



Looking back
on 13 years
of cooperation
between protected areas

the
Alpine/Carpathian
partnership



Introduction

The International Year of Mountains 2002 focused on the unique role of mountain regions in the Earth's ecosystem, particularly in the conservation of biodiversity. Most mountain regions extend across national borders and cooperation between neighbouring countries is crucial for their sustainable development. Sharing experiences under the Mountain Partnership, an initiative established as part of the International Year of Mountains, is an active instrument for promoting cross-border cooperation.

To implement this political initiative, at their seventh conference in 2002, the Parties to the Alpine Convention agreed to share the experience gathered during their many years in the Alpine process with other mountain regions, with a particular focus on the Carpathians. Since then, the Alpine states have been promoting cooperation between Europe's two most important mountain regions.

As a key contribution to the International Year of Mountains, the Carpathian countries developed the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians, taking the Alpine-Carpathian Partnership as a basis. The experience gained in the Alps was adapted to the needs and conditions in the Carpathians. The Carpathian Convention was signed at the Fifth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" on 22 May 2003 in Kiev, Ukraine. Like the Alpine Convention, it is a model for

international cooperation on the conservation and sustainable development of large, transboundary mountain ecosystems.

Transboundary protected areas and their ecological connectivity play a key role in the implementation of the Alpine Convention. Article 12 of the Nature Conservation Protocol of the Alpine Convention envisages the creation of an ecological network. Article 4 of the Carpathian Convention, expressly provides for the establishment of a network of protected areas as part of the international initiative to create an ecological network.

“The Alpine Network of Protected Areas (ALPARC) has been supporting the Alpine-Carpathian cooperation since 2003”

The Alpine Network of Protected Areas (ALPARC) has been supporting the Alpine-Carpathian cooperation since 2003. One result of this successful collaboration is the Carpathian Network of Protected areas (CNPA) which was established in 2006 on the ALPARC model. Long-term cooperation between the Alpine and Carpathian regions is needed to make ecological corridors for migrating species possible, facilitate genetic

exchange and enable the protected areas of these two European mountain ranges to share know-how and experience.

The Federal Environment Ministry considers the creation of an ecological network in Europe to be a key contribution towards achieving a global network of protected areas as envisaged in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). For this reason, we have been supporting the successful cooperation between the protected area networks of the Alpine and Carpathian regions since 2003.

The activities were presented as a model project at COP 9 of the CBD in 2008 in Bonn, where a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Alpine Convention, the Carpathian Convention and the CBD. Intensive cooperation has continued ever since.

This brochure highlights the results of the long-term and successful collaboration between the two networks and describes their potential for promoting the conservation of biodiversity in Europe.

Silvia Reppe

Focal Point Alpine Convention Germany
Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature
Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety



Two mountain ranges

The Alps and the Carpathians belong to the most extensive mountain ranges in Europe. The Alps cover an area of 190.000 km², and are the home of 14 million people living in eight Alpine countries (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Slovenia and Switzerland). The Carpathian arc has a surface of roughly 209.000 km² and spans over most of Slovakia and Romania and parts of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Ukraine and Serbia. The Carpathians have a population of 17 million people. Among the Alpine countries are some of the founding fathers of the European Union, whereas five of the Carpathian countries started entering the EU during the years 2000.

Both mountain ranges possess an outstanding natural and ecological diversity, a rich cultural heritage and are home to a great variety of languages. The Alps are also one of the world's main tourist regions: around 120 million people visit the region every year. The Carpathians are known for their large population of large carnivores (lynx, bears and wolves), their vast amount of different plant species and their potential as an ecological bridge between Eastern and Western Europe.

Both regions are sensitive to the influence of intensive farming that is replacing more and more the traditional agricultural activities, tourism, road construction, urbanisation, industrialisation and climate change. These developments, some more significant in one mountain range than the other, pose a threat to biodiversity and the migration of species. Therefore, 18% of the surface of the Carpathians and 23% of the Alps fall under some sort of protection.

Two conventions

Since 1991, nature protection in the Alps has been supported by an international treaty: the Alpine Convention. This model for sustainable development and nature protection was at that time the only international legal instrument on mountain protection in force anywhere in the world. The integrative approach of Alpine cooperation, from nature conservation to regional, economic, and social development, has inspired the creation of a similar instrument for the Carpathians and its signature in 2003. Each convention now roughly governs the whole area of the mountain massif concerned.





