, which may include:

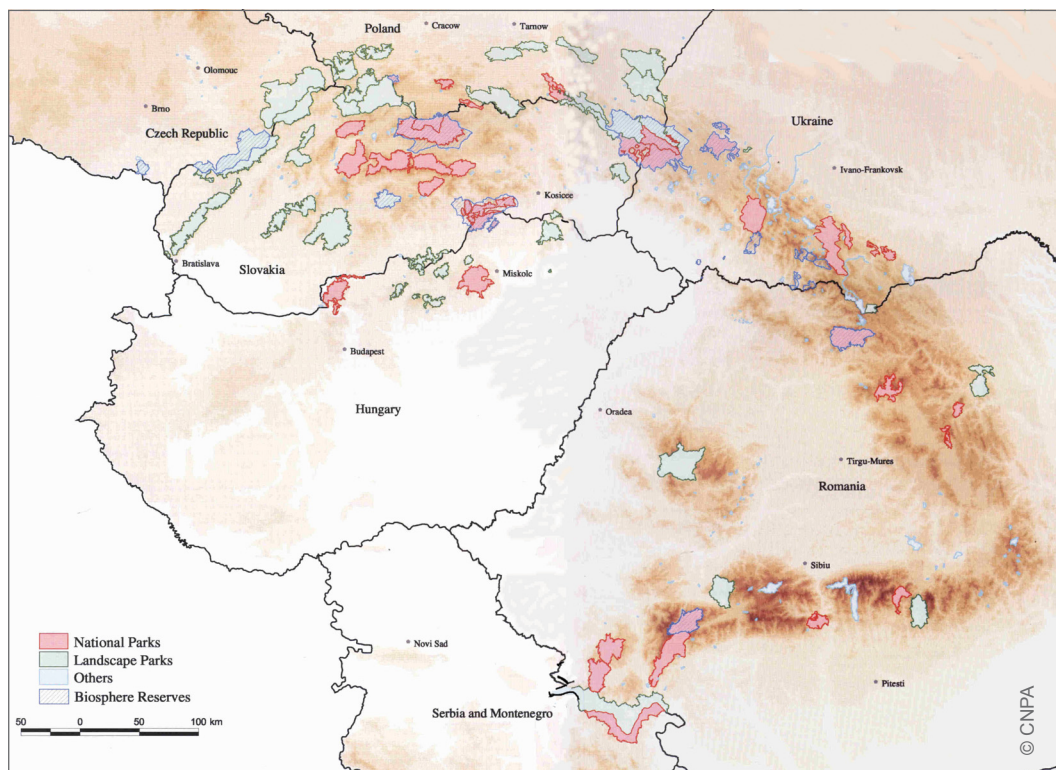
- Communication within the network;
- Coordination of common activities and projects undertaken by the network;
- Capacity building of the member protected areas and of the network;
- Common fundraising from external sources for activities of the network;
- Exchange of experience, skills, knowledge and data among network members, including through the CNPA working groups;
- Support for the activities of common thematic working groups established under the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee and common communication actions;
- Raising ecological awareness and promoting trans-boundary cooperation and sustainable development;
- Making recommendations on expansion of the existing and/or creation of new protected areas;
- Preparing reports, opinions and recommendations for the CC Biodiversity Working Group, for further submission to the Conference of the Parties and the relevant bodies established under the Carpathian Convention;
- Liaising and cooperating with other bodies established under the Carpathian Convention as well as with other relevant international, regional and national organisations under the guidance of the CNPA Steering Committee and coordination of the CC Biodiversity Working Group, thus building upon the vast experience and knowledge available.

To summarise - the CNPA as a regional thematic network of cooperation of mountain protected areas in the Carpathians shall contribute to the protection of nature and sustainable use of natural and cultural resources of the Carpathians within the framework of the Carpathian Convention, enhance the capacity of the CNPA members to achieve their statutory objectives and cooperate within this Network, facilitate and support the common work of protected areas being members of the CNPA. The CNPA shall contribute to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention in close cooperation with the bodies of the Convention, e.g. the Carpathian Convention Biodiversity Working Group or the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee. Moreover, the Network shall encourage cooperation between the Carpathian protected areas, designated as members of the CNPA, and with protected area networks of other regions.

Later the CNPA Steering Committee met twice, in November 2007 in Budapest (Hungary) and in April 2008 in Sibiu (Romania) to discuss organisational issues and the planned first Protected Area Conference. ALPARC in cooperation with the CNPA Steering Committee designed and prepared the website for the CNPA and published a multilingual promotional brochure on the CNPA.

The Second Conference of the Parties (COP2) to the Carpathian Convention held in Bucharest in June 2008 adopted the first thematic Protocol to the Framework Convention - the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity (Bucharest, Romania, 19 June 2008) and encouraged Parties, pending the ratification and entry into force of the Protocol, whenever possible to start its implementation.





► Map 4. The Carpathian Network of Protected Areas.

The text of the Protocol contains an explicit commitment of the Parties to support and facilitate cooperation under the CNPA:

Carpathian Convention, Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity, Article 14 (1): “The Parties shall support and facilitate cooperation under the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas established by the Conference of the Parties and encourage the protected area administrations to take part in the cooperation within this Network.”

COP2 requested the CNPA Steering Committee to further discuss and elaborate the proposal for a permanent arrangement for the CNPA taking into account results of the Protected Areas Conference and requested the

interim Secretariat in cooperation with CNPA Steering Committee, with the support of the ALPARC and Task Force of Protected Areas of the Alpine Convention Secretariat and in collaboration with the other CNPA partners, to prepare a Work Plan and Medium Term Strategy for CNPA, and invited the Protected Areas Conference to consider and provide inputs to these documents.

At its fourth meeting held in June 2008 in Bucharest the CNPA Steering Committee decided on the logo for the CNPA and on establishing the CNPA Unit to facilitate further cooperation within the network on an interim basis until the decision on the proposal for a permanent CNPA arrangement to be taken by COP3. Furthermore the meeting agreed upon the pro-

cedure of elaborating proposals of the CNPA Medium Term Strategy and Work Plan for 2009 that shall be presented to the Protected Areas Conference.

In July 2008 the Parties officially designated their protected areas being members of the CNPA, basing on country-by-country autodesignation rule: the Governments decided which protected area categories and which protected areas (depending on the geographical scope of the Carpathian Convention in each country) they designate as members of the network.

This formal step allowed convening the first Protected Areas Conference held on 23-24 September 2008 in Poiana Brasov (Romania), with the financial support of the WWF Danube Carpathian Programme. As the follow up of the conference the CNPA currently develops its Medium Term Strategy and Work Plan for the coming years.

The CNPA and its member protected areas shall contribute to the work of different consultative and coordinative bodies as well as expert and/or scientific teams, both in-country and common (international), to be established under the Carpathian Convention for the implementation of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity (further as "Biodiversity Protocol"), as well as other relevant future Protocols to the Framework Carpathian Convention.

By the end of 2009 the Biodiversity Protocol was ratified by the four Carpathian countries: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Ukraine. Thus, pursuant to the Rules of Procedure adopted by COP1, this first thematic Protocol to the Framework Convention came into force on 28 April 2010. Romania ratified the Biodiversity Protocol in July 2010, while the ratification procedure in the remaining two

Carpathian countries is in progress. Therefore, the Biodiversity Protocol can already be implemented, as encouraged by COP2, by the above mentioned five Parties to the Carpathian Convention, within their territories.

However, launching common activities at the broader eco-regional scale would still require the adoption of a Strategic Action Plan for its implementation in cooperation between the Parties. Furthermore, other possible thematic Protocols to the Carpathian Convention (e.g. on sustainable forestry, sustainable agriculture and rural development, sustainable tourism, spatial planning, water/river basin management) are, as for 2010, not yet available. Last but not least, funding available for the CNPA activities is still limited.

Nevertheless, this time the protected area network in the Carpathians was established as a governmentally driven, officially supported initiative and not a non-governmental organisation or association, like in the case of ACANAP.

Since 2001 the activities towards establishing the CNPA are supported by UNEP, ALPARC (Task Force of Protected Areas of the Alpine Convention Secretariat) and the Governments of the Alpine countries.

ALPARC in cooperation with the CNPA Steering Committee designed and prepared the website for the CNPA ([www.carpathianparks.org](http://www.carpathianparks.org)) and published several reports and brochures resulting from cooperation between the Alpine and Carpathian protected areas. Soon after the accession of the first four Carpathian countries to the European Community in 2004 a common conference on Natura 2000 and Emerald implementation in the Alps and the Carpathians was held in Neukirchen (Austria).

In 2005 and 2006 two common Alpine-Carpathian workshops were organized: on integrated management of protected areas (in Mala Fatra NP, Slovakia, June 2006) and on management of tourism and sustainable development in protected areas (in Piatra Craiului NP, Romania, July 2006). In July 2009 the Alpine-Carpathian colloquium “Large carnivores: management, research and public relation strategies of the protected areas” was held in Nizke Tatry National Park, Slovakia.

The first common project undertaken with the objective to accomplish the goals of the Carpathian Convention was the ‘Carpathian Project’ of the total value of € 4.260.000, implemented between 2005 and 2008 in cooperation between 18 partners from ten countries, where UNEP - Vienna ISCC was the project Lead Partner. The ‘Carpathian Project’ focused on establishing basic data platform, facilitating general strategic process for developing integrative policies, guidelines and instruments; promoting education and awareness raising as well as the transfer of experiences.

In 2009 UNEP Vienna ISCC prepared the proposal for the next common project with the focus on integrated management of biological and landscape diversity for sustainable regional development and ecological connectivity in the Carpathians. The objectives of the proposed project include:

- Enhancing the integrated management of natural assets and protected areas in the Carpathians
- Improving the harmonization of management plans aiming at common standards for protection and sustainable use of habitats and species
- Fostering ecological connectivity in line with the requirements of NATURA 2000 and the Pan-European Ecological Network

- Encouraging and supporting cooperative agreements for the management of protected areas in border regions
- Developing and promoting compatible biodiversity indicators and monitoring system, and regional inventories of species and habitats
- Promoting sustainable regional development based on the economic value of areas with high biodiversity, and increasing awareness on the importance of integrated management of the natural assets of the Carpathians as a development factor
- Promoting an intensive knowledge transfer to stakeholders at all levels and with other mountain regions (Alps, Balkans / Dinaric Arc)

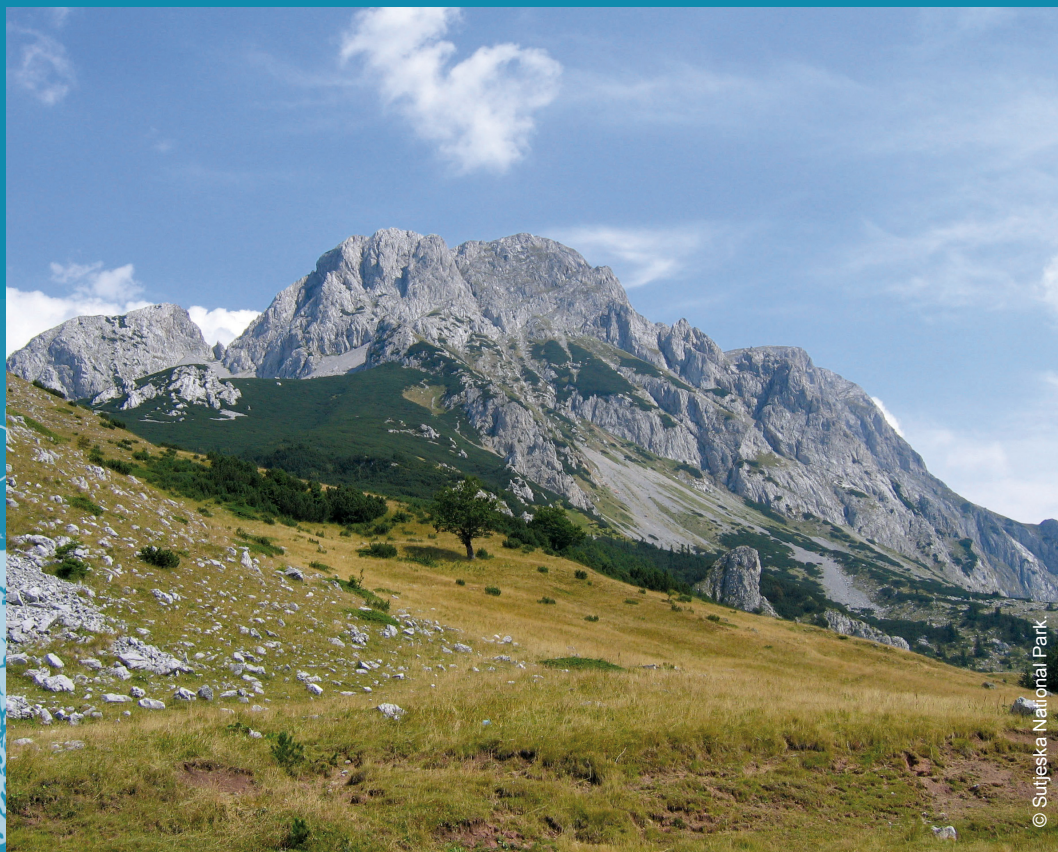
It is important to note that several activities planned under this project could enhance the further development of the ecological network in the Carpathians in the strategic fields of intervention defined by the recently adopted Biodiversity Protocol of the Carpathian Convention, by e.g. improving the continuity and connectivity of natural and semi-natural habitats (Article 9 of the Biodiversity Protocol) as well as enhancing conservation and sustainable management in the areas outside of protected areas in the Carpathians (Article 15), and harmonisation and coordination of measures undertaken in border areas (Article 16). Planned activities include also support for the development of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas and transnational Regional Wetland Centre.

On the other hand, the involvement of the CNPA member areas under the proposed project would be indispensable for the implementation of activities aimed at e.g. the collection of data and identification of areas with most endangered habitats and/or species, delineating mainstays and priority connecting corridors of species, and the development of the Carpathian Red List of Habitats and the Carpathian Red List of Species.

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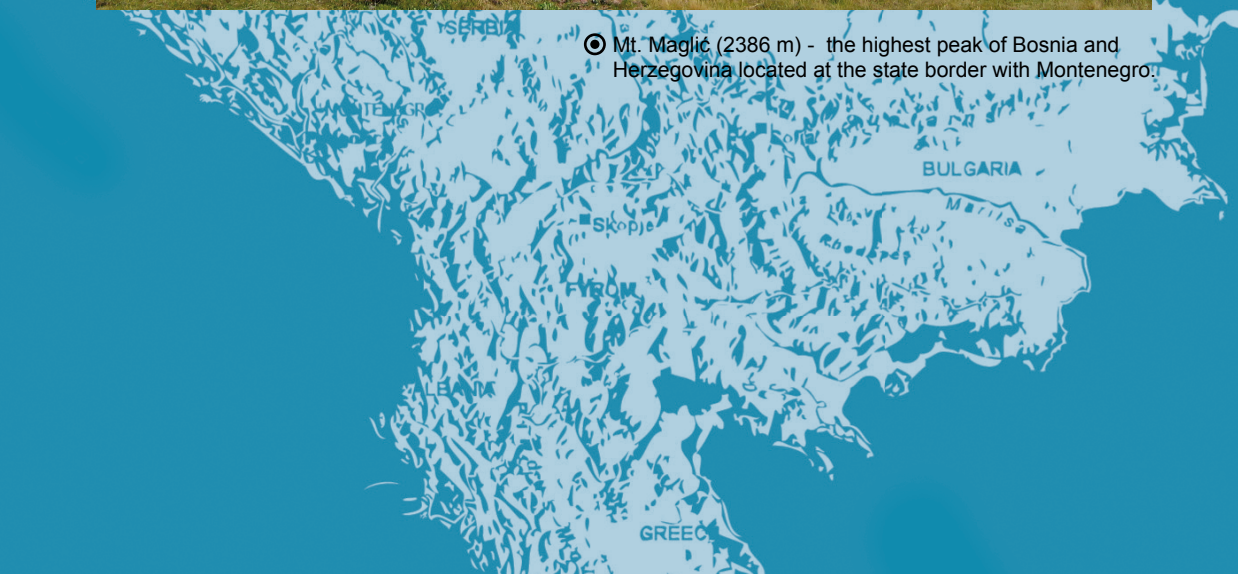
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© Sutjeska National Park

- Mt. Maglic (2386 m) - the highest peak of Bosnia and Herzegovina located at the state border with Montenegro.





## PART 2. POTENTIAL FOR ESTABLISHING THE MOUNTAIN PROTECTED AREA NETWORK IN SEE

### 2.1. Ecological network in the South Eastern Europe

The three countries of the ENVSEC-SEE region where new protected areas were designated since the previous regional assessment done by UNEP<sup>11</sup> are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia. For the purposes of this report, aimed at protected area networking in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc, protected area systems of the two countries remaining out of the geographical scope of the current ENVSEC-SEE project area are additionally described below – Bulgaria and Croatia, both neighbouring and sharing mountain ranges with the ENVSEC-SEE countries.

