

Ramsar Regional Initiatives 2009-2011

Guidance for the development of regional initiatives in the framework of the Convention on Wetlands

Introduction

In 2002, the 8th meeting of Ramsar's Contracting Parties (COP8) adopted *Guidelines for the development of regional initiatives* (Resolution VIII.30, cf. Annex I) as a reference against which to judge the value of regional initiatives for the implementation of the Convention. In conformity with these *Guidelines*, a number of Contracting Parties developed proposals for regional initiatives (including regional networks as well as regional centres for training and capacity building) and submitted them for the consideration of the Ramsar Standing Committee. The Committee submitted the proposals to COP9 in 2005 (information paper COP9 DOC. 21), which endorsed nine initiatives for the triennium 2006-2008 as operating within the framework of the Ramsar Convention and recognized a number of additional initiatives as having the potential to become operative within the framework of the Convention at a later stage (Resolution IX.7).

A similar procedure is now proposed for regional initiatives – ongoing or new – to obtain formal endorsement by COP10 in November 2008 as operating in the framework of the Convention during the triennium 2009-2011.

Procedure for submitting requests for COP10 endorsement and possible Ramsar funding

Contracting Parties that seek endorsement of a regional initiative by COP10 are requested to submit a proposal, following the format provided below. In order to be included in the list to be considered by COP10, the request must reach the Ramsar Secretariat not later than **31 March 2008**; it will then be submitted by the Secretariat to the 37th meeting of the Standing Committee in June 2008 for evaluation and transmittal to COP10.

The format to be used follows the structure of the *Guidelines* adopted in 2002 (attached in Annex I). Please consult the *Guidelines* when preparing your proposal. The information you provide about the initiative needs to be precise, brief, and to the point and should not exceed six pages in total.

Please submit your proposal in electronic form – as a Microsoft Word document – and send it to: salathe@ramsar.org only. Should you need further help, please contact this address.

Report Format Start

AIM OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

1. Implementation of the Ramsar approach

- 1.1 Describe briefly how your initiative is promoting the objectives of the Convention and how it is implementing the Ramsar Strategic Plan through cooperation in your region:

The Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI) is aimed at improved and coordinated implementation of the Ramsar Convention and its Strategic Plan in 7 countries of the Carpathian mountain region, which represents a major freshwater resource and is known for its great biodiversity and cultural richness. The mission of the Initiative is to contribute to the implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ramsar Convention and UNEP Interim Secretariat of the the Carpathian Convention (UNEP Vienna ISCC) signed on 13 December 2006 in Kiyv, Ukraine (*Annex I*). The CWI will facilitate collaboration between the two Conventions and their Parties in their efforts in conservation and wise use of wetlands in the Carpathian region and beyond, through local, national, regional and international activities.

The MoC between the two Conventions in its Annex specifies that the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and UNEP Vienna ISCC will work together especially on 8 joint activities which support also implementation of the (draft) Ramsar Strategic Plan and the Carpathian Convention and its (draft) Protocol on Conservation of Biological and Landscape Diversity: Relations of CWI to the draft Strategic Plan 2009-2011 are specified in *Annex V*.

SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

2. Complete regional adherence and bottom-up approach

- 2.1 Describe briefly if your initiative is based on a bottom-up approach:

The Initiative started after consultations with experts, Ramsar Administrative Authorities and Carpathian Network of Protected Areas Steering Committee members in all 7 Carpathian countries. The initial workshop was held on 28-30 April 2004 in Brezovica, Slovakia and was based on invitation of minister of environment of the Slovak Republic and the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic to all Ramsar and Carpathian Convention nominated institutions in the region, Ramsar Partner Organizations and MedWet Initiative. The 6th Evian Encounter organized in cooperation with the Ramsar Convention Secretariat between 15-17 November 2006 in Evian, France, and devoted to CWI, resulted in agreed key points which should be developed by the Initiative (*Annex II*) and which are, after consultation with all Carpathian countries and partners, reflected in the targets of the initiative listed bellow. National Ramsar Committees and national committees for implementation of the Carpathian Convention are also involved.

- 2.2 List the countries in the region that your initiative covers:

The Carpathian Wetland Initiative includes all 7 countries of the Carpathian region and Contracting Parties to the Carpathian Convention:

Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine

- 2.3 Specify those countries in your region that do not participate in the initiative (if any):

None

3. Active involvement of all relevant stakeholders

3.1 List the participants in your initiative and their affiliation:

All Carpathian countries (relevant Ministries or agencies) designated by 31 January 2007 their National Focal Points for the Carpathian Wetland Initiative as follows:

Country	Name	Organisation
Czech Republic	Libuse Vlasáková	Ministry of Environment
Hungary	András Schmidt	Ministry of Environment and Water
Poland	Zygmunt Krzeminski	Ministry of Environment
Romania	Carmen Damian	Ministry of Environment and Water Management
Serbia	Milutin Pantovic	Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection
Slovakia	Ján Kadlecik	State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
Ukraine	Igor Ivanenko	Ministry of Environmental Protection

Contact details please see in *Annex III*.