Two networks of protected areas

In 1995, ALPARC, the Alpine Network of Protected Areas was established. It includes all the protected areas of different types within the Alpine Convention area. These include the following large protected areas (over 100 ha):

- 13 national parks
- 96 regional/nature parks
- 289 nature reserves
- 13 biosphere reserves
- 4 UNESCO World Natural Heritage Sites
- 3 geological reserves
- and 510 others belonging to different categories (protected landscape, quiet areas, etc.)

The association ALPARC works closely together with the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention on all activities related to protected species. Its main task is based on Article 12 of the protocol “Nature conservation and landscape management”. ALPARC is also active in the fields of sustainable development in the regions of protected areas, information and environmental education. It provides services and organises events and international projects.

Following the example of ALPARC, the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) was officially created in 2006, as a contribution to the Carpathian Convention and to support international cooperation between Carpathian protected areas.

The protected areas in the CNPA are made up of:

- 36 national parks
- 51 nature parks and protected landscape areas
- 19 biosphere reserves
- and around 200 other protected areas

International cooperation between protected areas through a regional network is seen as a key element by both the Alpine and the Carpathian Convention. However, a significant difference lies in the fact that the Carpathian Convention considers this cooperation as important for all the domains of the convention. For this reason, the creation of a network of protected areas was directly integrated in the framework convention and not only in the nature protection protocol, as is the case for the Alpine Convention.

For both networks the convention is a starting point and a guideline for international cooperation.

The creation of a **sister organisation**

The idea of the creation of a network of the Carpathian protected areas came up almost naturally in the early 2000s after having built the Alpine Network of Protected Areas since 1995. The project was launched in the context of the year of the mountains 2002 and the German Presidency of the Alpine Convention in 2003. Together with UNEP and the General Secretary of the Carpathian Convention a first concept was elaborated. An international Steering Committee was formed by the Conference of the Parties of the Carpathian Convention.

Already in 2003 a first Steering Group meeting took place in Berchtesgaden to create a Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA), based on the experiences of ALPARC. Nevertheless this new network needed to be adapted to the specific Carpathian situation, which was a challenging process. After often lengthy discussions between the Carpathian countries it was possible to arrive at suitable solutions. A main step was achieved when the first Conference of the CNPA took place in Brasov in 2009, which is comparable to a general assembly. For the first time a common work plan was elaborated that structured the network.

A network for international cooperation needs structures – an international steering committee and a body that functions as a general assembly are essential features of good governance. A coordination unit which organises the services and events for the network is crucial. Therefore, the creation of such a unit has been one of the main aims from the start of the procedure of the CNPA. In the frame of the European BIOREGIO project the CNPA was involved in, a coordination unit could be established in 2013. However, due to lack of finances there is no professionally operating unit existing today.

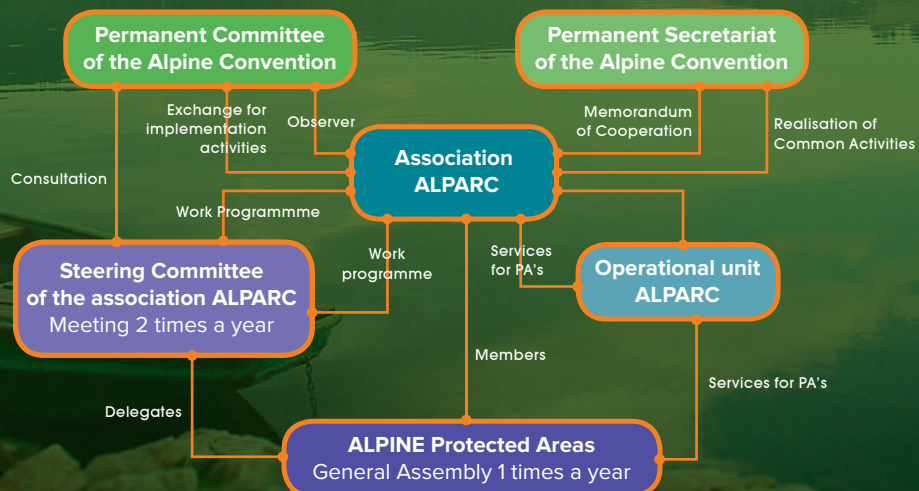
The organisation charts on the next page show the organisation structures of ALPARC and the CNPA. Like ALPARC, the base of the CNPA are the protected areas in the network. Representatives of each country make up the steering committee, which elaborates the working programmes for the coordination unit. Both structures also show the close cooperation with the convention they support.