#### Albania

As for June 2009 the protected area system of Albania covered 361'569<sup>12</sup> ha (which accounts for some 12.58 per cent of the country's territory). Large-scale protected areas in Albania include 14 national parks (of the total area of 176'584 ha), managed nature reserves (82'530 ha) and protected landscapes (95'884 ha), while some 200 nature monuments supplement the ecological network of Albania.

By the end of the year 2020 protected areas in Albania are expected to cover 588'817 ha, thus the share of protected areas in country's territory is expected to increase to some 20.48 per cent. The designation of the new "Alps Na-

tional Park" (77'458 ha), part of the planned transboundary area "Prokletije/Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains", expected to incorporate three already existing protected areas on the Albanian side (National Park "Thethi", National Park "Lugina e Valbones" and a Strict Nature Reserve "Lumi i Gashit" of the total area of 13'630) is planned for 2010-2011. The designation of Korabi Protected Landscape (31'360.54 ha) in the planned transboundary area of "Sharr/Šar Planina - Korab - Deshat/Dešat" is planned for 2012.

#### Bosnia and Herzegovina

As for 2009 the protected area system of Bosnia and Herzegovina encompassed almost 50'567 ha (which accounted for some 0.99 per cent of the country's territory), and included three national parks Kozara (3'375 ha), Sutjeska (17'250 ha) and Una (19'800 ha); two nature parks Blidinje and Hutovo Blato (the only Ramsar site designated in Bosnia and Herzegovina), five strict nature reserves, three managed nature reserves, 29 special reserves (six geological, 22 botanical and one ornithological), 16 nature landscape reserves, a large number of natural monuments, and seven memorial nature monuments. It has to be noted that the above protected area categories are sometimes overlapping, as e.g. the Strict Na-

<sup>11</sup> *Enhancing Transboundary Biodiversity Management in South Eastern Europe*

(2006) Niewiadomski, Z. (Ed.). *Report prepared under the Environment and Security Initiative*. UNEP Vienna.

<sup>12</sup> Source of information: *Nature Protection Policies Directorate, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration of Albania, June 2009.*

ture Reserve “Perućica” is located within the borders of Sutjeska National Park. National park “Una” designated in May 2008 in the Una-Sana canton is the first national park of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and third one in the country, encompassing over 39 per cent of areas currently protected in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

According to the statements made during CBD COP9 the new protected areas to be designated in Bosnia and Herzegovina are national park Bjelasnica Igman, nature park Jahorina, and protected areas in Prenj - Cabulja - Cvrsnica - Vran area. Existing national parks Kozara and Sutjeska are to be enlarged. The spatial plan for the Republic of Srpska proposes designation of some 15 to 20 per cent of the RS territory as protected areas, of different legal and protective management categories. According to the most recent proposals developed by the scientists the area of Sutjeska National Park (currently 17'250 ha ) shall be extended by some 8'331 ha (including some 3'500 hectares of the Tara river canyon) to reach the size of some 25'581 ha, which would then again make Sutjeska the largest protected area not only in the Republic of Srpska but in the whole country.

## Bulgaria

As for 2006 the protected area system of Bulgaria encompassed 583'038 ha (which accounted for some 5.26 per cent of the country's territory). The system included 55 reserves (50'697 ha in total), three national parks (as much as 193'048 ha in total), 359 natural landmarks (17'987 ha), 35 managed reserves (4'452 ha), ten nature parks (264'787 ha) and 402 protected sites (52'067

ha). Many areas in Bulgaria are holders of international designations like the UNESCO-MaB Biosphere Reserve (17 areas in 1996). There were two parallel proposals considered by the Ministry of Environment and Water for designation of the Nature Park Eastern Rhodopes with an area of about 200'000 ha and the Nature Park Western Rhodopes with an area of about 800'000 ha.

## Croatia

As for 2006 the protected area system of Croatia encompassed 512'480 ha<sup>13</sup> (which accounted for some 9.05 per cent of the country's territory). The system included 444 protected areas in total, of various legal protective categories: two strict nature reserves (2'395.35 ha in total), eight national parks (93'181.48 ha), ten nature parks (305'864.38 ha), 79 special reserves (28'796.5 ha), 103 natural monuments (761.79 ha), 69 important landscapes (71'467.08 ha), 38 forest parks (9'051.95 ha) and 135 horticultural monuments (961.82 ha). Two protected areas (Plitvice Lakes National Park and Velebit Mountain Nature Park) in Croatia are designated as UNESCO-MaB Biosphere Reserves, while four other areas are listed as Ramsar sites.

Five out of eight national parks and six out of ten nature parks of Croatia cover mountain areas. These are: Krka National Park (10'900 ha), Northern Velebit National Park (10'900 ha), Paklenica National Park (9'600 ha), Plitvice Lakes National Park (29'482 ha), Risnjak National Park (6'400), Biokovo Nature Park (19'550 ha), Medvednica Nature Park (22'826 ha), Papuk Nature Park (33'600 ha), Učka Nature Park (16'000 ha), Velebit Mountain Nature Park (200'000 ha) and Žumberak-Samoborsko gorje (33'300 ha).

<sup>13</sup> Source: “Biodiversity of Croatia” (2006). State Institute for Nature Protection, Ministry of Culture – Republic of Croatia. Zagreb.

Planned new protected areas in Croatia included proposed nature parks in Lastovo Archipelago, and in Neretva Delta (Ramsar site, 11'500 ha).

## **The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

The protected area system of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 2006 included 77 areas covering an area of 188'154 ha (which accounts for 7.32 per cent of the country's territory), of the following categories: national park, strict natural reserve, natural monument, landscape with special natural characteristics, and area outside nature reserves containing certain plant and animal species.

The system includes three national parks (NP Galičica covering 22'750 ha, NP Mavrovo 73'088 ha and NP Pelister 12'500 ha) together encompassing 108'338 ha (thus 4.21 per cent of the country area), four strict nature reserves together encompassing 12'855 ha, 53 natural monuments covering together the area of 61'978 ha, three areas classified as 'landscape with special natural characteristics' covering together 2'338 ha, plus 14 areas located outside nature reserves and designated for protection of certain plant and animal species covering together 2'645 ha.

The current Spatial Plan of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2004-2020) anticipates the increase in the share of protected areas up to some twelve per cent of the country area. One of the proposed new protected areas in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is the planned national park encompassing Šar Planina mountain range at the border with Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244.

## **Montenegro**

In August 2009 the protected area system of Montenegro encompassed some 124'788 ha (which accounts for some 9.03 per cent of the country's territory), and included five national parks: Biogradska Gora (5'400 ha), Durmitor (33'895 ha), Lovćen (6'400 ha), Prokletije (16'038 ha) and Skadar Lake (40'000 ha); 43 natural monuments (7'733 ha in total), four areas of exceptional natural values (322.5 ha in total), as well as the Kotor-Risan Bay (15'000 ha) protected by the municipal law.

The Durmitor National Park is part of the UNESCO-MaB Tara River Basin Biosphere Reserve (182'889 ha, designated in 1976) and together with the Tara river canyon was in 1980 inscribed on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites (WHS). Kotor-Risan Bay was designated as the WHS already in 1979, while the National Park Biogradska Gora has been nominated for inclusion on this list. The Skadar Lake National Park was in 1995 included on the List of Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar list).

During CBD COP9 in 2008 the Government of Montenegro committed itself to establish the national park in Prokletije Mountains (designated in August 2009) and several marine/coastal protected areas (islands Katiki, Stari Ulcinj and Platomuni).

The current "Spatial Plan of Montenegro until 2020" developed in 2008 proposes the designation of several new mountain protected areas: Orjen National Park (19'000 ha), Bioč-Maglič-Volujak Regional Park (7'200 ha); Ljubišnja Regional Park (7'800 ha); Sinjavina and Šaranci Regional Park (42'400 ha); Komovi Regional Park (21'000 ha), Rumija Regional Park (12'200 ha), and Turjak and Hajla Regional Park (14'600 ha). Furthermore, the above mentioned Plan

proposes the extension of the Durmitor National Park by some 20'000 ha towards the state border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, according to the above Spatial Plan, the total size of large scale protected areas in the mountains of Montenegro would increase from the current 61'733 ha by additional 149'162 ha to reach the total number of 210'895 ha.

In result, the protected area system of Montenegro could encompass the total area of some 319'645 ha which would be as much as some 23.14 per cent of the country's terrestrial territory (without the planned marine/coastal protected areas).

## Serbia

In 2006 the protected area system of Serbia encompassed over 6.6 per cent of the country's territory and included five national parks of the total area of 158'986.36 ha: Djerdap (63'608.45 ha), Fruska Gora (25'393 ha), Kopanik (11'809,91 ha), Šar planina (39'000 ha in Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244) and Tara (19'175 ha), and 19 regional parks of nature. Nature reserves in Serbia encompass some 83'024.1 ha, and include 59 nature reserves (where only six nature reserves exceed the size of 100 ha) and 20 special nature reserves (usually bigger areas, up to several thousand hectares). The protected area system of Serbia is supplemented by 17 protected landscapes, 43 cultural-historical landscapes, and over 320 nature monuments.

The Stara Planina Nature Park with the area of 142'219.54 ha<sup>14</sup> is currently the largest protected area within the scope of the ENVSEC-SEE project. The Golija Nature Park (the sec-

ond largest nature park in Serbia, 75'183 ha) is bearing the UNESCO-MaB designation as the Golija Studenica Biosphere Reserve. Other larger mountain nature parks of Serbia are Suva Planina Nature Park (located to SW from Stara Planina, approx. 21'354 ha), Sićevočka Klisura Nature Park (located to NW from Suva Planina, 7'746 ha), and Vršacke Planine (located at the state border with Romania, 4'177 ha). Furthermore, the two new protected areas designated in Serbia in 2008/2009 are the Nature Park Mokra Gora and Protected Landscape Zaovine, in the proposed transboundary protected area "Tara – Drina".

## Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244

In Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244 the protected area system encompasses some 46'504.6 hectares (which accounts for 4.27 per cent of the territory) and includes one national park, eleven small-scale nature reserves (covering together only 954.8 ha), 35 nature monuments (covering together some 4'868 ha), two protected landscapes - the Mirusha River Gorge and the Germia Mountains<sup>15</sup> (together covering only 1'681.8 ha) and two forest parks. Nature Monuments and Protected Landscapes are declared and managed by the local municipalities.

The Mali Sharr NP (Sharr Mountains NP) is currently the only national park, located in the southernmost part at the border of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and covering 39'000 ha, which accounts for over 84 per cent of the total acreage protected in Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244. There are also proposals

<sup>14</sup> Some sources define the area of Stara Planina Nature Park as 114'332 ha

<sup>15</sup> According to USAID Kosovo Biodiversity Assessment of 2003

to extend the Mali Sharr National Park area to the South, along the border of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and towards the border of Albania.

Most recently the experts from Prishtina University carried out assessment of natural values of Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains and the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning

of Kosovo proposed the inclusion of Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains National Park designation procedure in the Legislative Strategy of the Government of Kosovo for 2010, which can provide for the designation of Bjeshkët e Nemuna National Park (62'398 ha). Moreover, according to the USAID report (2003) different municipalities have submitted 150 new proposals for natural monuments.

## ***2.2. Potential partners of the sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans / Dinaric Arc***

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In order to initiate the establishment of the possible sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc the decision on selecting the group of most relevant partners capable to initiate activities towards networking, become the leaders of such initiative, and later involve other partners must be taken as the first step.

As for the geographical scope of the possible sub-regional protected area network encompassing the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc – it is recommended that in addition to the countries and territories within the scope of the current ENVSEC-SEE project (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia) two other countries could possibly join the initiative - Bulgaria and Croatia, both neighbouring and sharing mountain ranges with the ENVSEC-SEE countries. The potential involvement of Slovenian partners should also be considered, no matter that the mountain protected areas of Slovenia are already members of ALPARC.

The main stakeholders of the possible sub-regional network would be mountain protected areas, thus it should be the protected area man-

agers to initiate consultations among partner protected areas, and with the other important potential supporters and partners in their countries, such as relevant Ministries, supervisory governmental agencies responsible for protected areas (e.g. the Public Enterprise National Parks of Montenegro) and scientific institutions (e.g. the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia, the Institute for Nature Protection in Podgorica, the Institute for the Protection of the Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage of Republic of Srpska).

For obvious reason, the first important criterion for the selection of potential partners for the sub-regional network of mountain protected areas is the location of a particular area in the mountains.

Secondly, following the experience from the Alps and the Carpathians – the cooperation within the network is most likely to occur between protected areas which have their own staff and a responsible administrative body, which can represent them.

Thirdly, it is suggested that initially the possible protected area network should begin from enhancing cooperation and experience exchange between large-scale protected area, thus e.g. bigger in size than 1'000 hectares.



Another criteria for selecting partners for the 'team of leaders' to initiate consultations on the potential for networking protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc could be the mission of the administrative body represented in such group, to be focused primarily on nature protection.

This would initially further limit the number of partners to mainly representatives of e.g. national park administrations (sometimes having the special legal status described in some SEE countries as 'Public Enterprise National Park'), but should allow to bring together representatives of administrations and management bodies best motivated for launching cooperation through the network of protected areas.

Of course, the use of such criterion should not exclude protected areas managed e.g. by the municipal or state forest administrations from the future activities of the network, such criterion should only serve for defining the possible composition of the 'core team' initiating the cooperation. Furthermore, depending on country specifics, representatives of municipal or state forest administrations should in several cases be involved in this 'core team', e.g. in order to involve the managers of the Stara Planina Nature Park in Serbia (managed by the Public Enterprise Srbijašume), being currently the largest protected area within the scope of the ENVSEC-SEE project.

Last, but not least, the list of protected areas to be involved in the activities of the possible future sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc would grow with the designation of the currently planned new protected areas, e.g. the Alps national park in Albania, national park Bjelasnica Igman in Bosnia and Herzegovina,

national park Bjeshkët e Nemuna on the Kosovo<sup>16</sup> side of Prokletije mountains, national park Šar Planina in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and several mountain regional parks in Montenegro.

The administrations of these youngest members of the SEE protected area family could largely benefit from the experience of more advanced colleagues. But, for obvious reasons, representatives of these not-yet-existing administrations cannot currently be considered in the nearest future as potential members of the 'team of leaders' initiating the consultations on the possible sub-regional protected area network. A similar reservation relates to the administrations of the most recently designated protected areas (e.g. Una National Park in Bosnia and Herzegovina or Prokletije National Park in Montenegro) which should currently remain focused on building their capacities to accomplish their statutory objectives and making their protected areas operational.

Should all the above criteria be applied – the members of the 'team of leaders' expected to initiate consultations on the potential for establishment of a sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc could potentially recruit from among the representatives of two national parks in Bosnia and Herzegovina, three national parks and seven nature parks in Bulgaria, five national parks and six nature parks in Croatia, three national parks in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, three national parks in Montenegro, four national parks and two nature parks in Serbia, and one national park in Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244 (which will together make 36 protected areas potentially contributing to the consultations, including 15 large-scale mountain protected ar-

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<sup>16</sup> Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244

eas within the scope of the current ENVSEC-SEE project, and eleven large-scale mountain protected areas of Bulgaria and Croatia).

As for the potential representatives of the Albanian mountain protected areas - the decision which mountain protected area administrations should become involved in this activity should be left to the Nature Protection Policies Directorate, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration of Albania, as a focal point for communication in this respect.

The proposed tentative list of protected areas which could possibly contribute to the formation of the 'team of leaders' initiating consultations on the potential for establishment of a sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc is provided in Annex 1 to this report.

Within the geographical scope of the ENVSEC-SEE project area (like in the Alps or Carpathians) there is a wide range of different national legal designations for protected areas, e.g. national parks, nature parks, strict nature reserves, resource reserves, special reserves, nature landscape reserves, managed nature reserves, nature monuments, sites of special natural character (serving for species protection), memorial nature monuments, protected landscapes or protected seascapes.

It should be emphasised here that capacities of protected areas to become active members and contributors to the possible sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc are different among the countries of the South-Eastern European region, even among the group of protected areas bearing apparently 'the same' legal designation of e.g. a national park.

Even though areas designated as 'national parks' match the criteria for the IUCN Category II, it has to be stressed that the IUCN categorisation system is mostly based on the ultimate purpose of area designation. In fact the 'label' of a national park does not tell much about the set of its legal and operational arrangements. Due to different national legislation national parks in particular countries may have completely different legal powers, duties, functions, law enforcement tools, and operational capacities.

Secondly, depending on the location, national parks may have very different operational context, to large extent influencing its management objectives and possibilities for implementing conservation measures. A park located in a remote and scarcely populated region (like e.g. national parks in Bulgaria designated outside of populated areas) can operate in a very different manner than the park surrounded by, or encompassing numerous communities and settlements. Differences between the situation in the Alps on one hand and in the Carpathians or Balkans on the other is visible, partly resulting from historical factors. For instance, the private ownership of land in the Alps continued for centuries, while in several countries of the former Soviet bloc private owners were expropriated around 1950s.