3.2 Indicate if only Ramsar Administrative Authorities at national level or also other relevant stakeholders (including other ministries, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, academia and economic actors) are actively involved:

Several Carpathian countries nominated for cooperation with the CWI both National Focal Points of Ramsar and the Carpathian Conventions of the relevant ministries (Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Ukraine) and representatives of other agencies and institutes (Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia, National Park Djerdap, State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic, State Agency for Protected Areas of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Ukraine, State Museum of Natural History, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine). Intergovernmental bodies are represented by partners of the CWI: Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River ICPDR (Peter Whalley) and Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA Steering Committee). Non-governmental sector include Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative CERI (NGOs, scientific institutes and academia of all Carpathian countries), IUCN – Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe, Wetlands International (Wetlands International Black Sea Office in Kyiv, Vasily Kostyushin), WWF – Danube-Carpathian Programme and its Steering Group of the project Protected areas for a Living Planet. Through national Ramsar Committees and national committees for implementation of the Carpathian Convention various ministries, academia, DAPHNE – Institute of Applied Ecology and NGOs are involved.

4. Development of collaboration based on commonly agreed terms

4.1 Describe briefly how your regional network or centre is operating (attach the terms of reference (or other agreements) elaborated to guide its activities as separate documents where they exist):

The CWI is a part of the collaborative programme for sustainable wetland and water resource conservation and management in the Carpathian region through which the Secretariats of the Convention on Wetlands and Carpathian Convention develop mechanisms for programme cooperation (*Article 1 of the MoC of 2006*). The Carpathian Wetland Initiative is coordinated and supported by the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic. The Terms of Reference of the CWI were consulted with all Carpathian countries and approved by Extended Bureau of the Carpathian Convention in October 2007 and it will be submitted for approval to the 2nd Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Carpathian Convention 17 – 19 June 2008 in Bucharest, Romania (*Annex IV*).

5. Involvement of other regional partners

5.1 List relevant intergovernmental or international organizations operating in your region:

Intergovernmental and international organisations operating in the Carpathian region include: Ramsar Convention Secretariat, Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (UNEP, Vienna) and its Implementation Committee, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR, Vienna), Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA Steering Committee) and Danube River Network of Protected Areas. NGOs include Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative (CERI, Bratislava), IUCN – Programme Office for South-Eastern Europe (Belgrade), Wetlands International (Wetlands International Black Sea Office in Kyiv), WWF – Danube-Carpathian Programme (WWF-DCP, Vienna), Regional Environmental Centre (REC office in Bratislava).

5.2 List those with which you have established common activities:

The most organisations mentioned above are involved in the development of the CWI from the beginning.

5.3 List your activities in common:

Improving of information base on wetland ecosystems in the Carpathians; improving exchange of wetland-related information, inter-sectoral cooperation and international collaboration; building of the complete and representative network of Ramsar sites; integrating the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including wetlands, into river basin management; identifying and developing specific wetland restoration projects; identifying potential transboundary wetland ecosystems and possibilities for their joint management; facilitating cooperation in species and habitat monitoring; facilitating communication and information exchange aiming at capacity building and public awareness on the role of wetland ecosystem services in the Carpathians.

6. Scientific and technical backing

6.1 List the scientific and technical partners that provide a solid backing to your initiative:

The coordinator of CWI is from the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic, which is a technical and scientific organisation of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic with experienced staff and focal points for the Ramsar and Carpathian Conventions and it is a member of IUCN. The CWI National Focal Points and other contacts represent their countries in the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee, its Working Group on Biodiversity, the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas, the Danube River Network of Protected Areas as well as in the Association of Members of Wetlands International. There are Ramsar and Carpathian Administrative Authorities, staff members of institutions dealing with wetlands conservation and management and a national Academy of Sciences. Partners of the Initiative are those which are Partner Organisations of the Ramsar Convention (IUCN, Wetlands International, WWF) or the Carpathian Convention (CERI, DAPHNE – Institute of Applied Ecology, EURAC, ICPDR, WWF-DCP, REC) with solid scientific and technical backing. CERI is a network of member organisations which include NGOs and scientific institutions working towards the vision to achieve the long-term conservation of nature of the Carpathian mountains, while supporting its economy and culture through international partnership.