Organisation structures of ALPARC and the CNPA



CNPA



ALPARC

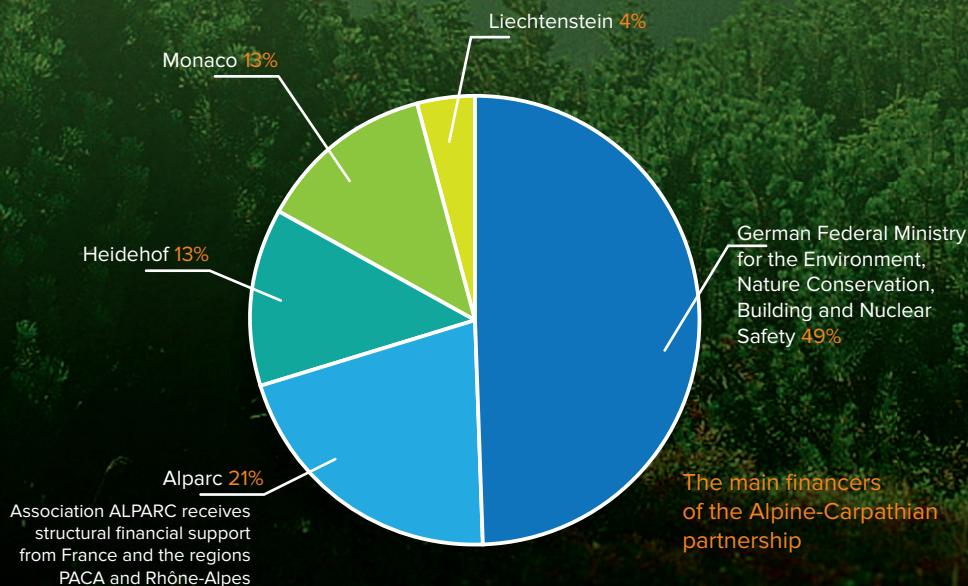
Essential elements

Without the continued support of Germany, Monaco and a private German foundation (Heidehof), the CNPA would not have seen the light of day. Especially the role of Germany has been crucial, not only as the main financier of the project, but even more as the main driving force in the frame of the Mountain Partnership of the Alpine Convention, which provided the frame, strategy and means for the birth of the CNPA.

Several people invested time and a lot of energy in this project which became reality and facilitated an intensive exchange and cooperation between the Carpathians and the Alps for 13 years. Their role has been indispensable.

In conclusion, the following elements can be marked as essential for the establishment of an international network:

- Well established organisation structures to coordinate and organise the work
- Common rules and working programs
- Supporting organisations and means
- A long term vision
- And, most importantly, motivated people investing time and effort in the project



A long tradition of cooperation

The cooperation between the protected areas of the Alps and the Carpathians has a long tradition. The first exchange programmes between the mountain ranges already took place in 1997.

The official beginning of regular cooperation was marked by the International Year of Mountains in 2002. In the so-called Berchtesgaden declaration, June 2002, was written down: „The creation of a Carpathian network of protected areas could be supported by UNEP and the Alpine Network of Protected Areas, by an exchange of documents and information, as well by an exchange of managers of protected areas. Sharing the experiences between Alps and Carpathians might help define the real needs of such a network. The Governments of the Alpine Region should consider providing continuous support to the process of cooperation in the Carpathian mountains, in particular the preparation of a Framework Convention”.

The procedure of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) started on the basis of article 4.5 of the Carpathian Convention with the support of Alpine countries (especially Germany, France, Austria and the Principality of Monaco) and several foundations. An international Steering Committee composed of one government representative for each Carpathian country was created to establish the CNPA.

ALPARC and CNPA identified 4 priorities for the cooperation between the Carpathian protected areas and the Alpine protected areas:

- Protected area management
- Tourism (impacts of tourism and regional benefits by sustainable tourism)
- Implementation of European Union legislation in nature conservation (in particular the NATURA 2000 network)
- Large carnivore management

The establishment of the CNPA in the context of the Alpine-Carpathian Cooperation did certainly contribute to the increase of exchange and cooperation between Carpathian and Alpine protected areas. Today, the CNPA and ALPARC are important elements for the concrete implementation of the international conventions of both mountain ranges.