Therefore, several national parks in the Alps have limited legal powers concerning the land management of their area, as it is sometimes almost entirely owned by the local municipalities and private land owners (incl. e.g. privately owned high-mountain glaciers in some Alpine parks). Similarly, nature parks in Bulgaria often include populated areas, settlements and resorts. In the above situation decisions on the protection, use and development of the land have to take into account the needs of the local population and rights of the land owners

concerning the use of natural resources of the area. Thus, national park management in e.g. the Alps requires reaching consensus with the local municipalities, gaining the support of the local inhabitants, and involving local stakeholders in the protection of natural resources and sustainable development projects.

The opposite situation is when the prevailing part of national park area is state-owned, like in the majority of Carpathian national parks, or many protected areas in the South-Eastern Europe. Such legal status of the park area largely facilitates enforcement of the strict protection of nature, restricting park visitation to marked tourist trails, or conducting scientific research, while the development functions are not a top priority.

Resulting from the above, national parks in the Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe are commonly perceived as much more conservation- and science-oriented than the national parks in Western Europe. However, in recent years the implementation of the Natura 2000 concept in the EU Member States largely facilitated enhancement of protective and scientific capacities in protected areas of the Western Europe, having much higher financial and technical potential than e.g. the countries of the South-Eastern Europe.

For many reasons, detailed maps and resource inventories as well as technically advanced management planning tools (like the digitalised geographical information system or aerial photos) and comprehensive or regularly updated and revised management plans may not yet be available for national park managers in all countries of the South Eastern European region. Therefore, national parks located in different countries of the region may have completely different number and professional composition of staff, operational budgets, field equipment, and research facilities.

Thus, depending on national institutional arrangements and funding possibilities in particular countries of the South Eastern European region - operational capacities of national parks, and their capacities to contribute to the formation and operation of the possible protected area network may significantly vary between countries.

However, the objective and task for such network is to allow sharing, cumulating and building the capacities of its member areas, to accomplish their statutory objectives, and to act as cooperation partners.

### ***2.3. Comparison of conditions for protected area networks in the Alps, Carpathians and Balkans / Dinaric Arc***

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The political, legislative, administrative, socio-economic, cultural and historical context for protected area network establishment and operations is different in the Alpine, Carpathian and Balkan / Dinaric regions. Thus, solutions successful in one of the above regions may not necessarily be suitable in other regions, and should be adjusted to the 'local' conditions, e.g. management culture, staff capacity, or financial

resources potentially available. A brief analysis of only few selected factors (legal basis, institutional setting, languages, and funding opportunities) having influence on the potential for success of the protected area networking initiative is the best illustration of such different situations:

## Legal basis

The network of protected areas in the Alps (ALPARC) largely benefits from the long history of the Alpine Convention, as a regional multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) being a legal basis for ALPARC establishment. The Alpine Convention has been ratified by all Alpine countries long ago, and a number of thematic Protocols to this framework convention is in force for years. Resulting from the above - protected areas and other partners for cooperation under the ALPARC structure had enough time to familiarize, select the most relevant partners, set up organizational framework, build up working alliances for different fields of networking; and learn how they could work together, how to gain political and social support and how to benefit from available European funding, by jointly approaching such opportunities.

In the Carpathians the process of developing legal basis for common activities of the protected area network (CNPA) has not yet been finalized, due to much shorter history of the MEA for the Carpathian region than in the Alps. The framework Carpathian Convention was ratified few years ago, and its first thematic Protocol, most relevant for protected areas and their network, has so far been ratified only by five Parties of the Convention and came into force on 28 April 2010. Other thematic Protocols relevant and important for protected areas (e.g. on sustainable forestry or tourism) have not yet been finalized and adopted for signature.

As for the South Eastern Europe – the ‘Belgrade Statement’ (in Article 22) recognized the benefits from the existing legally binding instruments for the protection and sustainable development of the mountain regions like the Alpine and the Carpathian Convention, and welcomed the initiative of South-Eastern European countries to develop such instruments. The pro-

posed text of the possible MEA for the SEE region has already been drafted, but there was either little or even no official follow up in particular countries to this proposal so far. Thus, the potential for the regional MEA for the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc is still an open question.

However, the consultations on the potential for protected area networking in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc should not remain suspended until the opening of the official negotiation procedures on the possible ‘Balkan Convention’, as the sooner the managers of the protected areas in the SEE region recognize the added values of acting as a network, identify potential benefits and opportunities, consult this idea with their supervisory bodies and colleagues, and jointly manage to find the way to cooperate under such network – the better designed network and the stronger the cooperation could be in the future.

## Institutional setting

The ALPARC network has a fully developed organizational and functional structure, with its General Assembly, international and national steering committees, numerous working groups, and an operational coordination unit with a headquarters and permanent staff, recently included (as the ‘task Force Protected Areas’) into the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention.

The Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) has a different status, of the network explicitly established under the Carpathian Convention as the inter-governmental initiative, which can hopefully prevent the CNPA from sharing the fate of the former ACANAP. However, no consensus on the possible location of the future Permanent Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention has so far been reached by the Parties, and consultations continue for

years. Similarly, the organisational and functional setup of the CNPA has not yet been decided, and the fragile partnership is constantly exposed to ambitions of different countries to take the 'lead' in the CNPA cooperation, pursue their own interests and dominate over the other partners, which does not help to build trust among the future partners of cooperation under the network. Last, but not least, the officially designated national focal points have little capacity to initiate or coordinate the possible common activities of the network, having either limited or none institutional backing and support for launching such initiatives.

In the South Eastern Europe issues concerning the possible legal status of the protected area network or its organizational and functional setup have not yet even been discussed.

## Languages

Languages are most probably the 'competitive advantage' of the SEE region, facilitating communication between the partners and limiting operational costs for the possible network, compared to the situation in the Alps and the Carpathians.

In the Alps the main spoken languages (French, Italian, German and Slovenian) are quite different, thus the ALPARC decided to operate simultaneously in these four languages, by translating documents and publications, and providing simultaneous translation at the meetings organised by ALPARC. The obvious benefit of this solution is that documents and publications translated to all national languages are therefore understandable for e.g. all members of protected area staff in all Alpine countries, while simultaneous translation at the meetings provides for active involvement of representatives and experts from all Alpine countries, regardless of their foreign language abilities.

On the other hand - a considerable part of funds, time and effort has to be allocated for facilitating communication among the network in several languages. However, languages such as German or French are often taught in schools, thus many people involved in cooperation under ALPARC can easily communicate despite their nationality during e.g. seminars, workshops or meetings of ALPARC working groups.

In the Carpathians each of the seven countries has its own language (Czech, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian, Serbo-Croat, Slovak and Ukrainian), thus the number of relevant spoken languages is almost twice higher than in the Alps. Only the Czech and Slovak languages are to some extent similar and mutually understandable, and in general none of these seven languages is taught in schools in other Carpathian countries (except for several smaller regions with larger ethnic minorities). Simultaneously the CNPA is not yet funded by the Parties to the Convention, thus cannot provide for translations of either documents or meetings. This is why the common 'lingua franca' in the Carpathians is English, which results in the obvious impediment for direct involvement of a larger group of people in cooperation, as English language skills are still scarce in many countries of the Carpathian region, even among protected area managers, in particular of the older generations. This will probably improve in the future, but the only common language for the CNPA would remain English.

The situation in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc is more promising, as most countries in the ENVSEC-SEE project area (except for Albania), as well as Croatia and Slovenia were parts of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ) not long ago. This is why Serbo-Croat language is either commonly understood or spoken in the vast majority of the ENVSEC-SEE area. Secondly, the language



in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has much in common with the language of its eastern neighbour – Bulgaria. Almost all languages spoken in the region, including Slovenian, belong to the same Southern Slavic language family. Only the Albanian language is different, and can only be understood in Albania, Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244 and few border areas of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. To summarise – effective communication among the partners of the possible protected area network in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc could probably use either two or three languages, thus limiting translation costs. Using English as a common language for communication among the network partners is not a feasible solution in the nearest future, as the knowledge of English in the SEE is even less common than in the Carpathians.

## Funding opportunities

The vast majority of ALPARC member protected areas are operating in countries of the “old European Union” (thus eligible for EU funding), where the welfare status of the society and state budgets, as well as the level of environmental awareness of the general public and support for the protection of nature are much higher than those of the Carpathian or Balkan / Dinaric countries. In result, the Alpine protected areas receive much higher support by the ‘general public’, providing for their greater lobbying strength.

Furthermore, Alpine protected area administrations have much longer track record and much better experience in raising external support, either from the long-available European funding mechanisms (e.g. Interreg or Life Programs) or from the private business sector than protected areas in two other regions.

Protected areas in the Alps usually have much bigger operational budgets than those of the Carpathian or Balkan / Dinaric regions, which largely facilitates gathering the required ‘critical mass’ (minimum threshold) of own contribution (both cash and in-kind) necessary for submitting an application for financial support from e.g. Interreg financial instruments or EU structural funds. Additionally, the level of salaries of the protected area personnel in the Alps (much higher than e.g. in the Balkans) can easily build-up the ‘critical mass’ of required own contribution by temporarily allocating staff members for project implementation. Therefore, the protected area administrations in the Carpathians, Balkans and the Dinaric Arc region have much more limited capacities to benefit from the above funding sources.

Moreover, the Alpine countries and their protected areas have better access to the European funds also due to political factors, which resulted in establishing the special Alpine Space Programme in the framework of the Interreg financial mechanism. As for 2010, not all Carpathian countries are Member States of the European Community, thus not all Carpathian countries are eligible for the same financial support mechanisms. Secondly, contrary to the Alpine Space Programme of the Interreg encompassing the whole Alpine region - neither the geographical scope of the Central Europe Programme nor of the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme of the Interreg allows for equal involvement of partners from all Carpathian countries.

Last, but not least, the ALPARC benefits from governmental support for its operations (e.g. some € 0.5 million per year made available for the activities of the ALPARC coordination unit, which allowed to employ permanent staff of the unit and support different activities of the network). The CNPA receives no direct

support from the side of the Governments, while relatively small voluntary contributions of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention to the budget of the interim Secretariat (ISCC) hardly allow for supporting the most basic activities, like e.g. regular meetings of the CNPA Steering Committee.

Therefore, the limited range of activities carried so far under the CNPA network was most often supported by 'project funding'. In the past the GIS map of the proposed network was prepared under the project by the Slovak partners funded by the Government of Norway, while currently the network meetings (e.g. seminars or the first protected area conference) were funded either by ALPARC or the WWF (e.g. the WWF "Protected Areas for a Living Planet" – PA4LP project). Should this situation continue also in the future – the activities of the CNPA may easily become 'project-driven', thus fully depending on external projects undertaken by other organisations, moreover with limited time duration, and objectives not always fully matching the main objectives set up for this particular protected area network – which is not an option in the long run. Therefore, launching an operational network of protected areas is most probably not possible without a stable funding for its core activities, like provided for ALPARC.

Simultaneously, the capacity of the CNPA member areas to generate external financial support from e.g. Interreg is much smaller than in the Alps, mostly due to budgetary constraints limiting their possibility to contribute financially to the common activities, and pre-finance project activities to be later (much later, and only partially) reimbursed from the project funds. Pre-financing cannot be solved by using e.g. bank loans, as protected area administrations are often not allowed to do so.

Furthermore, in many cases their application to e.g. Interreg is not possible due to their legal status as entities of the 'public finance sector', where the state budget planning time horizon is limited to one year. The European-funded projects usually tend to have a several years long project duration, while protected area administrations financed by the state budget have no legal mandate to declare their financial contribution in the longer perspective, as such would automatically mean the 'medium-term obligation of the State Budget', exceeding the budget planning time horizon of one year.

Moreover, in some cases, protected area administrations cannot submit the funding application without the special agreement signed with their supervisory bodies. Last, but not least, in some Carpathian countries protected area administrations are not allowed to acquire funds directly from the potential donors, such support should then be disbursed by the supervisory body responsible for protected areas, with little chances for explicit 'earmarking' of the support funds.

As for the Balkan / Dinaric Arc region – the opportunity to acquire project funding (from e.g. the Interreg SEE mechanism or the financial instruments for pre-accession, IPA) for launching the protected area network and initiating its activities may of course be tempting. On the other hand, the capacity of protected area administrations in the Balkans and Dinaric Arc to meet the 'minimum threshold' matching funds requirement by e.g. Interreg cannot be better than in the Carpathian region.

Last, but not least – developing a cooperation within a network based solely on temporary 'project funding' without stable and continuous funding for 'core / basic activities' (by e.g. the Governments) may easily result in a situation when the cooperation would end si-

multaneously with the expiration of the project duration and exhausting the project budget.

The above differences result in the much different stage of protected area network development in the Alps, Carpathians, and in the South-Eastern Europe:

- ALPARC may be described as operationally 'fully-fledged' network, with full legal basis and long traditions of cooperation, clear legal status paired by well-developed institutional set-up (including the coordination unit associated to the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention), support by Governments, local authorities, scientific institutions, and the society; more or less stable funding for core activities of the network, and adequate capacity to generate common projects and raise support from the European funding sources – which all together allow to carry out numerous activities under different thematic programs, involving hundreds of protected areas and other partners from all Alpine countries.
- CNPA can be perceived as an initiative with large potential for contributing to the implementation of the 'Biodiversity Protocol' and other future thematic protocols to the framework Carpathian Convention once these protocols come into force, provided the activities

of the network gain adequate support. For the moment this network cannot yet be considered as operational.

- The establishment of a protected area network for the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc has not yet been officially considered. The first ever consultations on this idea, involving few of the potential stakeholders took place during the second sub-regional ENVSEC meeting held in June 2009 in Podgorica. Thus, for obvious reasons, this idea has not yet been communicated to the full range of potential stakeholders and supporters of the network, and the majority of protected area managers in the South-Eastern Europe is not yet familiar with the potential benefits of networking, and experience with developing protected area networks in the Alps and in the Carpathians.

Therefore, the possible translation of this report into relevant languages and making it available to the protected area managers in the South-Eastern European region (e.g. by downloading from the ENVSEC website) could disseminate the concept of protected area networking in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc, and allow them to benefit from the experience gathered so far in the Alps and the Carpathians.

## ***2.4. Recommendations on the proposed network of protected areas in the Balkans / Dinaric Arc***

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The possible network of protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc (BNPA?) could largely facilitate coordination of activities aimed at biological diversity protection undertaken in different countries of the South-Eastern European region, and developing common international activities and projects. Such a network will also facilitate knowledge, skills and experience exchange.

It should be emphasised here that all countries which could potentially form the future network should be involved in such networking initiative from the very beginning. Furthermore, all initiatives and decisions regarding the network should be commonly elaborated, consulted with relevant authorities in all countries and approved by consensus of all countries. Otherwise the participation of several countries can be weak and therefore the network would not

represent the interests of all involved member protected areas.

Each country should identify fields of networking activities of its particular interest, or in which this particular country is most experienced and successful in order to contribute to the common network as well as to create the sense of ownership of the BNPA idea among protected area managers, scientists and practitioners from each cooperating country. Each country of the project area should contribute to network operations, based on the selection of priorities and the assessment of available skills, expertise and resources.

The first steps towards establishing a network of protected areas in the SEE region could be to:

- Select one communication focal point per country from among the 'team of leaders' expected to initiate consultations;
- Develop the contact database (directory) of relevant protected areas and their contact persons, which would then largely facilitate initiating contacts between large-scale protected areas of the region and allow exchange of views on the possible network;
- Inform protected areas about the networking initiative, gather and analyse their opinions and expectations towards the possible network.

The suggested first step in communication with potential members of the Balkan Network of Protected Areas would be, like in the Carpathians, to distribute a simple questionnaire, aimed at assessment of the expectations of its potential members and their needs for technical capacity building.

