

# The Carpathians: a Hub for Biodiversity

## Green Carpathians

Webinar on transnational cooperation to address the biggest threats to the biodiversity of the Carpathian Mountains

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Harald Egerer, Head, UNEP Vienna Programme Office -  
Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention

# Thank you...organisers and participants!



**eurac**  
research



# THE DANUBE CARPATHIAN REGION

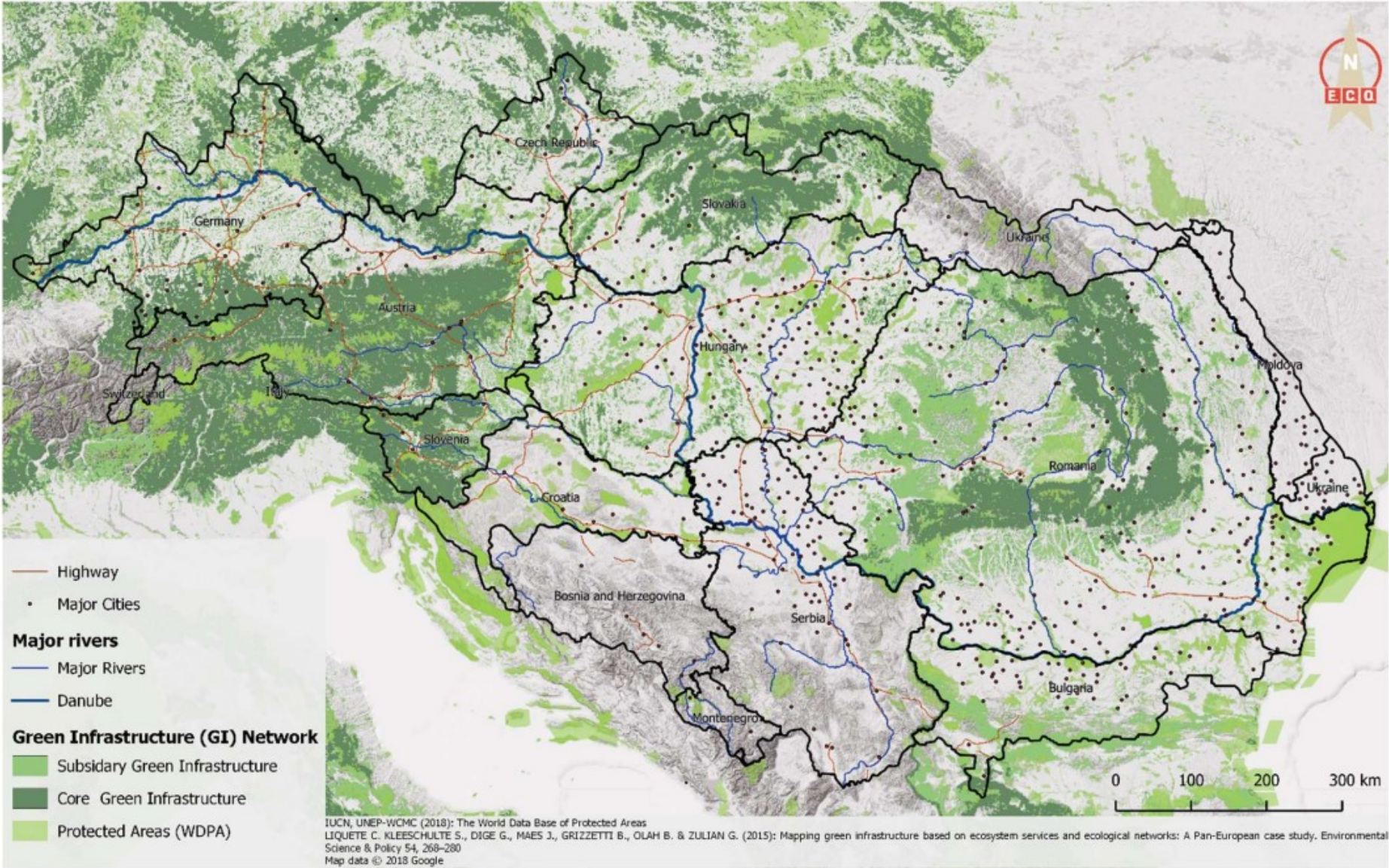
# The Danube-Carpathian region: a global hotspot for biodiversity