Dr. Michael Vogel
Director of Berchtesgaden National Park (Germany), President of ALPARC





A valuable partnership

In the beginning of 2002 I was invited, by virtue of my position at that time in the Slovak Ministry of the Environment, to hold a speech in the national conference on the occasion of the International Year of Mountains. I participated in the preparations for the new international convention for the protection of an important European mountain range: the Carpathians. After my presentation I was also asked to represent Slovakia in the creation of a network of Carpathian protected areas, as later that year I acceded to the position of director of a new national park in the Slovak Carpathians. An important part of this mission was the development of the cooperation with the already well established Alpine Network of Protected Areas, ALPARC.

That was the beginning of the more than 13 years continuing close cooperation with the Alpine Convention and the people of ALPARC. They had a crucial role in the birth of the sister Carpathian Network of Protected Areas CNPA, its development and guidance, identification of priorities, elaboration of strategic tools, improvements in communication, sharing of experience and knowledge in protected area management, the building of an ecological network, species protection and addressing climate change in the mountains.

“This is the best example of cooperation not only between protected areas, but also between countries, regions and in a European context.”

public awareness on importance of nature conservation has been raised. The Carpathian region and its importance for biodiversity conservation in Europe have become more visible on an international scale.

This is the best example of cooperation not only between protected areas, but also between countries, regions and in a European context. It has provided a solid basis for its continuation in years to come.

Experience of ALPARC in these fields has been indispensable. Without technical help and support from the projects of our Alpine colleagues many achievements of the CNPA would not have been possible. I dare say that the CNPA would not be in the stage it is today, with common strategies, projects, partnerships and valuable personal contacts. I have no doubt that this cooperation broadened the minds of the protected area staff members. Also, protected areas have been put higher on the political agenda of the Carpathian countries and

Dr. Jan Kadlecik
State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
Coordinator of the Carpathian Wetland Initiative

Lessons learned

ALPARC was created in the middle nineties, and its establishment was based on real needs of protected area managers. A few years later the cooperation with the Carpathian parks started and the organisation structure of the CNPA was a transposition of the Alpine model into the neighbouring mountain range. However, the historical, cultural and nature protection backgrounds are completely different in the Carpathian countries compared to the Alps, and even the needs of the park managers are not similar. Exporting the Alpine organisation to the Carpathians was a difficult challenge.

On the one hand, it was quite simple to set up the cooperation, thanks to the easy exchanges with the representatives of the Carpathian protected areas and thanks to their enthusiasm to discover new methods for park management. On the other hand, the technical and financial possibilities of the parks to arrange themselves in a new organisation (CNPA) were quite limited. For them, it was probably not felt as a major priority.

All the exchanges during workshops, conferences and meetings were extremely rewarding for both the Alpine and the Carpathian side. Yet we cannot simply export our ideas to the partner's area and hope that they will work there, which is true in both ways: the Carpathian large carnivore management model will hardly work in the Alps and the Alpine integrated management approach of protected areas, based on consensus, seems difficult to set up in the Carpathians. I would say there is a need to continue cooperation between European mountain ranges. That is the only way to bring new ideas to the quite complex nature protection issues. Let's continue to organise joint meetings, travel studies and conferences, but we must not wish to have the same system throughout the European mountains.

“All the exchanges during workshops, conferences and meetings were extremely rewarding for both the Alpine and the Carpathian side.”