### Question 1. Expectations on networking

Which activities do you perceive as the most important tasks for the BNPA (please tick all relevant boxes):

- development, maintenance and updating the common protected areas database, incl. preparation of directories of protected areas and other relevant partners for cooperation.
- publishing common informational and promotional materials, organising common exhibitions on the SEE region.
- facilitating communication by e.g. circulating an electronic newsletter.
- establishing, co-ordinating and facilitating thematic working groups allowing experience exchange, elaboration of common project proposals and implementation of common conservation and sustainable development projects.
- organising regional meetings, conferences, seminars and workshops.
- organising professional staff training, exchanges and study visits.
- technical capacity building for protected areas in the SEE region.
- facilitating sub-regional conservation, research and monitoring projects.
- representing the common interest of protected areas in the SEE region.
- Fundraising, preparation of joint applications and co-ordinating joint projects.
- Other suggestions (please list):

## Question 2. Challenges of your protected area

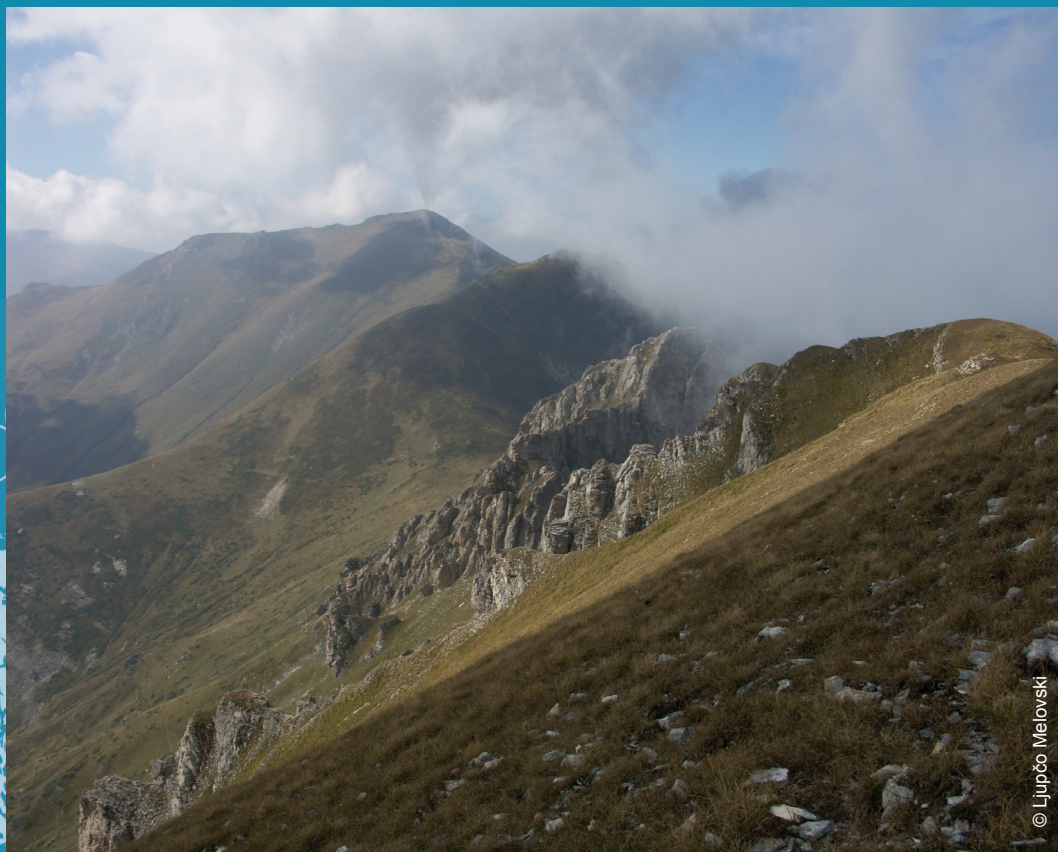
Having best knowledge of your protected area, its specific features and working environment as well as employed specialists - you are the most important source of information for the network. In order to help you - we would like to design the network according to the needs of member protected areas. Therefore we need to know what are your challenges in everyday work and which are your achievements so far. Please indicate by ticking relevant box if your answer is "yes". Does your area have:

- complete inventory of natural resources of your protected area
- valid long-term management plan in place
- adequate funding for management plan implementation
- support from international organisations
- support from local business
- good working relations with local communities, authorities, and non-governmental organisations
- good publicity in national and international media
- adequate visitor facilities/centre
- well-designed environmental education programs and facilities
- well-designed and developed network of tourist trails
- GIS database
- well developed monitoring system
- adequate research facilities (e.g. laboratories, field facilities)
- capacity to produce own scientific and visitor publications
- area maps in digital/electronic version
- own website

## Question 3. Potential contribution of your protected area to the network

Managing your protected area you must have gathered much experience so far and you must have had successes in your work. Please indicate, what do you consider strong points of your area and which experience (also in transboundary cooperation) you would like to share with other network member areas (especially if you answered "yes" to the majority of points in above question No 2)





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⦿ Treskavec (2 444 m) and Vrtop (2 555 m) mountain peaks in the northern part of Sar Planina, view from Mt. Kobilica (2 528 m).



## PART 3. INITIATIVES FOR ESTABLISHING THE MOUNTAIN PROTECTED AREA NETWORK IN SEE

### 3.1. ENVSEC sub-regional workshop “Enhancing Transboundary Biodiversity in Mountains of South Eastern Europe”

In June 2006 within the framework of the ENVSEC Initiative UNEP organized the first sub-regional workshop “Enhancing Transboundary Biodiversity Management in South Eastern Europe” with the objectives to jointly discuss the management problems experienced by the administrative bodies responsible for protected areas and identify the biodiversity hotspots in transboundary mountain ecosystems, and to further design the ENVSEC-SEE programme of capacity building for transboundary management of mountain biodiversity.

The workshop financed by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) was held in Podgorica (Montenegro), organised by UNEP through the Vienna Office, in cooperation with the Regional Environmental Center (REC) Field Office in Montenegro as the local partner.

The workshop brought together 39 participants, mainly from the SEE region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99, the FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. The workshop participants included the representatives of Ministries, scientific institutions, state forest administrations, non-governmental organisations of the SEE region and international organisations (ADA, OSCE, REC, UNDP, UNEP and UNESCO). The meeting was moderated by Ms. Ivonne Higuero of UNEP ROE / PEBLDS (Pan European Biological Landscape and Diversity Strategy) Secretariat.

During the workshop representatives of the Governments of the region jointly identified eight areas which have the potential to develop into large scale transboundary protected areas of European significance, perceived as the most urgent from the biodiversity point of view:

- Durmitor - Sutjeska (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro)
- Prokletije / Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains (Albania, Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99, Montenegro, Serbia)
- Sharr / Šar Planina - Korab – Deshat/Dešat (Albania, Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99, FYR Macedonia)
- Tara Mountains - Drina Gorge (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia)
- West Stara Planina (Bulgaria, Serbia)
- Orjen / Sniježnica (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro)
- Vlahina / Maleševska / Belasica (Bulgaria, Greece, FYR Macedonia)
- Osogovska Planina (Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia).

The recommendations of this first sub-regional workshop include:

- Implementation of activities towards the development of a network of mountain protected areas in the South-Eastern Europe;

- Development of experience exchange with other mountain regions (e.g. Alps, Carpathians) as a tool for capacity building;
- Further improvement of the information base through the development of consolidated reports (including visual communication tools) to be brought to the attention of political decision-makers, local stakeholders and the public;
- Building the ownership of stakeholders, in particular the national authorities and research institutes by involving them into the development of assessments and through targeted capacity-building measures.

Following these recommendations UNEP Vienna, in cooperation with relevant authorities and institutions from the SEE, developed feasibility studies on establishing three proposed transboundary protected areas.

### ***3.2. ENVSEC sub-regional meeting “Transboundary Cooperation of Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe: Towards the Dinaric Arc and Balkan Network of Mountain Protected Areas”***

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In June 2009 within the framework of the ENVSEC Initiative UNEP organized the second sub-regional meeting on “Transboundary Cooperation of Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe: Towards the Dinaric Arc and Balkan Network of Mountain Protected Areas” with the objectives:

- To initiate and enhance exchange of experience gathered under the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions with the stakeholders from the South Eastern European region;
- To support the initiatives of the Governments towards transboundary conservation of biodiversity in the mountain regions of the SEE, and their commitments expressed during the 9. Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP9) in May 2008;
- To foster partnerships on technical cooperation and capacity building for the stakeholders from the SEE;
- To promote, facilitate and encourage the establishment of the sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans / Dinaric Arc;
- To identify priority actions which shall be undertaken in proposed transboundary areas in SEE;
- To facilitate synergies and build on projects and activities of the partners of the ENVSEC and Dinaric Arc Initiative (DAI), e.g. UNDP, UNESCO-BRESCE, UNEP, IUCN, SNV and the WWF Mediterranean Programme;
- To foster working contacts for transboundary and sub-regional cooperation on biodiversity issues in the Balkans / Dinaric Arc.

The meeting financed by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) was held in Podgorica (Montenegro), organised by UNEP through the Vienna Office, in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Protection of Montenegro, the Institute for Nature Protection in Podgorica and the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (BRESCE).





► Second sub-regional ENVSEC-SEE meeting in June 2009, Podgorica, Montenegro.

The meeting brought together 59 participants, mainly from the SEE region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99, the FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, but also from Austria, France, Italy, Slovenia and UK.

The meeting was attended by His Excellency Mr. Branimir Gvozdenović, Minister of Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection of Montenegro; His Excellency Mr. Siniša Stanković, Deputy Minister of Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection of Montenegro; Ms. Sandra Wibmer, Austrian Development Agency; Mr. Christophe Bouvier, Director and

Regional Representative, UNEP Regional Office for Europe; representatives of Ministries from Albania, Kosovo (UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99) and Montenegro, representatives of international organisations and scientific institutions including BPPP, EURAC, IUCN, OSCE, REC, SNV, UNDP, UNESCO-BRESCE, and WWF - Mediterranean Programme, as well as scientific institutions, protected area and municipal administrations, and non-governmental organisations of the SEE region.

The ENVSEC sub-regional meeting on "Transboundary Cooperation of Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe: To-

wards the Dinaric Arc and Balkan Network of Mountain Protected Areas” held in June 2009 was the first occasion to consult the idea for establishing a network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc with the possible stakeholders, and bring this issue to the attention of nature conservation authorities and political decision-makers.

The meeting was followed by two workshops, first of them focused on strengthening cooperation in the proposed transboundary protected areas in the SEE, while the second

one focused on the potential for establishment of the sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc, expectations of the potential stakeholders towards the proposed network and its possible fields of work.

Outcomes of the above mentioned two ENVSEC workshops are described below, while the detailed minutes of the ENVSEC sub-regional meeting held in June 2009 constitute Annex 2 to this report.

### **3.3. ENVSEC workshop “Priorities for common actions in transboundary areas in focus”**

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During the second day of the ENVSEC sub-regional meeting on “Transboundary Cooperation of Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe: Towards the Dinaric Arc and Balkan Network of Mountain Protected Areas” held in June 2009 in Podgorica (Montenegro) UNEP carried out a workshop for the SEE stakeholders with the objectives:

- To identify priority common actions in particular ENVSEC-SEE transboundary “areas in focus”,
- To consider potential for establishing transboundary working partnerships,
- To discuss potential for addressing the common priorities by implementing joint pilot projects in each proposed transboundary area.

When initiating the discussion Mr. Niewiadomski emphasised that the most important step is to decide on the common priorities for cooperation under the first transboundary projects. Secondly, that the real ‘key to success’ and crucial asset for transboundary cooperation in a transboundary protected area

are the people involved in common activities on nature protection. Mr. Niewiadomski warned the workshop participants that before initiating any common activity one must remember that a failure in transboundary cooperation is much more highly visible and at the same time the risk of failure is greater than usually.

Moreover, a failure of the first joint project can easily hamper future co-operation on other common priority issues. This is why such first ‘kick-off’ projects must not be too challenging or ambitious, and should mainly serve for familiarising people supposed to cooperate in the future.

The workshop participants were divided into several smaller working groups, focused on particular priority transboundary area, also depending on the availability of representatives from particular areas and countries. Outcomes of the work of these ad-hoc working groups established for the purpose of this workshop are briefly summarized below



### **Priorities in the proposed transboundary protected area (TBPA) Durmitor - Tara Canyon - Sutjeska**

- Enhancing legal protection of the entire area of the proposed TBPA and joint/transboundary activities for the protection of the Tara river canyon ecosystems.
- Common identification of negative impacts or threats to nature and environment of the TBPA region.
- Cooperation on the development of harmonised management plans and action plans for particular protected areas, and the common action plan for the entire area of the proposed TBPA.
- Cooperation on defining, designing and delineation of the harmonised spatial functional zonation of the proposed TBPA, including protection zones, beginning from highly protected zone to the zone of tourist activities, also including “buffer zone”, and their precise delineation with the use of the GIS (Geographic Information System).
- Cooperation on identifying and establishing ecological corridors and migratory routes for wildlife species.
- Cooperation in research and collection of data on common biodiversity in accordance with unified methodology, which will allow development of update common nature inventories and/or databases for the proposed TBPA; exchange of data and information related to natural and cultural resources.
- Exchange of ideas on tourism management in order to promote sustainable tourism development in the region of the proposed TBPA.
- Preparation of the common sustainable tourism development strategy for the region of the proposed TBPA, including the development of the common tourist products and packages (e.g. mountaineering plus rafting activities).

- Establishing a common visitor centre for the proposed TBPA (by the Šćepan Polje border crossing), and networking for visitor and tourist information centres within the entire transboundary region.
- Development of sustainable tourist infrastructure for visitors to protected areas, and enhancing common visitor infrastructure standards and design.
- Preparation and publication of joint promotional materials for entire TBPA.
- Promotion and marketing of the local agricultural and handicraft products.
- Training and education of tourist and mountain guides who would work on entire TBPA.
- Education of local people and raising their awareness and consciousness on environment / nature protection issues, and need for protection of the entire transboundary region.
- Preparation of common projects to ensure financial means for implementation of joint activities (e.g. research, conservation measures, visitor infrastructure development, education, promotion).
- Preparation of a memorandum on cooperation to be signed by both sides / parks, or institutions on higher level e.g. relevant Ministries of Republic of Srpska and Republic of Montenegro.

### **Priorities in the proposed transboundary protected area (TBPA) Tara - Drina**

- Legal designation of the protected area on the side of Bosnia and Herzegovina / Republic of Srpska (e.g. proposed National Park “Drina”), as a precondition for developing transboundary cooperation.
- Possible designation of the areas to be protected on the side of Bosnia and Herzegovina / Republic of Srpska as UNESCO-MaB Biosphere Reserve.
- Mapping of the area, collection of data on com-

mon biodiversity, and developing nature inventories for the entire transboundary region.

- Experience and information exchange, e.g. by organizing common thematic workshops (National Park Tara offers to host and organize such).
- Establishing a common consultative body, e.g. a joint committee for the proposed TBPA.
- Monitoring of the implementation of the Memorandum between Serbia and Republic of Srpska.
- Priorities in the proposed transboundary protected area (TBPA) Prokletije / Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains
- Development of feasibility studies for the planned new protected areas in the region of the proposed TBPA.
- Legal designation of protected areas on all three sides as a precondition for developing transboundary cooperation, and reaching the similar starting point for cooperation on biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.
- Developing common nature / species inventories and maps of the region of the proposed TBPA, mapping of habitats.
- Application of the harmonized research methodologies on wildlife species, such as the lynx or large mammals.
- Improvement of road infrastructure, with the objective to establish road connections through the mountains across the state borders, and enhance direct personal contacts between the transboundary cooperation partners.
- Promotion and marketing of the local agricultural (e.g. organic food) and handicraft products, e.g. during the annual transboundary 'Olympic Games' local event, or traditional meeting in Gusinje.
- Monitoring of the implementation of the letter of intent / memorandum on cooperation

signed by municipalities in 2006, and providing a follow up by concluding further cooperative agreements on particular issues.

- Organising stakeholder meetings in e.g. Peć / Plav / Shkodër or Bajram Curri, with the participation of the local and central government authorities.
- Clarification of the border regimes and status of border crossings in the mountains, with the objective to facilitate establishment of cross-border tourist hiking trails.
- Continuation of the summer programs by BPPP and their extension into all three involved territories, including environmental awareness programs, English language trainings, and youth exchanges.
- Developing common funding applications to IPA (the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance) concerning activities to be undertaken in the proposed TBPA, including establishment of new protected areas and development of their management plans, biodiversity conservation measures, cultural heritage protection and sustainable development.

### **Priorities in the proposed transboundary protected area (TBPA) Sharr/Šar Planina - Korab – Deshat/Dešat**

- Legal designation of protected areas on all three sides as a precondition for developing transboundary cooperation.
- Common identification of threats to nature and environment of the TBPA region.
- Common management planning, incl. common maps and GIS database of habitats and endemic plant species distribution.
- Development of the common nature monitoring system.
- Enhancing direct personal working contacts between protected area managers and local stakeholders, by organizing stakeholder meetings (either bi- or trilateral) and thematic workshops.

- Capacity building for protected areas.
- Common research utilizing harmonized methodologies, allowing preparation of joint action plans and common implementation of conservation activities, in particular those targeted at 'flagship' large carnivore species (lynx, brown bear, wolf).
- Development and implementation of the system of compensations for damages in livestock caused by large carnivores.
- Development of common tourist hiking trails in border areas of Shara mountains, with the objective to facilitate provision of guided tours in the TBPA region.
- Common publication of promotional and information materials on the region of the proposed TBPA.