The region harbours many species and habitats that are either threatened or close to extinction in the rest of Europe

- Large natural and virgin forests
- Most of Europe's remaining intact rivers and wetlands
- Two-thirds of the European populations of large carnivores, including bears, lynx and wolves
- The Beluga sturgeon, now on the edge of extinction



# Ecological Connectivity in the Danube Area



# The Carpathian Mountains

Close to 100,000 km<sup>2</sup> of natural or semi/natural forests

- 36,000 km<sup>2</sup> of protected areas
- 3,000 km<sup>2</sup> of virgin forests
- 481 endemic plant species
- Viable population of all large herbivores
- Stronghold of the largest carnivore population in Europe
- Central Europe's last wilderness area



Mountain ecosystems are particularly fragile and vulnerable to external pressures. However, we depend on them:

- They play a key role in the water cycle for lowland regions in Europe, influencing temperature
- They contribute to preventing and mitigating natural hazards such as landslides and avalanches
- Ecological backbones of the continent, harboring a large portion its biodiversity













# The dark side of development

## Main threats

- high pressure on land usage
- high fragmentation of landscapes
- loss of globally significant biodiversity
- tourism pressure and waste
- poaching and illegal logging
- pollution
- climate change
- over-harvesting and unsustainable agriculture
- inappropriate natural resource management methods



## Key challenges:

- provide accessibility without endangering sustainability
- investment in nature for improved sustainable socio-economic development and post Covid-19 recovery
- need for transnational, cross-sectoral cooperation

# **POLICY FRAMEWORK: CARPATHIAN COVENTION**

# The Carpathian Convention - a Framework Convention for Transnational Cooperation and sustainable development

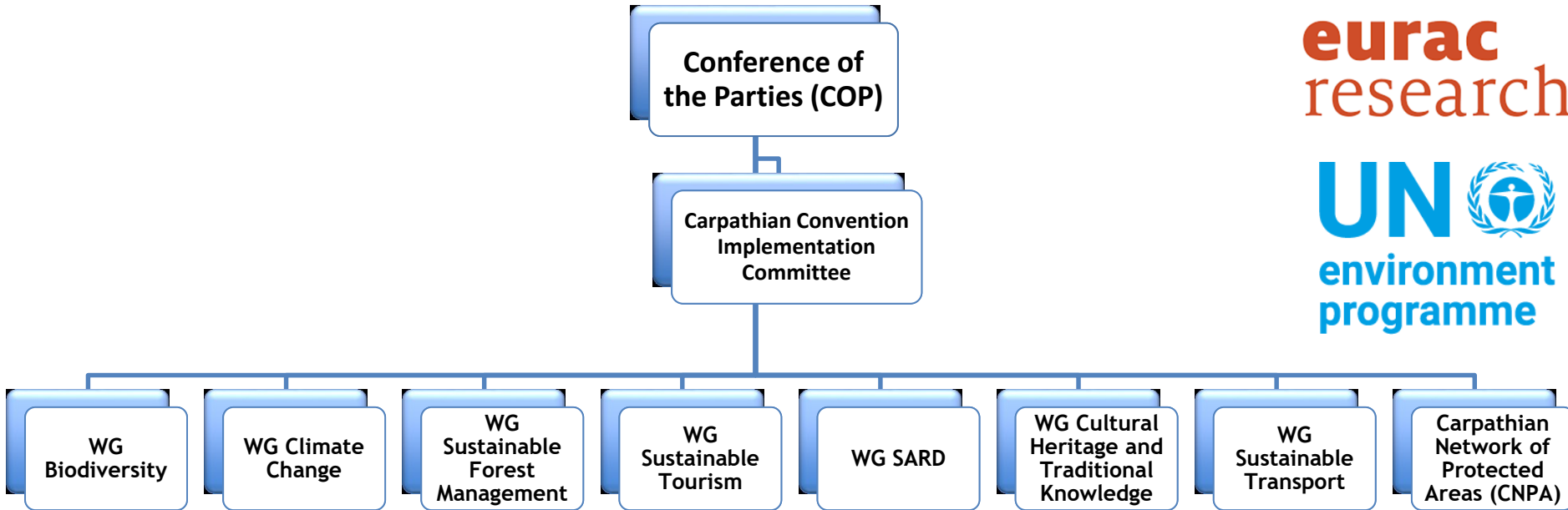
- Adopted on 22nd May 2003
- Entered in force on 4th January 2006
- Ratified by all the seven Carpathian countries
- Observer in the Working Group on Green Infrastructure and Restoration of the European Commission
- A framework Convention for cooperation and multi-sectoral policy coordination