Martin Pavlik

Responsible for the Alpine-Carpathian cooperation at ALPARC from 2008 – 2011



Two networks of protected areas

The Alpine and Carpathian protected areas larger than 100 ha

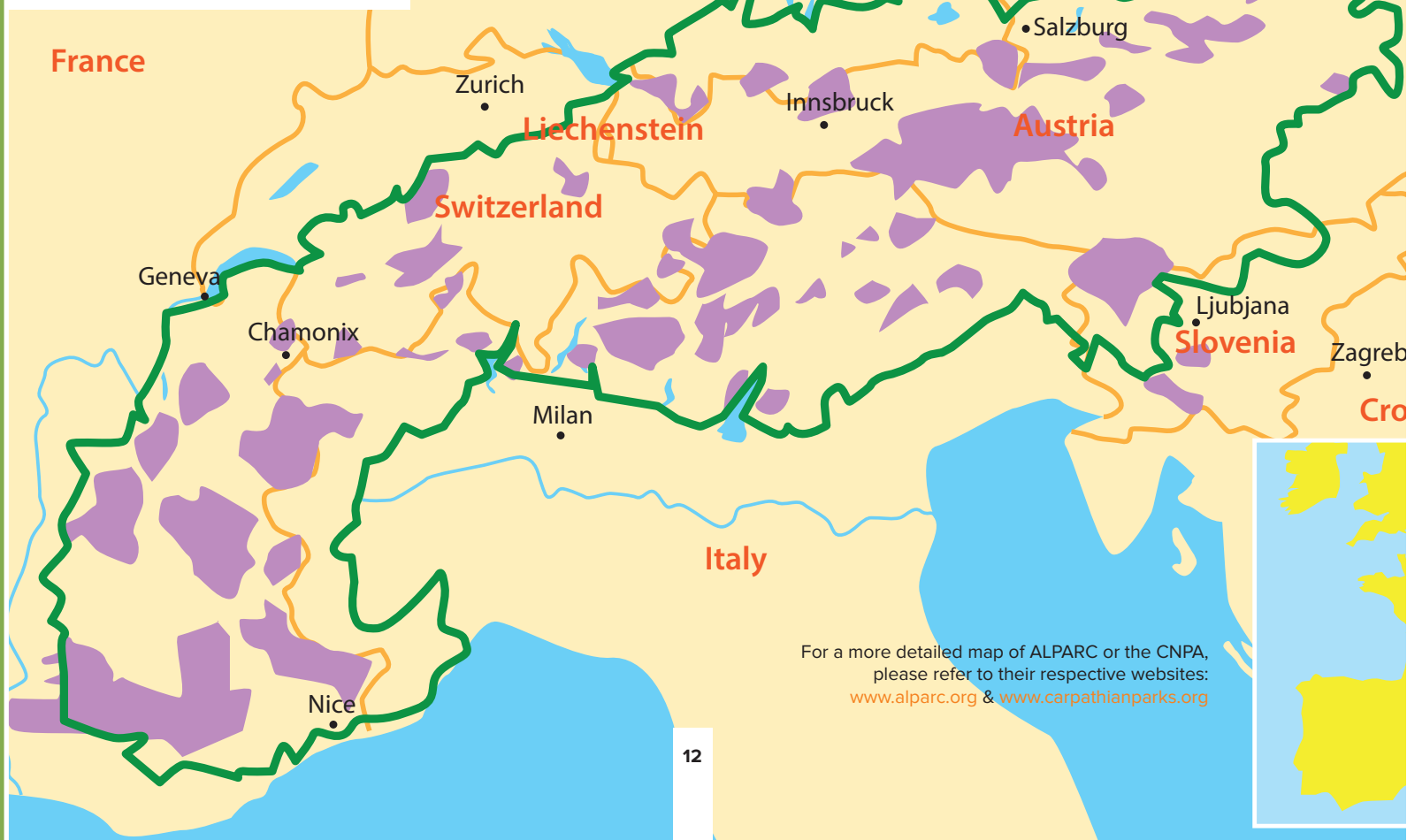
Area of the Alpine
Convention



Area of the Carpathian
Convention



Protected Areas



For a more detailed map of ALPARC or the CNPA,
please refer to their respective websites:
www.alparc.org & www.carpathianparks.org



Poland

Kraków

Lviv

Ukraine

Košice

Vienna Bratislava

Budapest

Hungary

Cluj-Napoca

Romania

Timisoara

greb
Croatia

Belgrade

Drobeta-Turnu
Severin

Bucharest

Serbia

Alparc & CNPA
Areas

Moments, meetings, milestones

A short history of the cooperation



1997-2002
First exchange programmes and participation of Carpathian PA managers in Alpine events (almost every year)

2002
UN International Year of Mountains

2003
Signing of the Carpathian Convention on the Fifth Ministerial Conference.
Kiev, UKR
—
Questionnaire for Carpathian protected areas
—
Steering Committee of the CNPA partnership created, first meetings of SC, begin process of defining structure of CNPA

2006
Official creation of the CNPA by the Conference of Parties of the Carpathian Convention
Kiev, UKR

Oct / 2001
Work Forum / Start procedure of establishing CNPA - "Ongulates, birds of prey"
Gran Paradiso NP, I

May / 2002
Meeting / On regional cooperation in Carpathians - "Sharing the Experience, Mountain Sustainable Development in the Carpathians and the Alps"
Bolzano, I

June / 2002
Meeting / On regional cooperation in Carpathians - "The Alpine Process - an Approach for other Mountains Regions?"
Berchtesgaden, D