After the discussion on the outcomes by the group working on Sharr/Šar Planina - Korab - Deshat/Dešat region Mr. Dime Melovski (Macedonian Ecological Society - MES) presented the project "Strategic Planning for the Conser-

vation of the Balkan Lynx", which is a joint bilateral project between the FYR of Macedonia (MES) and Albania (Protection and Preservation of the Natural Environment of Albania - PP-NEA) implemented in cooperation with KORA, the Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA), EuroNatur – Stiftung Europäisches Naturerbe and IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group, financially supported by the MAVA Foundation and the Research Council of Norway. The ultimate goal of this project aimed at the protection of the Balkan lynx species is the launch of the Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme. Mr. Melovski demonstrated the project outcomes achieved so far, e.g. the results of surveys and monitoring of the Balkan lynx habitats, camera trapping and methods of gathered data analysis. The pilot areas for the Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme are the Šar Planina transboundary mountain region, the currently developing transboundary protected area in Jablanica mountains (AL/MK), and the Ilinska-Plakenska region in the FYR of Macedonia.

### **3.4. ENVSEC workshop "Mountain Protected Area Network in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc"**

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The workshop carried out by UNEP for SEE stakeholders during the second day of the ENVSEC sub-regional meeting on "Transboundary Cooperation of Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe: Towards the Dinaric Arc and Balkan Network of Mountain Protected Areas" held in June 2009 in Podgorica (Montenegro) focused on the potential for establishment of the sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc, as well as possible fields of work for such network.

The main objectives of this workshop were as follows:

- To discuss participants' ideas on common priorities for sub-regional cooperation in biodiversity conservation,
- To formulate their expectations towards networking of protected areas,
- To identify opportunities for launching a network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans / Dinaric Arc.

As a warm-up for the discussion - achievements of the Alpine Network of Protected Areas (ALPARC) and potential benefits of networking were briefly summarised. Then, different possible functions of the sub-regional Balkan network of protected areas were presented, and

the participants were asked which of those functions could be most important for them, and provide the added value for their work, as follows:

- Thematic networking - exchange of experience, skills, knowledge and data among network members, in particular through the common thematic working groups
- Maintenance and updating of the common Balkan / Dinaric Arc protected areas database
- Maintenance and updating of the common Balkan / Dinaric Arc protected areas website
- Publishing informational materials on common regional and transboundary issues and projects
- Facilitating communication inside the network by distributing electronic newsletter / bulletin
- Organising common exhibitions and events for the public aimed at raising ecological awareness and promoting sustainable development
- Joint promotion of tourist and recreational potential, and marketing of tourist services
- Common labelling, marketing and promotion of local agricultural products and handicrafts
- Capacity building of the member protected areas and of the network (e.g. professional trainings, conferences, seminars, workshops, and study tours aimed at sharing examples of best practice)
- Facilitating joint scientific / research and monitoring projects
- Common fundraising and co-ordinating joint projects
- Maintenance and updating of directories / contact databases of protected areas and other relevant partners for cooperation
- Representing the common interest of the Balkan / Dinaric Arc protected areas to na-

tional and international authorities, European Union and international organisations and institutions

- Coordinating and facilitating cooperation with other mountain ranges and protected area networks in Europe.

The first question raised by the participants in the discussion was whether the proposed protected area network for the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc, as an informal initiative with no 'MEA backing', would be a provisional solution prior to arranging more official and broader cooperation under the possible 'Balkan Convention'. The conclusion was that the ultimate idea is to have the formal network one day.

Secondly, resulting from the overall 'transboundary protected area' context of the second sub-regional meeting, it was not clear for some of the participants whether the proposed network should involve only transboundary protected areas, or also other protected areas. The response by workshop facilitators was that a network of all mountain protected areas can be considered, while another network would be suitable for marine and/or coastal protected areas not encompassing mountain ranges.

According to the workshop participants - all activities listed at the beginning of the workshop could be interesting for the future, however some most urgent priorities for the South-Eastern European region were identified in the course of the workshop, where the possible network of protected areas could facilitate accommodation of these expectations, as follows:

- Common Balkan / Dinaric Arc protected areas' database,
- Exchange of data and information, incl. harmonisation of data collection methods, which would allow to share data with partners from other countries;

- Common Balkan / Dinaric Arc protected areas' website;
- Common thematic workshops, exchange and sharing of experience and know-how;
- Capacity building for protected areas;
- Common promotional materials and joint promotion of tourism potential;
- Joint scientific / research and monitoring (e.g. for large carnivores).

Another question raised was whether the possible common website could have either more educational or more promotional character.

Other comments made by the workshop participants during the discussion were that:

- “No matter that the possible network remains a question for the future – the informal communication here during this workshop and the whole second sub-regional meeting is already an achievement”,
- “Basing on the Skadar Lake project experience - institutions created under the project continued after the end of project”,
- “Cooperation could largely be facilitated by involving ‘transboundary cooperation institutions’, e.g. international organizations”.

The final conclusion of this workshop was that the workshop participants should consider becoming ambassadors of the protected area networking concept, as ‘envoys of green diplomacy’, promoting this idea and potentially facilitating communication in their countries. This workshop was perceived as only the first small step towards the possible future ‘bigger steps’ like the network of protected mountain areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc, and the possible ‘Balkan Convention’.



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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ACANAP</b> Association of Carpathian National Parks and Wilderness	<b>GEF</b> World Bank Global Environment Facility
<b>ADA</b> Austrian Development Agency	<b>GIS</b> Geographic Information System
<b>AL</b> Albania	<b>GRID</b> Global Resource Information Database
<b>ALPARC</b> Task Force of Protected Areas of the Alpine Convention Secretariat	<b>GTZ</b> Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
<b>ANPA</b> Alpine Network of Protected Areas	<b>H</b> Hungary
<b>ASCI</b> Area of special conservation interest	<b>HR</b> Croatia
<b>BIH</b> Bosnia and Herzegovina	<b>IPA</b> Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
<b>BNPA</b> Balkan Network of Protected Areas	<b>IPA CBC</b> Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance / Cross-Border Cooperation
<b>BPPP</b> Balkan Peace Park Project	<b>ISCC</b> Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Framework Convention
<b>BR</b> Biosphere Reserve	<b>IUCN</b> International Union for Conservation of Nature
<b>CBD</b> Convention on Biological Diversity	<b>LP</b> Landscape Park
<b>CC</b> Carpathian Convention	<b>MaB</b> Man and Biosphere Programme
<b>CEI</b> Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative (until 2002)	<b>MEA</b> Multilateral Environmental Agreement
<b>CERI</b> Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative	<b>MES</b> Macedonian Ecological Society
<b>CIDA</b> Canadian Development Agency	<b>MK</b> FYR of Macedonia
<b>CNPA</b> Carpathian Network of Protected Areas	<b>MNE</b> Montenegro
<b>CNPA SC</b> CNPA Steering Committee	<b>NATO</b> North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
<b>COP</b> Conference of the Parties	<b>NGO</b> Non-governmental Organisation
<b>CZ</b> Czech Republic	<b>NINA</b> Norwegian Institute for Nature Research
<b>DAI</b> Dinaric Arc Initiative	<b>NNP</b> National Nature Park
<b>DATAR</b> the French Delegation for Territorial Planning and Regional Actions	<b>NNR</b> National Nature Reserve
<b>ED</b> European Diploma	<b>NP</b> National Park
<b>ENVSEC</b> Environment and Security Initiative	<b>NtrP</b> Natural Park
<b>EU</b> European Union	<b>NW</b> North-West
<b>EURAC</b> European Academy of Bolzano / Bozen	<b>OSCE</b> Organisation of Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>FYR</b> Former Yugoslav Republic	

**PA** Protected Area

**PA4LP** Protected Areas for a Living Planet

**PEBLDS** Pan European Biological Landscape  
and Diversity Strategy

**PL** Poland

**PLA** Protected Landscape Area

**PPNEA** Protection and Preservation of the  
Natural Environment of Albania

**REC** Regional Environmental Center for Central  
and Eastern Europe

**RLP** Regional Landscape Park

**RO** Romania

**SEE** South-Eastern Europe

**SFRJ** Socialist Federative Republic of  
Yugoslavia

**SK** Slovak Republic

**SNV** Netherlands Development Organisation

**SRB** Serbia

**SSC** Species Survival Commission

**SW** South-West

**TBPA** Transboundary Protected Area

**ToRs** Terms of Reference

**UA** Ukraine

**UK** United Kingdom

**UN** United Nations

**UNDP** United Nations Development Programme

**UNECE** United Nations Economic Commission  
for Europe

**UNESCO** United Nations Educational, Scientific  
and Cultural Organisation

**UNESCO-BRESCE** UNESCO Regional Bureau  
for Science and Culture in Europe

**UNEP** United Nations Environment Programme

**UNEP ROE** UNEP Regional Office for Europe

**USAID** United States Agency for International  
Development

**WHS** World Heritage Site

**WWF** World Wide Fund for Nature

## ANNEX 1.

### Tentative list of large scale protected areas for consultations on the sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans / Dinaric Arc.

(as for June 2009, in alphabetical order)

No	Protected area (PA) name	PA size (in ha)	PA location	PA contact details (when available)
1.	Biogradska Gora National Park	5 400	Montenegro	National Park Biogradska Gora ul. Buda Tomovića, b.b. Kolašin +382 20 865 625 npbiogradskagora@t-com.me
2.	Biokovo Nature Park	19 550	Croatia	Biokovo Nature Park Trg Tina Ujevića 1/I, Makarska +385 21 616 924 / 625 136 / 625 141 park-prirode-biokovo@st.t-com.hr www.biokovo.com
3.	Bulgarka Nature Park	21.772	Bulgaria	Bulgarka Nature Park Directorate Tel: +359 66 808 857 dppbulgarka@nug.bg www.ppbulgarka.nug.bg
4.	Central Balkan National Park	71.669	Bulgaria	National park Central Balkan Gabrovo, st. Bodra Smiana 3 Director: Ms. Nella Ratschewitz +359 66 801 277 rechevitz@centralbalkan.bg office@centralbalkan.bg, office-tr@centralbalkan.bg www.centralbalkannationalpark.org
5.	Djerdap National Park	63 608	Serbia	Public Enterprise "National park Djerdap" Kralja Petra I broj 14a 19220 Donji Milanovac, Republic of Serbia +381 030 86788 /86778 npdjdjerdap@hotmail.com www.npdjdjerdap.co.yu Director: Saša Nestorović
6.	Durmitor National Park	33 895	Montenegro	National Park Durmitor ul. Jovana Cvijića, Žabljak +382 52 360 228 npdurmitor@t-com.me



No	Protected area (PA) name	PA size (in ha)	PA location	PA contact details (when available)
7.	Fruska Gora National Park	25 393	Serbia	Public Enterprise "National park Fruska Gora" Zmajev trg 1, 21208 Sremska Kamenica, Serbia, +381 21 463 666, +381 21 463 667, +381 21 463 824 , natlpfg@eunet.rs www.npfruskagora.rs
8.	Galičica National Park	22 750	the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Galičica National Park Ohrid, Republic of Macedonia + 389 46 261 473 galicica@galicica.org.mk www.galicica.org.mk
9.	Golija Nature Park/ BR	75 183	Serbia	Public Enterprise "Srbijašume" (State Enterprise for Forest Management) infosume@srbijasume.co.yu www.srbijasume.rs
10.	Kopaonik National Park	11 810	Serbia	Public Enterprise "National park Kopaonik" +381 36 471 011 nacparkkop@nadlanu.com www.npkopaonik.com
11.	Kozara National Park	3 375	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Nacionalni park "Kozara" Vuka Karadžića 43, Prijedor (79 101) +387 52 211 169, +387 52 240 221 info@npkozara.com www.npkozara.com
12.	Krka National Park	10 900	Croatia	Krka National Park Trg Ivana Pavla II. Br. 5, Šibenik, p.p.154 +385 22 201 777 izleti@npkrka.hr www.npkrka.hr
13.	Lovćen National Park	6 400	Montenegro	National Park Lovćen Bajova 2, Cetinje +382 41 231 570 jnpnpg@t-com.me

No	Protected area (PA) name	PA size (in ha)	PA location	PA contact details (when available)
14.	Mali Sharr National Park	39 000	Kosovo – UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244	National Park-SHARR Mr. Dana Hazer: hdana04@hotmail.com Mr. Njazi Trashnjaku: ntershnjaku@hotmail.com +377 44 203 371
15.	Mavrovo National Park	73 088	the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	National Park Mavrovo +389 42 489 425, +389 42 489 505, +389 42 489 019 www.npmavrovo.org.mk
16.	Medvednica Nature Park	22 826	Croatia	Medvednica Nature Park Lugarnica "Bliznec", Bliznec bb, Zagreb +385 4586 317 park.priode.medvednica@zg.t-com.hr www.pp-medvednica.hr
17.	Paklenica National Park	9 600	Croatia	Paklenica National Park Ul. Dr. Franje Tuđmana 14a, Starigrad-Paklenica +385 23 369 202, +385 23 369 155 np-paklenica@zd.t-com.hr www.paklenica.hr
18.	Papuk Nature Park	33 600	Croatia	Papuk Nature Park Trg Gospe Voćinske bb, Voćin +385 34 313 030kontakt@pp-papuk.hr www.pp-papuk.hr
19.	Pelister National Park	12 500	the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Pelister National Park Directorate +389 47 233 464, +389 47 233 668, pelister@mp.com.mk www.park-pelister.com
20.	Pirin National Park	40 332	Bulgaria	National park Pirin Bansko 2770, st. Bulgaria 4 +359 74 988 204pirin_np@mail.bg www.pirin-np.com
21.	Plitvice Lakes National Park	29 482	Croatia	Plitvička jezera National Park Plitvička jezera bb, Plitvička jezera + 385 53 751 000 info@np-plitvicka-jezera.hr www.np-plitvicka-jezera.hr

No	Protected area (PA) name	PA size (in ha)	PA location	PA contact details (when available)
22.	Rila National Park	81.046	Bulgaria	National park Rila Blagoevgrad 2700, kv. Varosha, st. Bistritsa 12 +359 73 80 538, +359 73 81 023 nprila@infonet.tehno-link.com www.rilanationalpark.org
23.	Rilski Manastir Nature Park	25 020	Bulgaria	Rilski manastir Nature park Directorate +359 70 542 293 dpprilski_manastir@nug.bg
24.	Risnjak National Park	6 400	Croatia	Risnjak National Park Bijela voda 48, Crni Lug +385 51 836 133 np-risnjak@ri.t-com.hr www.risnjak.hr
25.	Russenski Lom Nature Park	3.260	Bulgaria	Russenski Lom Nature Park Directorate +359 82 872 397 dpprusenski_lom@nug.bg www.ecoart2000.org
26.	Sinite Kamani Nature Park	12 499	Bulgaria	Sinite Kamani Nature Park Directorate +359 44 662 961, +359 44 624 632 dppsinite_kamani@nug.bg
27.	Sjeverni Velebit National Park	10 900	Croatia	Sjeverni Velebit National Park Krasno b.b., Krasno+385 53 665 380 np.sjeverni.velebit@gs.t-com.hr www.np-sjeverni-velebit.hr
28.	Stara Planina Nature Park	142 220	Serbia	Public Enterprise "Srbijašume" (State Enterprise for Forest Management) infosume@srbijasume.co.yu www.srbijasume.rs
29.	Strandja Nature Park	116 136	Bulgaria	Strandja Nature Park Directorate +359 59 522 896, +359 59 522 229 dppstrandja@nug.bg www.parkstrandja.hit.bg

No	Protected area (PA) name	PA size (in ha)	PA location	PA contact details (when available)
30.	Sutjeska National Park	17 250	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Nacionalni Park "Sutjeska" 73311 Tjentište, Republika Srpska – Bosna i Hercegovina +387 58 233 102sutjeska@teol.net www.npsutjeska.com
31.	Tara National Park	19 175	Serbia	JP "Nacionalni park Tara" Milenka Topalovica st. 3 31250 Bajina Bašta, Republic of Serbia +381 31 863 644 office@tara.org.yu www.tara.org.yu
32.	Učka Nature Park	16 000	Croatia	Učka Nature Park Liganj 42, Lovran +385 51 293 753 park.priroda.ucka@inet.hr www.pp-ucka.hr
33.	Velebit Mountain Nature Park	200 000	Croatia	Velebit Nature Park Kaniža bb, Gospić +385 53 560 450 / 160 velebit@gs.t-com.hr www.velebit.hr
34.	Vitosha Nature Park	27 079	Bulgaria	Vitosha Nature Park Directorate +359 29 895 377, +359 29 885 841, +359 29 805 688 dppvitosha@nug.bg www.park-vitosha.org
35.	Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park	28 844	Bulgaria	Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park Directorate +359 92 665 848 dppvrachanski@nug.bg
36.	Žumberak-Samoborsko gorje Nature Park	33 300	Croatia	Žumberak-Samoborsko gorje Nature Park Slani Dol 1, Samobor +385 1 3327 660 ppzsg@ppzsg.org www.ppzsg.org





## ANNEX 2.

### Report of the ENVSEC sub-regional meeting “Transboundary Cooperation of Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe: Towards the Dinaric Arc and Balkan Network of Mountain Protected Areas”

In June 2009 within the framework of the ENVSEC Initiative UNEP organized the second sub-regional meeting on “Transboundary Cooperation of Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe: Towards the Dinaric Arc and Balkan Network of Mountain Protected Areas” with the objectives:

- To initiate and enhance exchange of experience gathered under the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions with the stakeholders from the South Eastern European region;
- To support the initiatives of the Governments towards transboundary conservation of biodiversity in the mountain regions of the SEE, and their commitments expressed during the 9. Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP9) in May 2008;
- To foster partnerships on technical cooperation and capacity building for the stakeholders from the SEE;
- To promote, facilitate and encourage the establishment of the sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans / Dinaric Arc;
- To identify priority actions which shall be undertaken in proposed transboundary areas in SEE;

- To facilitate synergies and build on projects and activities of the partners of the ENVSEC and Dinaric Arc Initiative (DAI), e.g. UNDP, UNESCO-BRESCE, UNEP, IUCN, SNV and the WWF Mediterranean Programme;
- To foster working contacts for transboundary and sub-regional cooperation on biodiversity issues in the Balkans / Dinaric Arc.

