

Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative

'CERI'

Activity Report 2006



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1 Main CERI Achievements in 2005

Despite the fact that CERI was only legally registered in March 2005, through the support of its board and member NGOs, it has already achieved a significant amount. While some of these activities are natural steps from its past, most have been started and achieved in a single year. This progress has been an essential incentive for its members to restore their connections and interest in supporting and belonging to CERI.

Legal Status Obtained – Independence in the Carpathians

The overarching landmark achievement of CERI in 2005 was its obtainment of legal registration in the Slovak Republic, becoming the first legally constituted network of its kind (in Europe, perhaps also in the world), to carry out ecoregion-based conservation in the Carpathians. This was achieved after years of careful reconsideration of the organization, structure and purpose of CERI, and after months of consultation with future members, past participants, and key stakeholders on the legal statutes that would form the basis of this new organization.

Launching of Ecoregion Action Planning Process with CERI at the Helm

After a year-long process of designing a project for improving conservation efforts at an ecoregion scale through enhancement of the protected areas system of the Carpathians, the first phase the concept for a full-sized GEF project ('Carpathian Ecoregional System of Protected Areas') was green-lighted at UNDP in New York and is currently being submitted to GEF headquarters in Washington, D.C. for approval in early October.

If successful, the PDF-A (first phase application), would move into the PDF-B phase in January, entailing up to \$250,000 to write the full-sized project for a 3-5 year duration worth \$1 million U.S. per country plus co-financing from the EU, slated to begin in early 2007. The project brings together partners CERI, UNDP, UNEP-ISCC, World Bank and WWF-DCPO within the framework of the Carpathian Convention – with an 'Ecoregion Action Plan' at its core. The process has been endorsed by the Carpathian governments (Romania, Ukraine, Serbia, Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary), including the endorsement of CERI to execute the first phases of the project, involving the design and planning of the EAP.

First General Assembly of the New Era: 30 New Members and Seven National Focal Points

At CERI's first official General Assembly as a new organization in Brasov, Romania in June 2005, the core structure, membership base and key principles of CERI as a new legal entity were established, with many key decisions made, providing a solid basis for future growth of the network.

29 members from all seven Carpathian countries were approved (including 4 later in the year as interim members to be considered for nomination and approval at the next General Assembly). Approval of Chair and Vice Chair and national focal points was made. The list of current CERI members is contained in the application.

Critical discussion began involving the best means of harnessing the energy, talents and experience of members to set up a network capable of driving large-scale, long-term change, with requests for as much transparency and as little bureaucracy as possible. The first informal workgroups were established based on the themes agreed upon -

biodiversity, large carnivores, forests, database management, environmental policy, environmental education, ecotourism and sustainable rural development, CERI institutional development and communications - as well as successful fundraising to use these workgroups as tools to carry out the organization's first main activities. Finally, members agreed on the workplan and budget for 2005, but called for an additional General Assembly in 2005 (which convened in Djerdap National Park in Serbia in November), in order to:

- approve the work-plan and budget for 2006,
- to formalize the first 'start-up' workgroups,
- to discuss branding, identity and business plan for CERI,
- and to discuss the conditions and terms for data exchange and information in the near future among CERI members, culminating in a Memorandum of Understanding on Data Exchange.

Agreement on the Memorandum of Cooperation between CERI and the UNEP Vienna ISCC (Interim Secretariat for the Carpathian Convention)

The coordinator of UNEP Vienna ISCC, Harald Egerer reported during the General Assembly in June on the historic, current and future process of ratification and implementation of the Carpathian Convention, as well as the long-term collaboration of UNEP-ISCC and CERI concerning protection and sustainable development of the region.

Based on this past and future collaboration, a draft MOU between UNEP-ISCC and CERI was agreed. The contents of the memorandum include collaboration on the development of a UNDP-GEF project for achieving ecological connectivity of the Carpathians and cooperation on efforts to support the Governments of Carpathian countries in the implementation of the Carpathian Convention and the establishment of a Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA), an unofficial association of protected area managers and authorities. Joint action plans between the organizations will be elaborated in a separate document before the next GA and on an annual basis. CERI has been an ongoing observer at regular *ad hoc* expert meetings for discussion of a workplan, geographic scope of and financing for the Carpathian Convention since 2004.

200.000 Euro in Funds Raised for Priority Projects

Significant work in 2005 was also dedicated to 'project brokering' (fundraising and development) on behalf of CERI partners and for future CERI projects. Together with DOEN Foundation, UNDP, the EU (CADSES Interreg), World Bank and DEFRA, with projects that began as concepts at the 2003 Brasov Workshops, over €200.000 were raised for priority projects in the Carpathians. These projects were identified by CERI and potential donors as 'priority projects' in terms of their ability to both use existing policy and economic levers to solve specific 'bottlenecks' to conservation issues (e.g. mitigating the integrity of farming communities), to conserve specific biodiversity targets, as well as to provide the seeds for developing future CERI workgroups in priority thematic areas: **Environmental Policy and Sustainable Rural Development, Sustainable Finance (including ecotourism), Environmental Education, and Biodiversity.**

Funds were raised for:

CEEWEB's „**Sustainable regional development model project in the Carpathian Mountains**“ (2005-2006) to initiate and support a selected small Romanian municipality in the Carpathians through development and implementation of a sustainable regional/rural development plan taking into account national and international environmental and development commitments and guidelines (EU enlargement requirements, Carpathian Convention, Convention on Biological Diversity). (Project 2.3) This project will serve as the foundation for the development of a working group on environmental policy and sustainable rural development for CERI in 2005-06.

