



New cooperation aims to help shield Carpathians from impact of climate change and support rural economy

- **Countries adopt new Article on climate change and Protocol on sustainable agriculture and rural development under the Carpathian Convention**
- **Outlook on Climate Change Adaptation in the Carpathians launched today provides basis for action**

Lillafüred, Hungary, 12 October 2017 – High-level officials from the Carpathian states have laid the ground for new cooperation on climate change, agriculture and rural development that balances the needs of citizens and the environment.

Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine adopted the new Article on Climate Change and the Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development at the Fifth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP5) of the Carpathian Convention, administered by UN Environment.

More than half of the Carpathians is covered in forest and the region is a refuge for brown bears, wolves, eagles and some 200 plant species found nowhere else in the world. The mountains also act as the main drinking water supply for the surrounding region.

Yet – according to UN Environment’s Outlook on Climate Change Adaptation in the Carpathians launched at today’s meeting - the Carpathian Mountains are expected to experience a temperature increase of about 3.0-4.5°C over the course of this century. This will lead to profound consequences on the environment, economy and human wellbeing.

For example, extreme weather caused by climate change will lead to there being less groundwater, which provides over 80% of water fit for human consumption in the Carpathians. Droughts are expected to be more frequent in summer, when demand for water is highest. Temperature increases from climate change will furthermore lead to several tree species becoming extinct, with a knock-on effect for other ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration. Regional cooperation to protect ecosystems is therefore essential. “Today’s adoption of new strategic documents, including an explicit new Article of the Convention on climate change, and a new Protocol on sustainable agriculture and rural development, shows that the political will from Carpathian countries is there to meet the needs of

our planet and people at the same time,” said Jan Dusik, UN Environment’s Europe Director.

“This is yet another milestone showing how the Carpathians remain a pioneering force inspiring sustainable mountain development for the entire region and beyond, which makes UN Environment proud to be hosting this happy Convention” he added.

Under the Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development, developed in cooperation with Eurac Research, the Carpathian Countries will work together to realize a climate-smart circular rural economy and promote agro-tourism, local products, organic production and rural innovation.

“In Lillafüred, today we have decided how the future of the Carpathians will be. Let me congratulate all the Parties of the Carpathian Convention, the host country Hungary, all the stakeholders, scientists and representatives of civil society organizations, to agree on these decisive steps towards making the Carpathians a model for sustainable regional and local development”, said Harald Egerer, Head of the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention.

Meeting nearby Lillafüred castle, the Carpathian countries also seek to fortress the region from the worst effects of climate change. States are called on to “pursue climate change adaptation by promoting research and scientific cooperation, cross sectoral integration, transnational cooperation, awareness raising, public participation and fostering local adaptation planning and implementation, especially in the most vulnerable areas and sectors,” states the Climate Change Article adopted today.

UN Environment’s Outlook on Climate Change Adaptation in the Carpathians provides the scientific basis for policy action and offers best practices. The Outlook is part of a series covering major mountain ranges worldwide.

Today’s meeting took place under the auspices of the incoming Hungarian Presidency of the Carpathian Convention. The event was held back-to-back with a summit of Environment Ministers from the Visegrád Group (V4) also attended by Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Slovenia.

Background

The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention) is the only multi-level governance mechanism covering the entire Carpathian area. The Convention is only the second sub-regional treaty in the world that protects a mountain region. Since 2004, the Convention’s Secretariat has been administered by the United Nations Environment Programme through its Vienna office.

The COP is the Convention’s main decision-making body and consists of High Level Representatives from contracting states to the Convention. The COP adopts protocols and amendments to the Convention and sets up subsidiary bodies. It sets the Convention’s programme of work and budget and reviews and supports the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols. Ordinary COP meetings are held every three years.

To read UN Environment's Outlook on Climate Change Adaptation in the Carpathians click [here](#).

For more information on the Carpathian Convention and its Fifth Conference of the Parties, click [here](#) or contact:

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