7. Targets of the initiative and their links with Ramsar

7.1 List your initiative's strategic and operational targets for the period 2009-2011:

CWI strategic targets for the period 2009-2011:

- I. To establish a platform for collecting and sharing information on wetland ecosystems, including transboundary wetland ecosystems.
- II. To establish a platform for cooperation on international, regional and national cooperation.
- III. To establish a platform for wetland assessment and monitoring.
- IV. To establish a platform for integrated river basin management, especially in shared catchments.
- V. To establish a platform for wetland restoration activities.
- VI. To establish a platform for capacity building and public awareness.

Operational targets for the period 2009-2011:

- I. Platform of basic data on wetlands: 1.1. The first Carpathian wetland conference; 1.2. Harmonized classification system of wetland habitats and wetland inventory; 1.3. Training and workshop on field mapping, storing of data and digitising; 1.4. Collection and harmonisation of data for Overview of Carpathian Wetlands; 1.5. Involvement in the 2012 Protected Areas for a Living Planet Clearing House Mechanism
- II. Platform for cooperation: 2.1. Meetings and electronic communication of members of the CWI Board; 2.2. Facilitation of effective cooperation between sectors; 2.3. Reporting to the Secretariats
- III. Platform for wetland assessment and monitoring
- IV. Platform for integrated river basin management especially in shared catchments: 4.1. Involvement in the preparation of relevant documents on sustainable and integrated water/river basin management within the Carpathian Convention; 4.2. National stakeholder seminars/workshops in cooperation with UNDP/GEF project in the Tisza River basin; 4.3. Facilitate bilateral consultations; 4.4. Prepare handbooks and brochures
- V. Platform for wetland restoration activities: 5.1. Develop wetland restoration strategies/policies for montane/submontane wetlands; 5.2. Identify demonstration sites and projects in cooperation with UNDP/GEF project in the Tisza River basin
- VI. Platform for capacity building and public awareness: 6.1. Questionnaire on training priorities; 6.2. Training course focused on priorities identified; 6.3. CWI Web-site; 6.4. Database of educational and training institutions and experts; 6.5. Brochures, leaflets and posters on the Carpathian wetlands and their functions and services; 6.6. Regional Wetland Centre

7.2 Specify the relations of these targets to the objectives of the draft Ramsar Strategic Plan (attach your work plan for 2009-2011, or for 2009, where it exists):

The CWI Work Plan for 2009-2011 is attached to this document as **Annex V**.

8. Raising awareness of Ramsar objectives

8.1 Describe briefly your activities in the fields of communication, education, and participatory processes with relevant stakeholders:

Communication, education and participatory processes are between the most important activities in the CWI work plan. The aim is to increase wetland management capacity in Carpathian countries and public awareness on the role of wetland services in human wellbeing, including establishment of a regional Wetland Centre, organize information, education and training activities (training courses for trainees from the Carpathian countries, web site of CWI, database of educational and training institutions and experts, brochures, leaflets, posters on the Carpathian wetlands and their functions and services).

8.2 Describe briefly the increased support for Ramsar objectives resulting from these activities (this information may be used by Ramsar's CEPA Oversight Panel, according to Standing Committee Decision 35-14):

The CWI will raise awareness of general public through its web page and production of a number of printed materials on the Carpathian wetlands and their functions and services and through support of campaigns. The skills for wetland management will be improved through training programme and training courses and through establishment and activities of the regional Wetland Centre.

FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

9. Who provides political and financial support?

9.1 List all your sources and the amounts of financial support for the triennium 2009-2011. Specify the amounts which are already confirmed:

The Slovak Ministry of Environment (MoE SR) and the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic (SNC SR) will provide funding for operation of the coordination unit - 12,500 EUR yearly. The Czech Ministry of Environment (MoE CZ) will provide voluntary contributions to the CWI - approximately 3,000 EUR yearly.

The Hungarian Ministry of Environment and Water will support the CWI with – 2,000 EUR yearly.

The Carpathian Convention Secretariat (UNEP CCIS or Permanent Secretariat) will provide funding for development of the relevant documents and organizing of expert meetings (approximately 7,000 EUR yearly).

WWF-DCP in the MAVVA project “Protected Areas for a Living Planet” will contribute to the objective to ensure that critical gaps in the protected area network are filled, with a particular focus on, among others, freshwater ecosystems and trans-boundary protected areas – about 2,000 EUR yearly.

CERI project (DBU funding) on the Carpathian Ecological Network will contribute to the CWI implementation in database development, education and promotion activities, publications and the conference organisation (2,000 EUR yearly).