“**Building the Partnership for Nature Conservation and Tourism in Romania,**” (2005-2007) which aims to promote the concept and development of ecotourism for the support of nature conservation and local communities in natural and rurally developed areas in Romania. The project is currently developing certification standards in ecotourism in Romania through a multi-stakeholder process, designed not only to improve/anticipate the improvement of the overall standard of ecotourism-related services, but also to work with the Romanian government, protected area authorities and international protected area authorities to promote nature as an essential element of the Romanian tourist destination image. (Project 2.2)

‘**Support and capacity building for implementation of Ramsar and Carpathian Conventions in Serbia**’ to increase capacities of governmental and non-governmental organizations in Serbia to implement Ramsar and Carpathian Conventions; to enable them to manage and conserve biologically important habitats and species in Carpathians as part of designations of future Natura2000 sites, as well as wetlands of international importance within declared Ramsar sites. (Project 2.4) Providing twinning support for a non-EU country from an EU country, this project will help serve as the basis for activities planned in the GEF project, ‘Carpathian Ecoregion System of Protected Areas,’ [reference GEF], as well as for activities planned in the environmental education workgroup.

‘**Lesser Spotted Eagle – flagship species of the Carpathians**’ CERI gave a €29.000 grant to the Milvus Group for this CERI Ecoregion Model Project. The project is using the threatened EU priority-bird species as a model for the first coordinated regional action for the conservation of raptors on the Carpathians. With national censuses having been completed for the LSE in Romania and Ukraine for the first time, the results of this project are also being used to feed into two larger projects (LIFE and Darwin) using the species to identify Natura 2000 sites and the first links in the ‘Carpathian Ecological Network.’ (Project 2.1)

2 CERI areas of work in 2006

Nature and Biodiversity

CERI is particularly dedicated to the implementation of Article 4 of the draft framework Carpathian Convention – “Conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity,” through the development of a Carpathian Biodiversity Information System and an Carpathian Ecological Network, through projects as well as through the activities mentioned below.

Health and Environment

CERI is contributing to the implementation of this objective by its contribution to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention, including objectives related to protecting health and environment throughout virtually all of its articles, in particular emphasizing the need for a “living environment in the heart of Europe.” (preamble, Carpathian Convention) Through its current support for the activities of national networks in all Carpathian Countries, CERI is primarily involved with projects emphasizing improving health and the environment, conducting awareness-raising and capacity-building projects for local people on air and water pollution most notably, the biomass heating project by CERI partners in Slovakia and the Czech Republic (ECHO Energy Centre Hostetin, White Carpathians) which serve as the model case studies for the initiatives in other Carpathian countries. Many of members have projects dealing with controlling pollution in one form or another – combating toxic wastes, environmental restoration and alternative energy.

The activities of CERI Ecotourism Working Group support the development of projects which focus on harnessing the natural values of the Carpathian countries to generate and sustain revenues to the betterment of human health. The activities of this Working Group focus on the development and promotion of eco-businesses and eco-destinations which demonstrate high promise and innovation for delivering innovative alternatives to visitors, designed to not only protect but improve human health in terms of the environment (e.g. eco-villages).

Community Environmental Legislation

Each of the CERI initiatives, where relevant, takes into account the Community Environmental Legislation and its proper implementation. Through the implementation of the Carpathian Convention, CERI as a new organization in terms of the ability to facilitate political links to ensure that the most relevant local conservation activities, information and attitudes reach the highest political levels, implementation and enforcement of Community environmental legislation – and particularly in innovative ways – is crucial to the future success of CERI. Every project with which CERI is involved – either as a Secretariat (network-wide) project, as a partner (CERI-“brokered”) or in terms of individual members’ projects endorsed by CERI (CERI-“certified”), has at least one component of implementation or enforcement of Community environmental legislation.

CERI has established its Management Planning Working Group which is focused on the exchange of experiences and discussion on methodologies among the representatives from all Carpathian Countries – including the EU and Non-EU member states. This

group ensures that the approaches in management planning adopted based on the requirements set by Habitat and Bird Directives are discussed on the ecoregional level. Elaboration and finalisation of the management plans for protected areas including wider stakeholder involvement and designation of improved monitoring and evaluation systems remain the key challenges for Member States. CERI via its Management Planning Working Group contributes to reaching this Natura 2000 ambition.