The meeting financed by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) was held in Podgorica (Montenegro), organised by UNEP through the Vienna Office, in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Protection of Montenegro, the Institute for Nature Protection in Podgorica and the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (BRESCE).

The meeting brought together 59 participants, mainly from the SEE region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99, the FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, but also from Austria, France, Italy, Slovenia and UK.

The meeting was attended by His Excellency Mr. Branimir Gvozdenović, Minister of Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection of Montenegro; His Excellency Mr. Siniša Stanković, Deputy Minister of Spatial Planning

and Environmental Protection of Montenegro; Ms. Sandra Wibmer, Austrian Development Agency; Mr. Christophe Bouvier, Director and Regional Representative, UNEP Regional Office for Europe; representatives of Ministries from Albania, Kosovo (UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99) and Montenegro, representatives of international organisations and scientific institutions including BPPP, EURAC, IUCN, OSCE, REC, SNV, UNDP, UNESCO-BRESCE, and WWF - Mediterranean Programme, as well as scientific institutions, protected area and municipal administrations, and non-governmental organisations of the SEE region.

The second ENVSEC sub-regional meeting in Podgorica was opened and co-chaired by His Excellency Branimir Gvozdenović, Minister of Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection of Montenegro and Mr. Christophe Bouvier, Director and Regional Representative, UNEP Regional Office for Europe. The meeting and the two following workshops were facilitated by Mr. Harald Egerer, Mr. Zbigniew Niewiadomski and Mr. Pier Carlo Sandei from UNEP Vienna Office.

## Opening Session

On Tuesday, 16 June 2009, during the opening session His Excellency Mr. Branimir Gvozdenović, Minister of Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection of Montenegro welcomed the participants. Minister Gvozdenović confirmed the strong commitment of Montenegro to cooperate on the regional level under the ENVSEC and DAI initiatives, increase

protected areas in country and improve their management, build functional partnerships and promote transboundary cooperation with neighbouring States on biodiversity conservation, progress towards establishing the Natura 2000 network in Montenegro. He emphasised the importance of developing international conventions focusing on mountain regions and sharing experience with the Alpine and Carpathian regions, the importance of protecting high natural values by establishing and managing national parks, need for establishing spatial linkages between Durmitor National Park and the planned regional park Bioč-Maglić-Volujak in Montenegro with Sutjeska National Park in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the need for protecting natural values of Prokletije, Orjen and Sniježnica mountains in transboundary cooperation between neighbouring countries.

Mr. Christophe Bouvier, Director and Regional Representative, UNEP thanked Minister Gvozdenović for hosting this already second sub-regional ENVSEC meeting in Montenegro. He emphasised the need for implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and link between protection of biodiversity values and sustainable economic development. He expressed the strong commitment of UNEP to promote and facilitate regional cooperation in South Eastern Europe on both above issues.

Ms. Sandra Wibmer expressed the strong commitment of Austrian Development Agency (ADA) to support the activities under the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative in South-Eastern Europe focusing on joint management and protection of transboundary moun-

tain regions. She emphasized the importance of regional conventions focusing on mountain regions and the need for experience exchange with the Alpine and Carpathian regions.

## Introductory Session

His Excellency Mr. Siniša Stanković, Deputy Minister of Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection of Montenegro opened and chaired the introductory session, aimed at familiarizing participants coming from different ENVSEC-SEE countries and brief presentation of the expected outcomes of the meeting and proposed meeting agenda. He initiated an introduction round, where participants were asked to introduce themselves and express their expectations concerning this meeting.

The majority of participants stressed their expectations for establishing new working personal contacts, exchange of experience, and interest in contributing to the next steps to be undertaken in transboundary and regional cooperation under the ENVSEC initiative. It can also be noted here that the director of Tara National Park (Serbia) expressed the commitment to support possible future transboundary / sub-regional initiatives also financially. At the end of this short session Mr. Harald Egerer (UNEP Vienna) made a brief presentation of expected outcomes of the meeting. Mr. Christophe Bouvier (UNEP ROE) recalled the commitment of UNEP to support and service transboundary and regional initiatives in SEE.

## Session “Mountain Protected Area Networks - towards the European ABC”

Mr. Harald Egerer (UNEP Vienna) presented global and regional Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and different initiatives fostering establishment of protected area networks and transboundary cooperation of

mountain protected areas, including the CBD and its Programme of Work on Protected Areas, regional Alpine and Carpathian Conventions, ENVSEC and the Mountain Partnership. He described the way towards developing framework regional conventions on the protection and sustainable development of the Alps and the Carpathians, their institutional structure, scope and thematic protocols.

Furthermore, he gave a brief overview on the progress of the developing Alpine-Carpathian cooperation, and informed about the outcomes of the ‘Carpathian Project’ of the total value of € 4.260.000, implemented between 2005 and 2008 in cooperation between 18 partners from ten countries, where UNEP - Vienna ISCC was the project Lead Partner. The ‘Carpathian Project’ focused on establishing basic data platform, facilitating general strategic process for developing integrative policies, guidelines and instruments; promoting education and awareness raising as well as the transfer of experiences. Further, Mr. Egerer mentioned the Memorandum of Cooperation signed between the CBD, Alpine and Carpathian Conventions. He described the objectives of the CBD Programme of Work on Mountain Biodiversity and of the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas. Later Mr. Egerer presented the progress in development of the Mountain Partnership launched in 2002, and the progress of the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) in South East European region.

Mr. Egerer also recalled the joint statement of the Governments signed during the “Big Win for Dinaric Arc high-level event” held during the 9th Conference of the Parties to the CBD in Bonn, and Article 22 of the ‘Belgrade Statement’ welcoming the mountain partnerships within and between the Alps, the Carpathians, the South-Eastern European mountain region, the Caucasus and the mountain regions of

Central Asia; recognizing the benefits from the existing legally binding instruments for the protection and sustainable development of the mountain regions like the Alpine and the Carpathian Convention, and welcoming the initiative of South-Eastern European and Caucasian countries to develop such instruments. He stated that this will allow to develop the 'European ABC' – Alpine experience and Balkan future together with Carpathian opportunities.

During the discussion related to MEAs for the SEE region Ms. Jelena Knezević (ENVSEC National Focal Point for Montenegro) mentioned that the draft text of the possible regional convention for the Balkans has already been prepared, but later there was no progress. Some of the participants expressed their concern that the SEE countries may lack the capacity to contribute financially to the implementation of the possible convention. Later Mr. Egerer responded to different questions related to global and regional environmental conventions.

Mr. Giorgio Andrian (UNESCO-BRESCE) presented UNESCO World Heritage Sites and MaB Biosphere Reserves as the suitable network for cooperation in the SEE region, and mentioned the above double designation of properties in Northern Montenegro (Durmitor NP and Tara River Basin BR). As for 2009 the world network of World Heritage Sites included 878 properties in 186 states being parties to the WHS Convention, while the World Network of Biosphere Reserves includes 553 areas in 107 countries. He emphasised the fact that World Heritage Sites nominated for natural values are in general underrepresented, and expressed expectation that Sutjeska NP in Bosnia and Herzegovina could reach for UNESCO designation. UNESCO-BRESCE offered their assistance in designation of the transboundary protected area including Durmitor and Sutjeska

National Parks, e.g. by technical assistance and/or organising a workshop on sustainable tourism development.

During the discussion Ms. Knezević stressed the need for developing a new management plan for Durmitor National Park, including part on visitor management, and for valuation of its tourist capacities. Mr. Veselin Luburić (Public Enterprise "National Parks of Montenegro") informed the meeting that the Government of Montenegro adopted a decision on developing the new management plan for Durmitor NP and had some preliminary consultations with UNESCO. He also expressed the readiness to implement the eco-regional approach in transboundary region of Durmitor, Bioč-Maglič-Volujak and Sutjeska.

Mr. Joerg Lohmann (Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection of Montenegro) confirmed the high potential of Montenegro for developing transboundary cooperation on biodiversity conservation with neighbouring countries, but emphasised the need for necessary additional capacities and resources for this purpose. He also called for developing a clear action plan for all countries involved in cooperation under the ENVSEC-SEE Initiative.

Mr. Andrian responded that sometimes it is enough to re-organise already existing capacities. Ms. Knezević mentioned the two projects supported by the World Bank GEF, including the one targeted on building the protected area network of Montenegro.

Ms. Sanja Bojanić (UNDP Montenegro) presented the proposed project "Mainstreaming ecosystem services valuation into decision-making in SEE", which is planned for launch in 2010, with the two-year project duration period and total project budget of € 2.9 million, provided adequate resources are mobilized. The overall

purpose of the project is to strengthen the capacities of South-Eastern European candidate countries and territories, and potential candidate states to implement EU environmental and sustainable development policies and legislation, within the framework of their accession process.

Expected results include gathering data on environmental benefits of ecosystem services to key economic sectors, increased capacity for assessment and valuation of ecosystem services, raised awareness and knowledge among e.g. decision-makers, spatial planners, economists and the society on the value of ecosystem services, improved communication and cooperation between environmental, economic and development sector agencies. Pilot sites selected for the project include Butrinti and Prespa lakes in Albania; Livanjsko Polje, Vjetrenica cave, Jahorina Mt. And Baradaca in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the Neretva Delta and Spačva forest in Croatia; the Sharr Mountains and the Bjeshkët e Nemuna / Prokletije Mountains in Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99; Boka Kotorska bay and Mt. Lovćen in Montenegro; Tara National Park and Obedska Bara in Serbia; and wetlands in Belasica mountains in Macedonia.

Ms. Emira Mesanović (WWF-Mediterranean Programme) presented the objectives of the recently launched common project with SNV and IUCN, entitled "Sustaining Rural Communities and Their Traditional Landscapes Through Strengthened Environmental Governance in Transboundary Protected Areas of the Dinaric Arc", supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland through the Western Balkans Environment and Development Cooperation Programme with the three-year project duration period and total project budget of € 136'000 (plus expected IUCN resources), focusing on selected six transboundary regions.

The overall programme objective is to promote sustainable development of rural communities in the Dinaric Arc region through increased transboundary cooperation in the management and conservation of biodiversity and cultural landscapes, as well as to improve regional cooperation and strengthening environmental governance, including the involvement and empowerment of civil society and local communities. The programme includes developing and implementing three-year action plans for transboundary cooperation activities and launching pilot projects in transboundary sites. The pilot transboundary sites selected for this programme are Prokletije / Bjeshkët e Namuna (MNE/AL), Durmitor NP / Sutjeska NP (MNE/BIH), Tara NP / Drina (SRB/BIH), Neretva Delta (BIH/HR), Mt. Dinara (BIH/HR) and Una NP / Plitvice NP (BIH/HR). The WWF thanked UNEP for allowing the use of UNEP's 'transboundary methodology' developed under ENVSEC and expressed their expectations for UNEP's further assistance in implementation of this project.

During the discussion several participants pointed out that harmonisation of newly launched projects and building on synergies could provide for additional benefits to local stakeholders, and optimise the use of available funds. For instance the GTZ has applied for some € 300.000 for a project targeted at developing transboundary cooperation in Durmitor - Sutjeska region, while the set of pilot sites selected by the WWF partially overlaps with regions currently in focus of UNEP.

Mr. Egerer proposed to join efforts of different organisations, and Mr. Andrian suggested developing and adopting a clear 'who does what' list, and gathering feedback on possible cooperative alliances from the respective Governments involved.

Mr. Albin Debevec, Director of Skočjanske Jame National Park / UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (Slovenia) presented his experiences from protected area networking in the Alps, and the activities of the Alpine Network of Protected Areas (ALPARC), including different common thematic working groups, workshops and seminars, common Interreg projects on e.g. research and nature inventories, or developing the ecological network in the Alps. He also emphasised ALPARC support for the establishment of protected area network in the Carpathians.

Later during this session two presentations were delivered by Mr. Zbigniew Niewiadomski (UNEP Vienna, and CNPA National Focal Point for Poland). The first one described the progress achieved so far towards establishing the protected area network in the Carpathian Mountains - the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) officially designated by the first Conference of the Parties (COP1) to the Carpathian Convention in December 2006. This long process included establishing transboundary protected areas, then launching the first common international initiative focusing on the whole Carpathian eco-region (the Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative) which paved the way for the future multilateral environmental agreement focusing on the Carpathian mountain region, the Carpathian Convention. Mr. Niewiadomski emphasised the support provided by the Alpine states and assistance by ALPARC, and the fundamental role of UNEP in facilitating the negotiations on the Convention.

The second presentation by Mr. Niewiadomski described activities carried out under the ENVSEC-SEE project on management of shared natural resources in transboundary mountain areas, coordinated since 2005 by UNEP Vienna, and supported by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Canadian

Development Agency (CIDA). He emphasised the fact that protecting larger parts of the most important ecosystems and habitats, and in particular viable populations of its wildlife is possible only in 'large-scale' (as for Europe) protected areas of around 100'000 hectares in size, while smaller areas are rather suitable only for protection of e.g. landscape phenomena or a single threatened plant species. Currently in the ENVSEC-SEE project area there are only ten national parks exceeding the size of 10'000 hectares and only one nature park exceeding 100'000 hectares. Designation of a large-scale new protected area by one country alone is often not feasible, while concerted efforts of two or more partners may result in a spectacular success for biodiversity protection at the regional and European levels. This is why establishing large-scale transboundary protected areas seems to be a solution more acceptable for the state budgets of the SEE countries. Such areas represent a commitment of two or more countries to common management of their frontier regions and shared ecosystems. Moreover, transboundary protected areas help to reduce tensions and are a symbol of peace with great political visibility.

During the discussion Ms. Knezević recalled the strong orientation of Montenegro towards regional and transboundary cooperation on nature protection, and quoted examples of different regional environmental initiatives where Montenegro is involved, including multilateral cooperation in the Adriatic region, the Sava river project, integrated management system for Skadar Lake with Albania, or bilateral cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina. She emphasised the need for coordination of activities, keeping in mind the potential for IPA CBC financial support. The amount of some € 75 million is available under the IPA CBC funds, and no matter that a big part of this funding is targeted at protection of marine biodiversity and



coastal areas – IPA will also support activities in mountain regions. A month earlier a meeting with partners from Bosnia and Herzegovina was held, with the objective to discuss possible activities in this respect.

### **Session “Transboundary Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe”**

The objective of this session was to update the meeting on the progress in transboundary cooperation achieved since June 2006 in proposed transboundary protected areas in the SEE region.

At the beginning of this session Mr. Niewiadomski briefly reminded the outcomes of the first Sub-regional workshop on “Enhancing Transboundary Biodiversity in Mountains of South Eastern Europe”, held in Podgorica (Montenegro) in June 2006, where representatives of the Governments of the region jointly identified eight potential transboundary protected areas:

- Durmitor - Sutjeska
- Prokletije / Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains
- Sharr / Šar Planina - Mt. Korab – Deshat/Dešat
- Tara Mountains - Drina Gorge
- West Stara Planina
- Orjen / Sniježnica
- Vlahina / Maleševska / Belasica
- Osogovska Planina

Mr. Niewiadomski informed the meeting that one of the three “priority areas in focus” identified in June 2006 is the proposed “Durmitor - Tara Canyon - Sutjeska” transboundary protected area, and that during CBD COP9 in May 2008 the Government of Montenegro committed itself to examine possibilities for the establishment of transboundary protected areas

including Durmitor National Park (MNE) and Sutjeska National Park (BIH) while the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina committed itself to support the enlargement of Sutjeska National Park and examine possibilities for its transboundary cooperation with Durmitor NP in Montenegro.