Ukrainian BBI-MATRA project “Establishment of Ramsar Sites in the Danube-Carpathian region of Ukraine” will support the project activities in Ukraine (approximately 10,000 EUR yearly).

UNDP/GEF project “Integrating multiple benefits of wetlands and floodplains into improved transboundary management for the Tisza River Basin” can provide for adoption of policies and legislation and demonstration of effective floodplain management strategies through ICPDR a part of funds also for the Carpathian mountain region – approximately 5,000 EUR yearly.

UNDP/GEF / DAPHNE Peatland project “Conservation, restoration and wise use of rich fens in the Slovak Republic” can support some CEPA activities - 2,000 EUR.

9.2 List your sources and amounts of financial support for the year 2009. Specify the amounts which are already confirmed:

Source	Amount [EUR]	Confirmed
MoE SR and SNC SR	12,500	Y
MoE CZ	3,000	Y
MoE Hungary	2,000	Y
WWF-DCP/MAVA	2,000	Y
CERI/DBU	2,000	Y
BBI/MATRA Ukraine	10,000	Y
ICPDR/UNDP/GEF	5,000	N
DAPHNE/UNDP/GEF	2,000	Y
EU/Swiss Funds	4,000	N
CC Secretariat/INTERREG	7,000	N

9.3 List concisely, according to main budget lines, your expenditures planned for 2009:

Expected expenditures according to the work plan for 2009 are estimated in the table below (in EUR)

Staff costs	10,000
Experts and consultants	12,000
Travel expenses of coordinator and participants	35,000
Conference expenses	3,000
Office costs	2,500
Outreach/CEPA	3,500
Total	66,000

10. Financial planning

10.1 Summarize your remaining funding needs for 2009 that are not yet covered by confirmed donations, according to the main budget lines used above:

Experts and consultants	3,000
Travel expenses of meetings participants	20,000
Conference expenses	2,500
Outreach/CEPA	1,500
Total	27,000

10.2 Provide information about your fundraising plan to cover such outstanding needs:

The State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic is developing a project proposal for funding of the activities for wetlands conservation and wise use in the period 2008 - 2011 from the structural funds of the European Union and is working on a project design to be funded from the Swiss Cohesion Fund. UNEP Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention is working on an INTERREG project proposal for funding of the activities of the Carpathian Convention for the next triennium, including subject of implementation of the Article 6 on Sustainable and integrated water/river basin management and activities of the CWI.

11. Request for Ramsar core budget support

11.1 If you request a financial contribution from the Ramsar core budget, specify the amount for 2009, and for the triennium 2009-2011:

For 2009 the request for a financial contribution from the Ramsar core budget is 25,000 CHF.
For the triennium 2009-2011 it is 75,000 CHF.

GOVERNANCE OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

12. Governance mechanisms in place

12.1 Describe the governance and advisory mechanisms and structures (e.g., committees) in place or to be established to provide guidance and insight to your initiative (attach terms of references, rules of procedures, or operational guidelines, where such exist):

The framework for CWI governance is given in the already approved Terms of Reference for the CWI (see *Annex IV*). In the 6th Evian Encounter in November 2006 Jan Kadlecik of the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic was asked to coordinate the CWI and in February 2008 a special position of coordinator for the Ramsar and Carpathian Conventions was established within this organisation. The implementing body of CWI is a Board composed of the National Focal Points

delegated by the Parties to the Carpathian Convention (they were designated in January 2007 – see *Annex III*). The international and non-governmental organisations and secretariats of the Carpathian and Ramsar Conventions will provide inputs to the Board. The Board will elect a chair to guide its proceedings. The chair will report on CWI activities to the Secretariats of the Ramsar and Carpathian Conventions. If resources permit, the Board may meet periodically face-to-face, but will operate largely through electronic and telephone communication.

13. Coordination with the Ramsar Secretariat

13.1 Specify the established or anticipated operational arrangements between the governance structures of your initiative and the Ramsar Secretariat:

The Ramsar Convention Secretariat has been involved in the development of the CWI from the very beginning. The Mechanisms for Programme Cooperation and Joint Activities are based in Articles 1 and 2 of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ramsar and Carpathian Conventions. The CWI is in permanent contact with the Senior Advisor for Europe of the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and it is anticipated that the representatives of the Secretariat will be invited to all meetings, consultations and activities within the Initiative. Results of all the activities will be reported to the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention and the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention.

13.2 List the full name, telephone and e-mail contact of the main focal point of your initiative:

Jan Kadlecik, Tel.: +421 48 4713629; +421 43 4284503; E-mail: jan.kadlecik@sopsr.sk.

Report Format End