Oct / 2002
Conference / International Year of Mountains - "Protected Areas of European Mountains - place of life / sanctuary, recreation and exchange"
Chambéry, F

Jan / 2004
Conference / "Natura 2000 and EMERALD: Establishment in the Alps and Carpathians"
Numerous parks from the Alps and Carpathians attended this symposium, in which a map and list of all the Carpathian protected areas were produced and presented during the conference.
Neukirchen, A

June / 2006
Workshop / Integrated Management of Protected Areas
Mala Fatra, SK

July / 2006
Workshop / Management of Tourism and Sustainable Development in Protected Areas
Piatra Craiului. RO





2007

Development of communication tools for the CNPA by ALPARC. The CNPA website, an information brochure in 8 languages and a press release in 7 languages

July / 2009

Alpine-Carpathian international colloquium

"Large carnivores: management, research and public relations strategies for the protected areas"
Liptovsky Jan, SK

May / 2011

Event / "The Wall" in the centre of Bratislava.
Bratislava, SK

2011-2014

BIOREGIO project in the Carpathians, establishment of temporary CNPA coordination unit in 2013 as part of this project, exchange with Alpine experience (ECONNECT project)

2014

Official transfer of the ownership and management of the CNPA website
www.carpathianparks.org
from ALPARC to the CNPA

May / 2008

Signing of Memorandum of Cooperation between Alpine Convention, Carpathian Convention, Convention on Biodiversity
Bonn, DE



Apr / 2010

Meeting / Climate change and priorities of the protected areas in CZ and SK
Prague, CZ

Sep / 2010

Meeting / "Alpine-Carpathian exchange on ecological networks - Implementing the MoC" (Exchange meeting ecological networks 1st edition)
Mikulov, CZ

Sept / 2008

First CNPA Conference. Adoption of the official CNPA logo, first drafts of the internal rules of the Steering Committee, the CNPA Conference and the Coordination unit. Strategic documents created: Medium-term strategy, Work plan, Work programme 2010-2015, Alpine-Carpathian cooperation plan
Poiana Brasov, RO

June / 2011

Meeting / Ecological networks between the Alps and the Carpathians, 2nd edition
Sibiu, RO

May / 2012

Meeting / Between the ECONNECT project (Alps) and the BIOREGIO project (Carpathians)
Vienna, A

Apr / 2013

Second CNPA Conference
Tatranská Javorina, SK

Meeting / "Improving the Financial Sustainability of the Carpathian System of Protected Areas"
Baile Felix, Oradea, RO

Exchange & events

Getting to know colleagues in another corner of Europe and learning from each other has been the heart of the cooperation from the very beginning. What started on a high administrative level with workshops about management methods gained a broader scope throughout the years, when experts on large carnivores, ecological networking, and even rangers working in the field got a chance to exchange experiences at several events. These mind-broadening encounters of people working in the protected areas have been of great professional but definitely also personal value and are for many the most memorable aspect of the cooperation. The numbers below are a testimony of the engagement of the Carpathian protected areas in this exchange.

During the years since its creation in 1995, ALPARC has organised numerous public events: (data evaluation for the years 1995-2011)

- 63 small scale events (< 30 participants)
- 33 medium scale events (between 31 and 70 participants)
- 44 large scale events (> 71 participants)

The participants came from different organisations, among which:

- 90 Alpine protected areas
- 35 Carpathian protected areas
- 27 protected areas outside the areas of the two conventions
- This gives a total of 152 protected areas

Exchange on many levels

The Danilo Re Trophy is the highlight of the year for ALPARC. In this winter sports event the whole network of protected areas reveals itself: mostly rangers, but also directors and other staff members step on their skis in this competition to the background of the snowy Alpine landscape. The tremendously popular event is for many protected area staff members the ideal chance to catch up with their colleagues. In 2009 ALPARC welcomed two Carpathian teams in Hohe Tauern, Austria, and in 2010 another Carpathian team competed in the Swiss edition in Zerneuz. This has been a fun and informative experience for the participating rangers, for whom international contact is not a regular part of the job.



A European dimension for Alpine and Carpathian activities

The International Exchange Meeting that took place in September 2010 in Mikulov (Czech Republic) can be considered as a milestone for the Alpine and Carpathian activities on ecological connectivity.