# Institutional Structure and Protocols

**eurac**  
research

**UN**   
environment  
programme



## CC Protocols:

- Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity in force
- Protocol on Sustainable Tourism in force
- Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management in force
- Protocol on Sustainable Transport in force
- Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in force
- Protocol on Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge in progress

# Biodiversity

**Art. 4 of the Carpathian Convention**

- 2003

**Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity (Article 9: Continuity and connectivity of natural and semi-natural habitats, ecological network in the Carpathians)**

- 2011

**Strategic Action Plan**

- 2011 Carpathian Project

**International action plan for the conservation and sustainable management for the Carpathian populations of large carnivores (In progress) and Ecological Connectivity Strategy (in progress)**

**Declaration on the Management and Protection of Large Carnivores in the Carpathians, Cooperation with the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation, CWI, CNPA, CCIBIS**





The Carpathians - harbor of extraordinary natural and cultural heritage

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New project – *Carpathian Route* funded by the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Regional Cooperation (2021- 2023)

# Sustainable Forest Management

Art. 7 of the Carpathian Convention

2003



Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management

2011

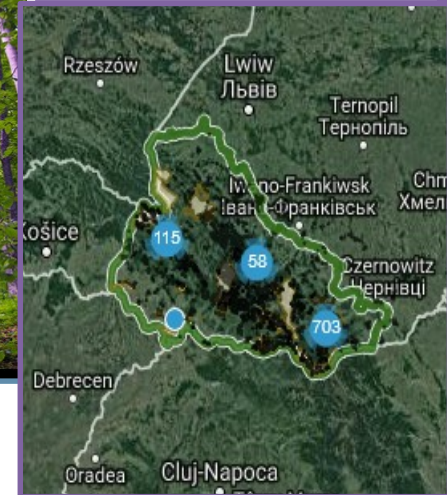


Strategic Action Plan

2014

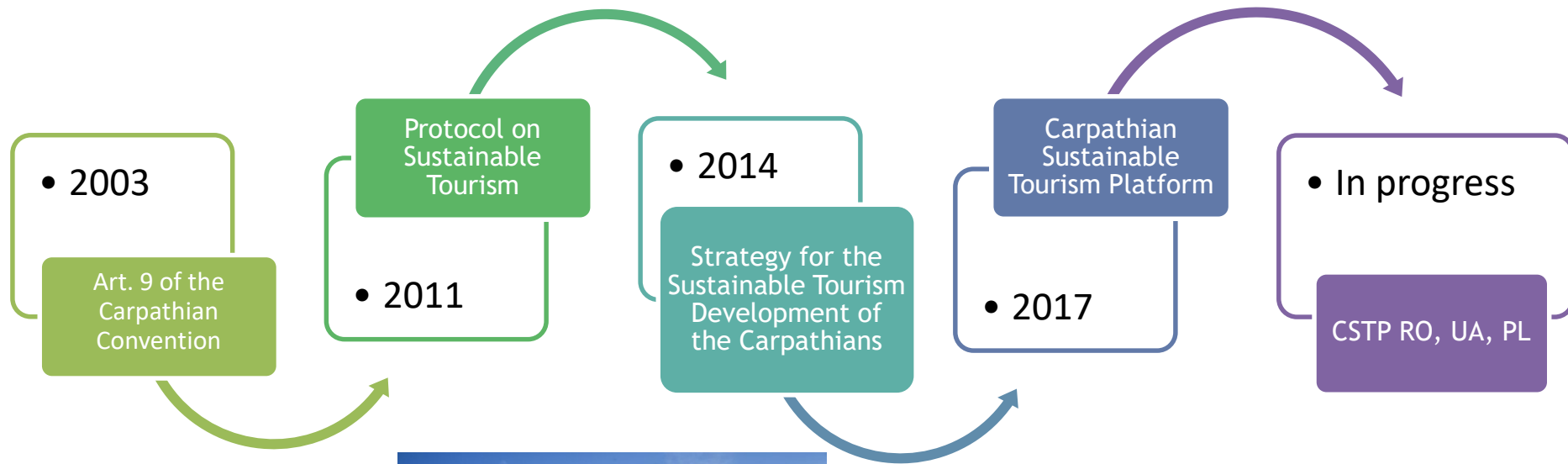


Inventory of Virgin Forest (In progress) in cooperation with EEA



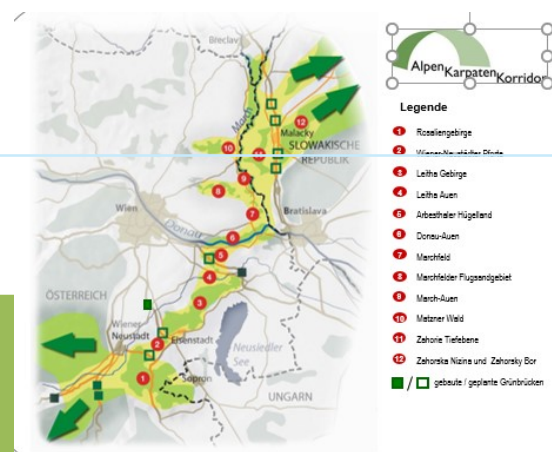
European  
Environment  
Agency

# Sustainable Tourism



**Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform** shall support cooperation between stakeholders and enhance implementation of the Carpathian Convention provisions on Sustainable Tourism

# Sustainable Transport



Art. 8 of the Carpathian Convention

• 2003

Protocol on Sustainable Transport

• 2014

Strategic Action Plan (ongoing → TRANSGREEN project support) cooperation between Transport WG, Biodiversity WG and Spatial Development WG

# Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development

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Art. 7 of the Carpathian Convention  
2003



Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development  
2017



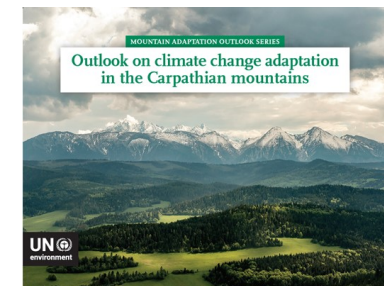
Cooperation with Euromontana, FAO, EEA, Eurac Research

Strategic Agenda on Adaptation to Climate Change in the Carpathian Region  
2014

Joint Alpine – Carpathian Statement on Adaptation to Climate Change  
2014

Joint Declaration of the ICPDR Tisza Group and the Carpathian Convention on the sustainable development of the Tisza River Basin within the Carpathian Region (Tisza Declaration) - signed  
2015

New Article 12bis on Climate Change introduced to the Carpathian Convention – **need for implementation!**  
2017