The second “priority areas in focus” selected in 2006 was the proposed “Prokletije / Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains” transboundary protected area involving Albania, Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99 and Montenegro. During CBD COP9 the Government of the Republic of Albania committed itself to continue to work towards establishment of this transboundary protected area and later prepared the proposal for designating the “Alps National Park” incorporating three already existing protected areas on the Albanian side. Simultaneously the Government of Montenegro committed itself to support the establishment of the Prokletije National Park and later carried out ecological assessment of the area. On the side of Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99 there is also a high potential for establishing a new protected area.

The third “priority area in focus” identified in June 2006 is the proposed “Sharr/Šar Planina - Korab - Deshat/Dešat” transboundary protected area involving Albania, Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99 and the FYR of Macedonia. Recently the Government of the Republic of Albania prepared the proposal of legal designation of “Korabi Protected Landscape” area. On the side of Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99 there is high a potential for extending the area of existing Sharr Mountains National Park along the state border with the FYR of Macedonia towards the border with Albania. Similarly, on the

side of the FYR Macedonia the designation of a new protected area is planned (proposed Šar Planina National Park on the border with Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99), to be adjacent to existing Mavrovo National Park (bordering Albania and Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99).

Should initiatives on all three sides of this region be successful - the proposed "Šarr/Šar Planina - Dešat - Korab" TBPA could cover the total area up to some 255.306 ha, and become the largest protected area in South-Eastern Europe, and one of the largest in the whole Europe.

Another potential transboundary protected area identified in June 2006 is the proposed "Tara Mountains - Drina Gorge" transboundary protected area involving Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. During CBD COP9 in 2008 the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina committed itself to examine possibilities for transboundary cooperation with Serbia in the region of Drina – Tara while the Government of the Republic of Serbia committed itself to continue to work towards establishment of a transboundary protected area (Biosphere Reserve) which would encompass Tara National Park and surrounding areas on the Serbian side, and several municipalities on the Bosnia and Herzegovina's side of the Drina River.

Ms. Milena Kapa (Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection of Montenegro) updated the meeting on progress achieved in developing the ecological network of Montenegro, mentioned the activities carried out in Durmitor National Park, including the workshop on sustainable tourism recently organized by UNESCO, and the need for developing the new management plan for Durmitor NP, for which the financial support of some € 150.000 would be necessary. She emphasised

the need for establishing the management authority responsible for the whole Tara River Canyon Biosphere Reserve area, in cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ms. Kapa recalled the provisions of the current "Spatial Plan of Montenegro until 2020", proposing the designation of Bioč-Maglič-Volujak regional park and extension of Durmitor NP area.

Furthermore, Ms. Kapa delivered the presentation covering the institutional and legal framework for nature conservation in Montenegro, and relevant national policies and strategies. She informed the meeting that the new Law on National Parks is currently undergoing the procedure of adoption by the Parliament; this new law shall also establish the new national park in Prokletije mountains, in the Plav municipality. The required feasibility study for the designation of Prokletije National Park prepared by the Institute for the Protection of Nature in Podgorica has been submitted for consideration by the Parliament. The presentation by Ms. Kapa included also the detailed description of natural values of Durmitor NP.

Ms. Mirjana Radović (Sutjeska NP) delivered the presentation including the overview of the history of establishment, natural and landscape values and tourist potential of Sutjeska National Park located in Bosnia and Herzegovina / Republic of Srpska.

Then Mr. Niewiadomski briefly presented the findings of the draft feasibility study ('gap and opportunity analysis') on the proposed transboundary protected area "Durmitor-Tara Canyon - Sutjeska", where the most obvious "competitive advantage" of this region is the presence of legally designated protected areas on each side of the state border. He emphasised the fact that there were no ethnic conflicts across

the border in this particular region, which could have adverse impacts on environment, nature or cultural heritage of the area; there are also no potential conflict issues in relations between the local populations across the border, which could impair transboundary cooperation.

The presence of the state border does not prevent wildlife migrations across the border or impair direct contacts between e.g. protected area managers. Protected area managers, scientists and inhabitants of neighbouring communities maintain strong informal relationships and working contacts across the border, and in the past jointly campaigned against the proposed hydropower project Buk Bijela which could have adverse impact on upstream areas, thus threaten the values for which Durmitor NP has been inscribed on the World Heritage List and affect the local economy.

However, there is no official agreement on transboundary cooperation between both states that consider the proposed “Durmitor-Tara Canyon - Sutjeska” transboundary protected area. There are also no official initiatives or cooperative agreements between local authorities and/or self-governments from both sides of the border. Last, but not least, no spatial linkage between both national parks exists so far, and a considerable part of the Tara river canyon remaining beyond the borders of protected areas is exposed to growing development pressures. Finally, Mr. Niewiadomski listed several most urgent common priorities for cooperation in this proposed transboundary protected area as identified in the feasibility study.

During the discussion Ms. Knezević informed the meeting that the proposed text of the bilateral agreement between Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina was recently delivered to relevant authorities across the border, but has

not yet been formalized. As for the proposed national park in Prokletije mountains – its legal designation is expected within eight months since the adoption of the new Law on National Parks, and the management plan for this area shall be developed within the next six months since the designation.

It has to be noted that the Montenegrin municipality of Plav (where the progress of initiatives towards establishing a national park was previously slow due to the disputes among the local community) was represented at the meeting by three participants, including the Mayor. They noted the progress towards establishment of the ‘Albanian Alps’ National Park on the Albanian side, supported the initiative of the Government of Montenegro to establish a new protected area including their community and expressed expectations that this designation could enhance sustainable development of the local economy and infrastructure, and that similar initiatives could be undertaken on the side of Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99.

Representatives of the Plav municipality commended the excellent quality of the feasibility study for the designation of Prokletije National Park prepared by the Institute for the Protection of Nature. They also expressed expectation that the new Law on National Parks establishing Prokletije National Park will be adopted soon, and recalled the fact that the Plav municipality authorities entered the dialogue with the central government concerning the potential for receiving the national park designation already in 1973. They suggested that the area of the proposed national park could extend even beyond the borders of Plav municipality. In response the representative of the Public Enterprise “National Parks of Montenegro” suggested keeping the area of Prok-

letije National Park like in the proposal already submitted to the Parliament, but indicated the possibility of designating new protected areas, e.g. regional parks in the neighbouring municipalities, thus extending the proposed trans-boundary protected area.

Mr. Ismail Hetemaj (Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99) updated the meeting on the progress towards establishing a protected area in Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains. Unfortunately, the previous proposal for a new national park in this area was rejected by the Parliament in 2007, and the law on nature conservation is undergoing legislative changes. However, the experts from Prishtina University recently carried out assessment of natural values of both Bjeshkët e Nemuna and Sharr mountains. Mr. Hetemaj informed that the extension of Sharr National Park area by additional 8'000 ha is being considered.

Ms. Antonia Young (Balkan Peace Park Project, website: [www.balkanspeacepark.org](http://www.balkanspeacepark.org)) presented the achievements of this international initiative targeted at Bjeshkët e Nemuna / Prokletije Mountains. The Balkans Peace Park Project (BPPP) is a registered UK charity organization, developed by the international group of enthusiasts, facilitating organizational support structures for more than 15 years in three involved countries/territories, with the objective to create a truly international cross border peace park on the borders of Albania, Kosovo - UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244/99 and Montenegro, aimed at promoting environmental conservation, cultural survival and ecotourism, and acting as a symbol of peace and cooperation.

Cooperation under BPPP involves local NGOs, local authorities, communities and individuals, but also Ministries and international organizations. One of the milestones of the BPPP initiative was the signature of the letter of good intent by all 6 municipality mayors in November 2006 during the meeting in Prishtina. The BPPP initiates and supports different activities in the region, e.g. retaining rural schools and environmental education programmes, trainings for tourist services providers, and small local infrastructure projects.

During the discussion on the BPPP presentation several participants (e.g. the representatives of the Plav municipality) opposed to using the word "peace", as indirectly implying the apparent existence of ethnic tensions in this region, and suggested the use of 'inter-state park' term as more suitable.

Ms. Elvana Ramaj (Nature Protection Policies Directorate, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration of Albania) gave the comprehensive presentation on the protected area system in Albania, currently covering 361'569 ha, or 12.58 per cent of the country's territory, and including 14 national parks (of the total area of 176'584 ha), managed nature reserves (82'530 ha) and protected landscapes (95'884 ha).

Ms. Ramaj described different activities recently undertaken, e.g. the governmental program for extension of protected areas, database development, digital mapping, GIS mapping of boundaries, habitats, threatened and endangered flora and fauna species, land use; activities towards the development of the EMERALD network of ASCI-s (so far 20 proposed sites covering 410'197 ha), identification of core areas, buffer zones and ecological corridors; and preparatory work for the implementation of Natura 2000. By the end of the year

2020 protected areas in Albania are expected to cover 588'817 ha, or 20.48 per cent of the country's territory.

Furthermore, Ms. Ramaj informed that the designation of the new "Alps National Park" (part of the planned transboundary area of "Prokletije / Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains") incorporating three already existing protected areas on the Albanian side is planned for 2010-2011, while the designation of Korabi Protected Landscape (in the planned transboundary area of "Sharr/Šar Planina – Korab - Deshat/Dešat") is planned for 2012.

The representative of the Institute for Nature Conservation (Serbia) delivered the presentation by Professor Nenad Stavretović on the development of protected area network in Serbia and potential for transboundary cooperation on biodiversity issues. Prof. Stavretović described the situation in the region of River Drina, where natural, cultural and historical values are so far protected solely on the side of Serbia in National Park "Tara" of 19'175 ha, located in the Drina river gorge and surrounded by the mountain massif of Tara, Zvijezda and Crni vrh. Following prior initiatives in 1950, 1976 and 1981, the experts at the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia, in cooperation with their colleagues from the Institute for Conservation of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage of the Republic of Srpska, conducted preliminary research on both sides of Drina in 2007, which resulted in development of the proposal for designation of the National Park "Drina", communicated to the respective municipal authorities in Republic of Srpska.

Furthermore, two new protected areas were established in Serbia in 2008 and 2009 - "Nature Park Mokra Gora" and "Protected Landscape Zaovine", adjacent to the planned transboundary protected area stretching across the Drina river gorge. The above three protected

areas form the complex natural and geographical unit, were designated as Important Plant Areas, Important Bird Areas and Prime Butterfly Areas, are part of so called "western zone" of high mammal fauna diversity in Serbia, form an important migration corridor for several species of large mammals and are part of the EMERALD Network in Serbia.

Another "priority area in focus" identified in June 2006 is Stara Planina mountain range in eastern Serbia, stretching across the state border with Bulgaria, where the Nature Park Stara planina was designated in the municipalities of Zajecar, KJazevac, Pirot and Dimitrovgrad, with the total surface of 114'332 ha, divided into the first degree protection zone of 3680 ha (3.23%), second degree zone of 20'159 ha (17.63 %) and third degree zone of 90'493 ha (79.14 %).

Prof. Stavretović described the biodiversity values of Stara Planina mountain range, including e.g. 115 endemic plant species, and 50 species classified as either endangered or critically endangered; 200 bird species including rare and endangered, and 30 mammal species, including 20 rare or endangered species. The Serbian presentation included also information on the development of the Emerald network database coordinated by the IUCN, the transboundary project implemented by IUCN Eastern Europe Regional Office in cooperation with Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia and financed by the Norwegian Government aimed at experience exchange on involving local communities in integrating nature conservation with the rural development; elaboration of the regional agro-tourism development strategy supported by the GEF, compatible with a mirror project "Protected Natural Resources Eco-Tourism Programme" implemented on the Bulgarian side; and the proposal by the National MaB Committee to designate Nature Park Stara Planina as UNESCO-MaB Biosphere Reserve.

## Concluding Session

Mr. Harald Egerer, Mr. Pier Carlo Sandei (UNEP Vienna Office) and Mr. Giorgio Andrian (UNESCO-BRESCE) briefly summarised the outcomes of the meeting. One of the conclusions of the meeting, basing on clear expectations expressed by its participants is that in the next phases of activities under the ENVSEC-SEE Initiative some funding should be made available for supporting pilot projects in selected “priority areas in focus”, e.g. for operational capacity building, developing common identity by producing e.g. common maps and promotional materials, and supporting common meetings of local stakeholders involved in cooperation.

The meeting was followed by the field mission to the border regions of Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina / Republic of Srpska, carried out by UNEP-Vienna with the objective to clarify the situation with the planned spatial extension of Sutjeska and Durmitor National Parks towards the state border in the Tara River Canyon, institutional and organizational aspects of the planned designation of new protected areas in this region, and to encourage cooperation between both national parks and the local communities of Žabljak and Plužine (in Montenegro) and Foča (in Bosnia and Herzegovina).



## ANNEX 3.



2<sup>nd</sup> sub-regional meeting on

**“Transboundary Cooperation of Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe:  
Towards the Dinaric Arc and Balkan Network of Mountain Protected Areas”**

organized in the framework of the project  
“Environment and Security in South Eastern Europe:  
Improving regional cooperation for risk management from pollution hotspots  
as well as the trans-boundary management of shared natural resources”

with the support of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA)  
and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

**16-17 June 2009, Podgorica, Montenegro**

**Meeting Venue: Hotel Crna Gora, Bulevar Svetog Petra Cetinskog 2, 81000 Podgorica**

**Monday, 15 June 2009**

*Arrival of participants, 20:00 - 22:00 Dinner*

**Tuesday, 16 June 2009 (Day one)**

**09:00 - 10:00 Opening Session**

*(Chair: His Excellency Mr. Branimir Gvozdenovic, Minister of Physical Development and Environmental Protection of Montenegro)*

*Welcome address by the Ministry of Physical Development and Environmental Protection of Montenegro. Address by Christophe Bouvier, Director and Regional Representative, UNEP. Address by Sandra Wibmer, Austrian Development Agency (ADA).*

**10:00 - 11:00 Introductory Session**

*Brief presentation of the expected outcomes of the meeting and proposed meeting agenda, brief “who is who” session aimed at familiarising participants coming from different ENVSEC countries.*

**11:00 - 11:30 Coffee break**

**11:30 - 13:30 Session “Mountain Protected Area Networks - towards the European ABC”**

- *Presentation on MEAs and initiatives relevant for establishment of protected area networks, incl. CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas, regional Alpine and Carpathian Conventions; ENVSEC and the Mountain Partnership. (by Harald Egerer, UNEP Vienna)*
- *Presentation on UNESCO activities including MaB trans-boundary Biosphere Reserves (by Giorgio Andrian, UNESCO-BRESCE)*
- *Presentation on regional efforts on biodiversity in the Western Balkans (by Sanja Bojanic, UNDP Montenegro)*
- *Presentation of the trans-boundary collaboration project initiated by DAI partners IUCN, WWF and SNV (by Emira Mesanovic, WWF)*
- *Presentation of activities of the Alpine Network of Protected Areas, incl. thematic working groups, workshops and seminars, common Interreg projects on e.g. research and nature inventories in the Alps, E-CONNECT - ecological networking project in the Alps, ALPARC support for the establishment of protected area network in the Carpathians. (by Albin Debeve, ALPARC) (tbc)*
- *Presentation of the project “ENVSEC SEE: Management of Shared Natural Resources (trans-boundary mountain areas) and progress towards establishment of the protected area network in the Carpathians (Carpathian Network of Protected Areas - CNPA) (by Zbigniew Niewiadomski)*
- *Discussion: possible benefits of networking, potential for the establishment of the sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc.*

**13:30 - 14:30 Lunch**

## Agenda of the second ENVSEC sub-regional meeting “Transboundary Cooperation of Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe: Towards the Dinaric Arc and Balkan Network of Mountain Protected Areas” (Podgorica, June 2009)

### 14:00 – 18:00 Session “Transboundary Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe”

- Brief presentation of the outcomes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sub-regional workshop on “Enhancing Trans-boundary Biodiversity in Mountains of South Eastern Europe”, held in Podgorica, Montenegro in June 2006 (by Zbigniew Niewiadomski)
- Brief update information by relevant ENVSEC SEE National Focal Points and national representatives on the progress in transboundary cooperation achieved since June 2006 in a proposed transboundary protected area including Durmitor NP, planned Bioc-Maglic-Volujak Regional Park, and Tara River region in Montenegro, and Sutjeska NP in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Brief presentation of the Durmitor NP (Montenegro)
- Brief presentation of the Sutjeska NP (BiH)
- Brief presentation of the findings of the draft feasibility study (‘gap and opportunity analysis’) on the proposed transboundary protected area “Durmitor-Sutjeska” (Zbigniew Niewiadomski)
- Discussion: lessons learned – case of transboundary cooperation between Durmitor NP and Sutjeska NP.

16:00 – 16:30 Coffee break

continuation of Session “Transboundary Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe” – brief update information by relevant ENVSEC SEE National Focal Points and country experts on the progress in transboundary cooperation achieved since June 2006 in 7 other proposed transboundary “areas in focus”:

- Prokletije Mountains / Bjeshkët e Nemuna
- Šar Planina / Deshat / Sharr / Korabi
- Tara Mountains / Drina gorge
- West Stara Planina
- Orjen / Sniježnica
- Vlahina / Maleševska / Belasica
- Osogovska Planina.