The symbolic visit of the Alps-Carpathians Corridor project building an ecological link between the two mountain areas and a concrete implementation activity opened an intensive exchange between numerous experts for ecological connectivity, among which also the Members of the Platform Ecological Network of the Alpine Convention.

The European dimension of the activities carried out in the Alps and the Carpathians and their contribution to the European Green Infrastructure was highlighted, also by the European Commission present at the meeting. The Mikulov encounter crystalized



the topic of ecological connectivity as a key topic for the cooperation activities, also in the frame of the Memorandum of Cooperation and was followed by different training and knowledge transfer sessions between projects going on in the two regions.

The Wall

As part of the “Ecological Continuum Initiative” in which ALPARC was a project partner, a public awareness raising tool for ecological connectivity was developed: The Wall. This temporary wall can be built up in any town, and is meant to show the effects of the construction of roads through nature areas to the people passing by; their way is blocked and they cannot move on. In 2011 the Wall made an extra appearance in the centre of Bratislava, Slovakia, when the Conference of the Parties of the Carpathian Convention held its meeting. It made a strong statement against the fragmentation of landscapes in the Carpathians.



The key topics

During 13 years numerous topics were highlighted and addressed. Here, a brief overview is given of the topics that received the most attention.

European legislation

From the very beginning the Carpathian protected areas have been looking at their Alpine counterparts to learn about the implementation of European legislation. Four of seven Carpathian countries joined the European Union in 2004, and for the protected areas in these countries it was enlightening to have a look behind the scenes in long-standing EU member states. They were interested to learn how to manage the EU directives they had to adopt, such as the Bird Directive, Habitat Directive and the NATURA 2000 network. Protected areas play a major role in the implementation of these directives. The Alpine protected area managers were the only ones who could give their colleagues in the Carpathians very concrete advice and realistic, first hand experiences with the EU directives in a mountain context.

Protected area management

Learning other management methods has been one of the initial reasons for exchange. From the 2003 questionnaire among the Carpathian park managers this topic emerged as a main priority, so with this in mind a workshop was held on this theme in 2006. A very pragmatic approach is characterising the workshops in these first years of the cooperation, prompted by very concrete and individual demands of protected area managers. Management plans, integrated management in the Alps and sustainable financing were the main foci within this topic. The salience of the theme also stems from the wish to harmonise management approaches over country borders to deal with big topics such as nature conservation and sustainable development.



The key topics

Tourism

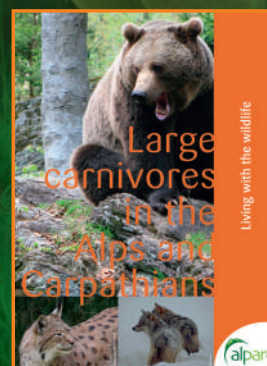
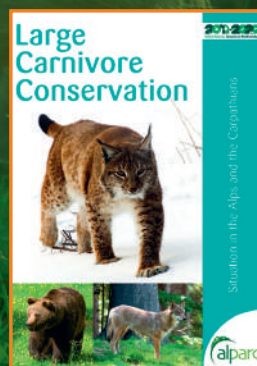
Each national government determines conservation policy, but also defines the tourism priorities. These strategies can sometimes be contradictory and the challenge is to find a viable compromise, as tourist activities play an important role in mountain economies. Conservation policies have to be taken into account when drawing up tourism management plans. Finding the balance between attracting tourists for economic reasons and minimising the impact on the wildlife has been the other big topic of interest that resulted from the questionnaire in 2003. In 2006 this has been the leading theme of one of the two exchange workshops.

Large carnivore management

The return of bears, lynx and wolves to the Alps has faced the Alpine protected areas with the challenge of supporting the creation of habitats large enough to provide enough space for these species. Since there is hardly any wilderness left in Europe, this means we have to welcome large carnivores into our own human living space, which calls for a strategy based on man and nature coexisting rather than being separated. The Carpathians have large populations of bear, lynx and wolves and have a long tradition of managing these species. During several meetings, of which the most important one was a Large Carnivore colloquium in 2009, the Alpine parks have learned from the Carpathian know-how.

Two brochures have been published addressing this topic, to share the knowledge that was gained during the meetings with even a wider audience. One was directed at specialists and the other at a more general public.