# **POLICY MAINSTREAMING**

# EU and Global Policy Framework

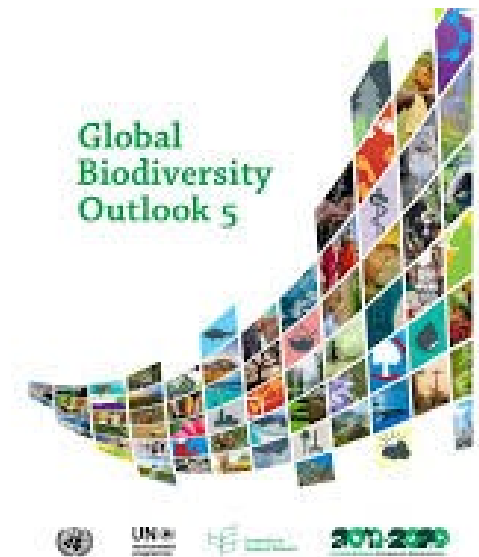




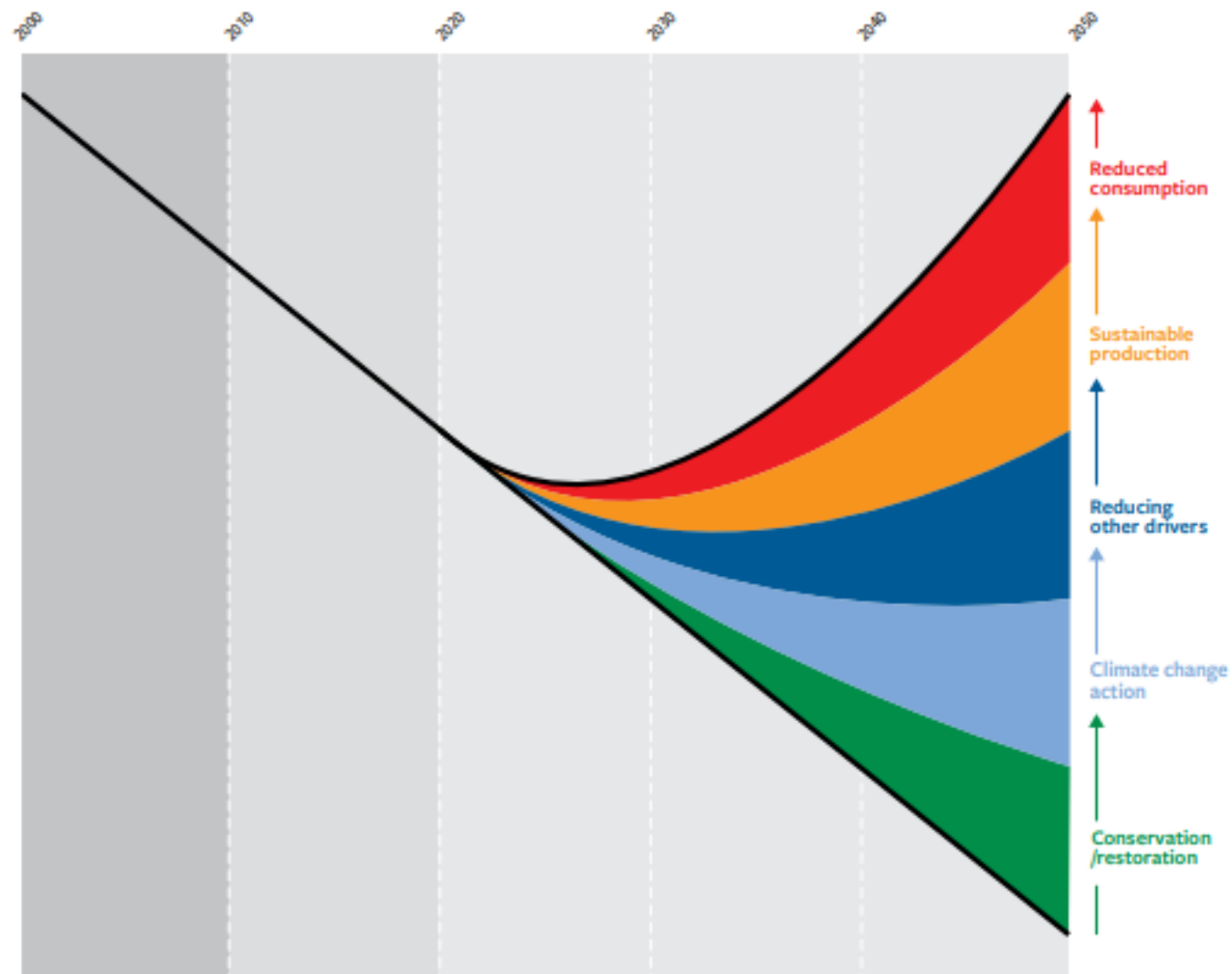
# Focus: Global Biodiversity Outlook 5

## Humanity stands at a crossroads

- **Biodiversity is declining at an unprecedented rate** and the pressures driving this decline are intensifying
- **None of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets will be fully met**, in turn threatening the achievement of the SDGs and undermining efforts to address climate change
- The **COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance of the relationship between people and nature**



## A portfolio of actions to reduce loss and restore biodiversity



Trends in biodiversity (various metrics, left axis) have been declining and are projected to continue to do so under business as usual scenarios (trend line). Various areas of action could reduce the rate of biodiversity decline, and the full portfolio of actions, in combination, could halt and reverse the decline (bend the curve), potentially leading to net biodiversity gains after 2030. These are, from bottom to top: (1) Enhanced conservation and restoration of ecosystems; (2) climate change mitigation; (3) action on pollution, invasive alien species and overexploitation; (4) more sustainable production of goods and services, especially food; and (5) reduced consumption and waste. However, none of the areas of action alone, nor in partial combinations, can bend the curve of biodiversity loss. Moreover, the effectiveness of each area of action is enhanced by the other areas (see Part III of the full report for discussion).

# The Carpathian Convention and EUSDR

## Signed Memorandum of Cooperation with EUSDR:

- MoC with EUSDR PA1b “Mobility I Rail-Road-Air”, June 2016
- MoC with EUSDR PA04 “Water Quality”, August 2016
- MoC with EUSDR PA02 “Energy”, November 2016
- MoC with EUSDR PA05 “Environmental Risks”, December 2017
- **MoC with EUSDR PA06 “Biodiversity and Landscapes”, endorsed, December 2017**