### 20:00 – 22:00 Welcome Dinner hosted by the Ministry of Physical Development and Environmental Protection of Montenegro

Venue: Restaurant “Dvor”, Kralja Nikole br 36 (+382 20 622 265)

### Wednesday, 17 June 2009 (Day two)

#### 09:00 – 11:00 Workshop 1: Priorities for common actions in transboundary “areas in focus”

*Objective: to identify priority common actions in particular protected “areas in focus” and consider potential for establishing transboundary working partnerships. Discussing potential for addressing the common priorities by implementing joint pilot projects in each area.*

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

#### 11:30 – 13:30 Workshop 2: Mountain Protected Area Network in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc

*Objective: to discuss participants’ ideas on common priorities for sub-regional cooperation in biodiversity conservation, to formulate their expectations towards networking; and to identify opportunities for launching a network of mountain protected areas in the Dinaric Arc and Balkans.*

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch

#### 14:30 – 16:00 Concluding Session

*Presentation of the outcomes of the workshops, discussion.*

16:00 Closing of the meeting.

*Departure of participants.*

## ANNEX 4.

**List of participants of the second ENVSEC sub-regional meeting “Transboundary Cooperation of Mountain Protected Areas in South Eastern Europe: Towards the Dinaric Arc and Balkan Network of Mountain Protected Areas” (Podgorica, June 2009)**

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## ANNEX 5.

**Examples of potential fields and benefits of transboundary cooperation – working material for the participants of the workshop**  
**”Priorities for common actions in transboundary areas in focus”.**

Fields of cooperation	Examples of possible common actions	Examples of potential benefits of transboundary cooperation
Information and data exchange	Exchange of information on natural and cultural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows development of common inventories of natural and cultural resources;</li> <li>• allows to control and, if need be, eradicate pest species (pathogens, insect pests or invasive alien species, which could threaten natural habitats of the TBPA).</li> </ul>
	Exchange of information on possible common threats to environment and/or nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows enhanced prevention from natural hazards and man-made threats to environment and/or nature</li> </ul>
	Exchange of information on tourist traffic, tourism development and available services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows monitoring of the visitor traffic and its seasonality, research on main visitor destinations, preferred activities, visitation pattern etc.;</li> <li>• allows development of the common sustainable tourism development strategy in the regional scale</li> </ul>
	Exchange of information on the results of protective activities undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows comparisons and evaluation of effectiveness of protective measures applied in particular protected areas and particular national constituent parts of the TBPA;</li> <li>• contributes to enhancing operational capacities of protected areas;</li> <li>• provides for better cost efficiency of protected area operations.</li> </ul>
	Establishing the common GIS database for the entire transboundary area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows common planning, monitoring and conservation activities in the entire TBPA region;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Organisation of joint conferences, workshops and seminars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitates information flow;</li> <li>• allows sharing results of scientific research;</li> <li>• promotes better understanding between partners from each side of the state border.</li> </ul>

Fields of cooperation	Examples of possible common actions	Examples of potential benefits of transboundary cooperation
Research	Establishing common resource centres and transboundary 'think-tanks'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for increased, cumulated pool of expertise;</li> <li>• allows elaboration of common approaches to common challenges and management issues;</li> <li>• facilitates gathering information on the TBPA region in one place ("one-stop-shop");</li> <li>• contributes to developing the common vision of the future of the TBPA.</li> </ul>
	Implementing joint scientific projects and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eliminates potential duplication of efforts;</li> <li>• provides for exchange of research methodologies and technical skills;</li> <li>• promotes standardisation and/or unification of research and monitoring methodologies.</li> </ul>
	Standardisation and unification of research and monitoring methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for compatibility of data collection, processing and management methods,</li> <li>• provides for comparability of research results gathered on each side of the state border</li> </ul>
	Unification of wildlife inventory methodology and dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for accuracy of data on wildlife populations in the scale of the entire eco-region/TBPA;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Organisation of joint sessions of protected area Scientific Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows sharing results of scientific research;</li> <li>• allows influencing management decisions of the cross-border counterpart, affecting either the whole TBPA or border areas on the other side of the state border;</li> <li>• contributes to developing the common vision of the future of the TBPA.</li> </ul>

Fields of cooperation	Examples of possible common actions	Examples of potential benefits of transboundary cooperation
<b>Management planning</b>	Cooperation on developing management plans for particular protected areas involved, and for the entire transboundary area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides protected area managers, planners and scientists a more holistic and wider 'eco-regional' approach;</li> <li>• allows harmonisation and/or coordination of management plans in the scale of the entire TBPA;</li> <li>• contributes to developing the common vision of the future of the TBPA.</li> </ul>
	Cooperation on developing spatial management / land development plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows harmonisation and/or coordination of spatial management / land development plans in the scale of the entire TBPA;</li> <li>• allows joint opposition against unwelcome inappropriate development, more sound than the unilaterally expressed by a single protected area or one national part of the TBPA;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity and developing the common vision of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Establishing common thematic working groups including experts from each side of the state border, organisation of joint technical meetings of protected area specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows cumulating skills pool, finding relevant expertise and solutions for either common or exclusive single-side management problems;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity and developing the common vision of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Development of common maps for the entire transboundary area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows harmonisation and/or coordination of management plans in the scale of the entire TBPA;</li> <li>• allows development of common strategies and planning common transboundary actions;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Development of the common environmental monitoring system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows evaluation of the effectiveness of joint or harmonized management of the TBPA;</li> <li>• allows evaluation of the 'added value' of transboundary cooperation in the TBPA;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>

Fields of cooperation	Examples of possible common actions	Examples of potential benefits of transboundary cooperation
<b>Cooperation on protection of the common natural and cultural heritage</b>	Coordination of protective measures concerning threatened, protected and migratory species as well as rare habitats and endangered ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows coordinated ecosystem-based management for plant and animal species where populations occur on both or more sides of state boundary/boundaries, or for migratory wildlife species that cross state border/s;</li> <li>• allows implementation of coordinated protective measures concerning habitats and ecosystems divided by the state border;</li> <li>• reduces the risk of biodiversity loss, caused by different non-coordinated policies applied in national parts of the TBPA where protective status, harvesting level and enhancement measures for rare species may differ.</li> </ul>
	Exchange of specimens of animal or plant species, establishing common ex-situ seed/gene banks and/or nurseries of rare and threatened species, transfer of specimens for ex-situ restoration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promotes protection or restoration of animal or plant species which populations are seriously threatened or even extinct in one national part but still viable across the border;</li> <li>• reduces the risk of biodiversity loss;</li> <li>• prevents negative inbred effect in isolated wildlife populations;</li> <li>• allows reintroduction of wildlife species requiring large habitat range, such as large carnivores or birds of prey;</li> <li>• allows sharing and reducing the costs of reintroduction activities, if jointly undertaken or coordinated.</li> </ul>
	Coordinated protection and restoration of natural linkages across borders (ecological corridors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows wildlife and plant species migrations across the state border, thus providing extended habitat range, in particular for large mammals;</li> <li>• allows coordinated ecosystem-based management for plant and animal species where populations occur on each side of the state border or for migratory wildlife species that cross state border/s.</li> </ul>
	Joint patrolling and surveillance of border area, sharing of the intelligence database and law enforcement methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for enhanced law enforcement, better control on poaching and illegal trade in plants and animals;</li> <li>• allows better control of wildfire and other hazards, if a cooperative surveillance and suppression efforts are non-restricted by the presence of the state border.</li> </ul>
	Implementing common control measures on invasive alien species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows to control and, if need be, eradicate pest species (pathogens, insect pests or invasive alien species, which could threaten natural habitats of the TBPA).</li> </ul>
	Implementing common projects on protection of historical and cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows technical skills and experience exchange;</li> <li>• provides for enhanced understanding of neighbour's culture;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>



Fields of cooperation	Examples of possible common actions	Examples of potential benefits of transboundary cooperation
<b>Common visitor management</b>	Implementing compatible visitor access regulations and common visitor 'code of conduct'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for enhanced protection of nature and landscape of the TBPA;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region</li> </ul>
	Networking for visitor centres within the entire transboundary area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows establishing the common booking system of tourist services;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Unification of visitor service and accommodation standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitates development of the common regional tourist product / tourist service packages;</li> <li>• improves the quality of tourist services.</li> </ul>
	Enhancing common visitor infrastructure design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promotes local traditional architectural patterns and the common cultural heritage of the TBPA region;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Coordination of search and rescue activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows coordination of search and rescue activities; thus increasing visitor safety.</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity building for protected area administrations</b>	Joint staff training, staff exchange and secondments programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for personnel capacity building and promotes staff professional development;</li> <li>• promotes experience exchange on e.g. law enforcement, protected area management, fundraising and project management, environmental education;</li> <li>• allows reducing operational costs;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Exchange of experience in GIS implementation, data management and application for management planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for capacity building and higher effectiveness of GIS utilisation;</li> <li>• facilitates undertaking joint research and monitoring projects;</li> <li>• allows reducing operational costs.</li> </ul>
	Sharing expensive research or heavy technical equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows reducing operational costs;</li> <li>• provides for technical skills exchange.</li> </ul>
	Direct technical assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enhances operational capacity building;</li> <li>• allows reducing operational costs.</li> </ul>

Fields of cooperation	Examples of possible common actions	Examples of potential benefits of transboundary cooperation
<b>Sustainable tourism development and visitor management</b>	Preparation of the common sustainable tourism development strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for harmonised development of tourist facilities in the whole TBPA;</li> <li>• allows enhancing common visitor “code of conduct”;</li> <li>• allows enforcing compatible visitor access regulations;</li> <li>• provides for streamlining the flow of visitors accordingly to common strategy for the whole area;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Development of the common tourist product package of the TBPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for greater marketing strength of a TBPA;</li> <li>• attracts tour operators due to the economy of scale and more diversified and broader tourist product package available;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Development of the joint system of booking for tourist services (e.g. accommodation, transportation, guided excursions, cultural events)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for higher tourist attractiveness of the whole TBPA, as the visitor is able to visit more than just one national part on a single travel;</li> <li>• allows implementation of the joint system of booking for tourist services (e.g. accommodation, transportation, cultural events);</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Organising common training of tourist guides and interpretative personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitates experience and interpretative skills exchange;</li> <li>• provides for better knowledge of the whole TBPA region, its natural, historical and cultural heritage;</li> <li>• provides for better communication and understanding between partners;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Joint promotion of tourist and recreational potential, and marketing of visitor services available on each side of the state border	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increases marketing strength of the whole TBPA region;</li> <li>• increases incomes of the local tourist services providers and tourist accommodation owners;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Producing common tourist map/guide, common promotional video materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increases marketing strength of the whole TBPA region;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Common labelling, marketing and promotion of local agricultural products and handicrafts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increases marketing strength of the whole TBPA region;</li> <li>• increases incomes of the local farmers and craftsmen;</li> <li>• contributes to protection of traditional knowledge, traditional land-use forms, cultural heritage and technical skills;</li> <li>• provides for development of the common regional products;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>

Fields of cooperation	Examples of possible common actions	Examples of potential benefits of transboundary cooperation
<b>Cross-cultural management and common identity building</b>	Establishing cultural links that promote regional identity, promoting joint cross-cultural events and cultural exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contributes to enhanced protection of the common historical and cultural heritage;</li> <li>• promotes better understanding of neighbour's culture and traditions;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Developing a common 'transboundary' logo for the transboundary area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increases marketing strength of the whole TBPA region;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Organisation of neighbour's language training courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contributes to improved communication between partners;</li> <li>• promotes better understanding of neighbour's culture and traditions.</li> </ul>
<b>Public relations, communication, awareness raising and environmental education</b>	Providing assistance in acquiring international designations (e.g. Biosphere Reserve, World Heritage Site, European Diploma, transboundary certificate of excellence by EUROPARC) by the neighbouring protected areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for improved international recognition of the whole TBPA region;</li> <li>• increases marketing strength of the whole TBPA region;</li> <li>• increases credibility of common fundraising initiatives;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Establishing directories and address databases of all key stakeholders on each side of the state border	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitates communication, consulting and planning joint activities by transboundary partners;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Development of the common communication strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for better understanding of shared natural and cultural values, and of the added value of transboundary cooperation;</li> <li>• provides for improved international recognition of the whole TBPA region;</li> <li>• increases marketing strength of the whole TBPA region;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Establishing a 'one stop shop' for transfrontier information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitates improved information, communication and experience exchange between partners;</li> <li>• provides for improved international recognition of the whole TBPA region;</li> <li>• facilitates common public relations;</li> <li>• allows reducing operational costs;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>

Fields of cooperation	Examples of possible common actions	Examples of potential benefits of transboundary cooperation
<b>Public relations, communication, awareness raising and environmental education</b>  <b>(continued)</b>	Developing common communication tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitates improved information, communication and experience exchange between partners;</li> <li>• provides for improved international recognition of the whole TBPA region;</li> <li>• facilitates common public relations;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Developing common publications and publicity material including common maps, brochures, exhibits, video material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for improved international recognition of the whole TBPA region;</li> <li>• increases marketing strength of the whole TBPA region;</li> <li>• increases credibility of common fundraising initiatives;</li> <li>• allows reducing operational costs;</li> <li>• by using common name and logo promotes pride for a common designation and raises the “corporate identity” of the TBPA;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Publishing information materials in all national languages and unifying the design of materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for better knowledge of the whole TBPA region, its natural, historical and cultural heritage;</li> <li>• contributes to improved communication between partners;</li> <li>• raises the “corporate identity” of the TBPA.</li> </ul>
	Organisation of field staff meetings from neighbouring areas across the frontier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improves field staff morale;</li> <li>• improves working contacts in border areas and reduces the feeling of isolation in remote locations;</li> <li>• helps to overcome cross-cultural differences;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Establishing best practice awards for common demonstration projects e.g. on endangered species protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitates improved information, communication, technical skills and experience exchange between partners;</li> <li>• raises the “corporate identity” of the TBPA.</li> </ul>
	Installation of similar or even unified interpretative outings (e.g. information boards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promotes local traditional architectural patterns and the common cultural heritage of the TBPA region;</li> <li>• provides for better knowledge of the whole TBPA region, its natural, historical and cultural heritage;</li> <li>• raises the “corporate identity” of the TBPA;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>

Fields of cooperation	Examples of possible common actions	Examples of potential benefits of transboundary cooperation
Public relations, communication, awareness raising and environmental education (continued)	Cooperation in environmental education programs, organisation of youth exchanges and common volunteer camps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitates experience and interpretative skills exchange;</li> <li>• provides for better knowledge of the whole TBPA region, its natural, historical and cultural heritage, as well as understanding of the added value of transboundary cooperation;</li> <li>• promotes better understanding of neighbour's culture and traditions;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
Funding and fundraising	Developing joint applications for common transboundary projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides greater lobbying strength for fundraising efforts and attracting international donors and assistance agencies;</li> <li>• creates greater responsibility to honour obligations for support among external founders, decision-makers, respective authorities and governmental agencies;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>
	Establishing common funding mechanisms for transboundary cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides for continuity of transboundary cooperation activities in the long term;</li> <li>• allows to support common transboundary activities by e.g. grant programs;</li> <li>• allows to cover core costs of transboundary cooperation;</li> <li>• provides greater lobbying strength for fundraising efforts and attracting international donors and assistance agencies;</li> <li>• provides matching funds / own contribution required when applying for external project funding;</li> <li>• contributes to building the common identity of the TBPA region.</li> </ul>

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Landscape of Prokletije / Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains. © Tomasz Pezold

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The programme of work on mountain biological diversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recommends establishing regional and transboundary collaboration, and cooperative agreements for mountain ranges, as well as establishing and strengthening adequate, effective national and regional networks of mountain protected areas. Protected area networks allow for a more effective and harmonised management of the shared natural heritage, habitats and species as well as for joint preservation and promotion of cultural values of the region.

The following report by UNEP Vienna Office

- Briefly summarises potential benefits of acting as a protected area network,
- Describes the experience on the development of protected area networks in the mountain ranges directly neighbouring the Balkan / Dinaric region – in the Alps and in the Carpathians,
- Provides a brief overview of the ecological network in particular countries of the South Eastern Europe,
- Describes possible criteria for selection of the potential partners of the sub-regional network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc and provides their tentative contact list,
- Compares conditions for protected area network initiatives in the Alps, Carpathians and the Balkans,
- Includes recommendations on the necessary first steps towards the proposed network,
- Presents initiatives undertaken under ENVSEC-SEE with the objective to share the Alpine and Carpathian experience, promote and consult the idea for establishing a network of mountain protected areas in the Balkans and the Dinaric Arc with the possible stakeholders, and bring this issue to the attention of nature conservation authorities and political decision-makers.

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