Large Carnivores
conservation:
Situation in the
Alps and the
Carpathians,
2012



Large Carnivores
in the Alps and
the Carpathians:
Living with the
wildlife, 2009

The key topics

Biodiversity and ecological connectivity

After some years, the accent was more and more put on the realisation of an ecological network in both mountain ranges. Over the years of cooperation there has been a clear shift from concrete and daily questions about park management to more strategic topics and a long term vision. ALPARC has supported to a great extent the exchange on the topic, with the help of the German Ministry of the Environment. After the realisation of the ECONNECT project in the Alps, another project concerning ecological connectivity took place in the Carpathians: BIOREGIO.

Public awareness, education and communication

Environmental education and public awareness raising are always high on the agenda of protected areas. Even more challenging is the question how an international network can contribute to this purpose, the question how to communicate as a network to the outside world, and how to stay in contact with all the members within the network. ALPARC developed a set of communication tools for the CNPA: the website www.carpathianparks.org, a communication strategy, brochures in 8 languages, a press release in 7 languages, two post cards and a special pop-up stand about the Alps and the Carpathians. The website and its management were officially handed over from ALPARC to the CNPA in 2014, as a symbolic step to a certain autonomy of the management of the CNPA.





A helping hand

Since the early stages of the CNPA in the early 2000s ALPARC has lended a helping hand to the younger sister network from the Carpathians. For us, the people from the Carpathian protected areas, this cooperation also meant friendship, fun and the opportunity to see more experienced administrations and a more advanced example of international networking that served as a model we could follow.

Later on, ALPARC was always present; not only at the important CNPA events, but also as a partner in all the activities we organised together, from which many protected area staff members benefited greatly.

“This cooperation also meant friendship, fun and the opportunity to see more experienced administrations and a more advanced example of international networking”

International cooperation conditions were further improved by the fact that most of the Carpathian states joined the European Union. In this frame each network developed ecological connectivity projects, which created opportunities for further dialogue and exchange of experiences.

This cooperation should and will go on in the following years, through the exchange of experiences between the various projects implemented by both networks, and also through the development of joint projects for common objectives.

Mircea Verghet,
Director of Piatra Craiului National Park (Romania)
President of the CNPA

Looking back and **looking forward**

The cooperation with the Carpathians was and is a mile stone and a very important element in the evolution of ALPARC. It showed how much concepts elaborated and tested in one specific context (the Alps) could be transferred to another context (the Carpathians) and it made it possible to be more critical towards own ways of functioning by providing an outside view. The existence of the CNPA today is due to a strong engagement of ALPARC and important financial contribution of mainly Germany in the frame of the Mountain partnership of the Alpine Convention.

The topics of cooperation between the networks need to be of common interest to enable a long lasting and efficient cooperation. A simple transfer of know-how and experiences can be part of it but the goal is clearly a common vision of management, the test of new methods and their efficiency and goals allowing a strong identification of protected area managers with their work and the exchange with partners abroad. Especially the topic of ecological connectivity was very enriching for both sides and has led to concrete projects such as BIOREGIO and a work in the transition area of both mountain ranges.

The Memorandum of Cooperation between the Alpine and Carpathian Convention and the CBD offers a strong political frame

of the Carpathian Protected Areas to the CNPA in 2014. For the future the cooperation between the Carpathian and Alpine protected areas will be project-related collaboration with a focus on topics of transnational and European interest. Ecological connectivity will remain a main issue. New mainstream issues such as the valorisation of ecosystem services, mitigation strategies against climate change, lobbying for a more efficient European protected area policy and new forms of mountain activities may complete this cooperation.

The Memorandum of Cooperation between the Alpine and Carpathian Convention and the CBD offers a strong political frame for this cooperation and the protected areas of both mountain regions clearly contribute to the successful implementation of this agreement.

ALPARC wishes the colleagues in the Carpathians a further successful development of their network, to foster and strengthen the organisational background of the CNPA and the possibility to mobilise financial means. But first of all it is hoped they will find a high number of motivated people and protected area staff to stimulate the cooperation between the Carpathian parks and to continue the cooperation between the Alps and the Carpathians.

For the future the cooperation between the Carpathian and Alpine protected areas will be project-related collaboration

The more strategic topics such as connectivity, NATURA 2000, governance approaches and scientific issues linked to long term monitoring activities have shown to be important to be treated within an international context.

The pure technical support of the CNPA development has ended for ALPARC with the symbolic handing over of the Homepage



This brochure was published in the frame of the **Alpine-Carpathian cooperation**




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CNPA
CARRATHAN NETWORK OF PROTECTED AREAS

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