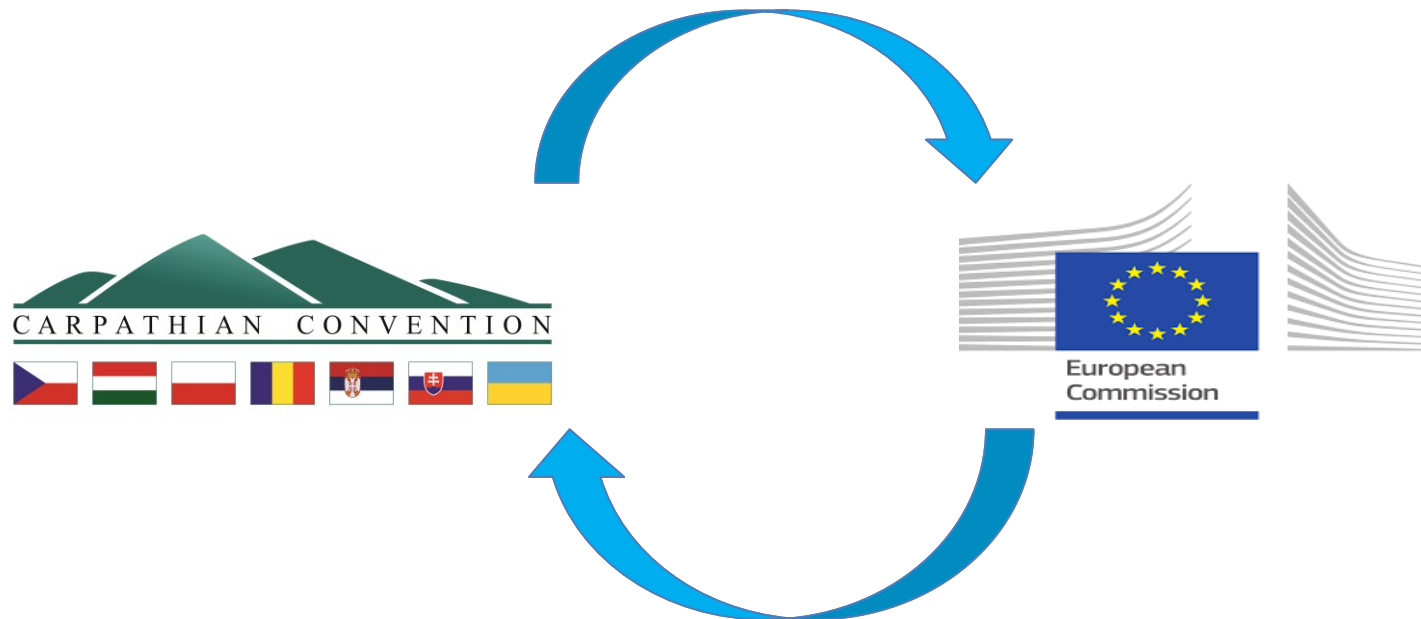


Exchange of information, participation in reciprocal meetings, support to projects, involvement in the revision of the EUSDR Action Plan



# Milestones for integration of CC with the EU Framework and Neighborhood/Enlargement dimension:

- 6th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention - 25 November 2020 – ONLINE MEETING
- Ministerial Conference of the Carpathian Convention in Poland 2021/2022



# CARPATHIAN PROJECTS



# Carpathian Projects

## TRANSGREEN-Integrated Transport and Green Infrastructure Planning in the Danube-Carpathian Region for the Benefit of People and Nature

Duration: 2017– 2019

Lead Partner: WWF CEE

Funding: INTERREG Danube Transnational Programme

## ConnectGREEN- Restoring and managing ecological corridors in mountains as the green infrastructure in the Danube basin

Duration: 2018– 2021

Lead Partner: WWF CEE-Romania

Funding: INTERREG Danube Transnational Programme

## Centralparks- Building management capacities of Carpathian protected areas for the integration and harmonization of biodiversity protection and local socio-economic development

Duration: 2019– 2022

Lead Partner: Eurac Research

Funding: INTERREG Central Europe

## SaveGREEN- Safeguarding the functionality of transnationally important ecological corridors in the Danube basin

Duration: 2020– 2022

Lead Partner: WWF CEE

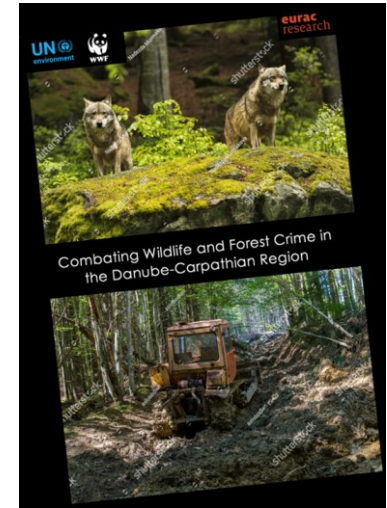
Funding: INTERREG Danube Transnational Programme



# Project on Wildlife and Forest Crime in the Danube-Carpathian Area

- DTP Project and Booklet on Wildlife and Forest Crime in the Danube-Carpathian Region at the EU Parliament in Brussels (22 Nov 2017) in cooperation with WWF and Eurac Research

→ Case studies on illegal logging, illegal fishing of sturgeon and caviar trade, poaching of large carnivores, illegal killing of wild birds



**Coming up → LIFE SWIPE PROJECT – SUCCESSFUL WILDLIFE CRIME PROSECUTION IN EUROPE**





# Thank you!

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Harald Egerer, Head, UNEP Vienna Programme Office - Secretariat  
of the Carpathian Convention

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