CERI has initiated the work on the elaboration of the Carpathian Ecoregion Action Plan, which will formulate the regional priorities and approaches combining the Community environmental legislation, CBD Programmes and Recommendations, with main focus based on the regional specifications.

Sustainable development

As the CERI is the main NGO network partner supporting the implementation of the Carpathian Convention – officially titled, the “Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians,” (in addition to articles 6, 7, 8 and 9) sustainable development underlies all the work that CERI has done to date and plans to conduct in the future.

Sustainable Development forms the core of international treaties, policies and initiatives, serving as the vision combining the economic growth and nature conservation in the Carpathians. Therefore CERI has this broad topic among its priorities. The main focus is put on the rural development policies and tendencies and CERI has established the Environmental Policy and Rural Development Working Group (EPRD WG). The EPRD WG had its first meeting in autumn 2006 and its regional activities started in summer 2006.

Climate Change

CERI has initiated the design and development of a Carpathian Ecological Network which will identify the most valuable nature areas and will form the backbone of the protected area system in the Carpathians. Initiatives started in first 3 Carpathian countries – in Serbia, Romania and Ukraine. The nature backbone once created and implemented will significantly support the conservation of large and small scale intact vegetation areas which limit the causes and impacts of climate change by mitigating greenhouse gases arising from transport and by serving as a sink for carbon dioxide. Additionally, CERI contributes to mitigating the effects of anthropogenic-induced climate change in the Carpathian ecoregion by its active involvement in the practical implementation of the Carpathian Convention (climate change is a leading issue for the Carpathian governments, as given in the Carpathian Convention).

CERI is further lobbying for the launch of UNDP-GEF project for achieving ecological connectivity of the Carpathians (Project 1.1 as given in the proposal). Under guidance from project partners of Project 1.1 and 1.2 specializing in ecological networks, CERI members learn how to design and develop ecological networks meant to specifically address the effects of climate change, namely, accommodating the movement of (migratory) species, as well as coming to a much better understanding of the effects of climate change in the Carpathian region.

CERI has undertaken steps for the establishment of a “Carpathian Clearinghouse” as a meta-database not only for mutual information and data exchange, but also for gaining information about indicators for an array of threats and mitigation of threats, which will help to identify background data for greenhouse gas sources and potential sinks.

Sustainable management of natural resources and waste

Management of natural resources and waste is another theme that runs throughout the draft framework Carpathian Convention (Articles 4, 6, 7 and 10), which CERI supports primarily through its work towards development of the Carpathian Ecological Network, and through three major working groups – Management Planning Working Group, Environmental Policy and Rural Development Working Group and Ecotourism Working Group, as well as the member projects.

Important contribution to this objective is ensured through the activities of Management Planning Working Group (WG) which is focused on the management of protected areas and valuable nature sites, including management of natural resources in a sustainable way. This WG started its activities in spring 2006 and in autumn the first meeting of experts and NGO representatives took place. At the meeting the regional priorities were identified and based on them the concrete activities of the WG were planned for upcoming months and, within the longterm vision also for next years. This WG provides space for expert as well as non-expert discussions and ensures the exchange of experiences in the area of sustainable management of natural resources among all the Carpathian countries, identification and broad dissemination of model approaches and successful case studies. Effective and proper management planning forms the bases for efficient conservation of natural resources, therefore all activities undertaken by the Management Planning Working Group are planned in this direction.

Environmental Education

The Carpathian Environmental Outlook (KEO) is being developed under the guidance of UNEP. CERI experts are involved in the preparation of the publication and are commenting on the individual chapters in order to ensure the public voice is heard already during the phase of KEO preparation. The publication will serve as the unique summary of the main environmental information/data about the Carpathian Ecoregion. However, the KEO is targeted to experts and stakeholders involved/interested in environmental issues in the Carpathians. In order to make this information available, usefull and attractive for broader audience - schools, protected area managers, local people etc., CERI is raising funds for elaboration and printing of the environmental education manual “World of Carpathians”, which will provide the shortened information in understandable language combined with proposals for practical conservation indoor and outdoor activities, work sheets and drawings. In 2006 CERI submitted the project proposal to the German DBU foundation. The aim of this publication is to make people aware of connections between living things, their habitats and the potential economic benefits of conservation, as well as helping develop skills and improve knowledge of individuals in the fields of environmental protection and conservation. CERI recognizes that the more familiar people (schools, universities, professors, media, NGOs, governments and local authorities) are with the environment and how it works, the better they can recognize specific environmental problems and anticipate possible outcomes.

In order to acknowledge the importance of environmental education, based on its relevance to the Carpathian Convention (Article 13), and based on the interest of so many CERI member NGOs in this subject and the success of CERI with environmental education in the past, CERI members decided to form Environmental and Sustainable Education Working Group in 2006. The so called ESDE WG had its first meeting in September 2006. The aim of the meeting was to initiate the development of Carpathian

Workbook on Environmental Education, which will specify the priorities and summarize approaches to environmental education at the Carpathian region level for various kinds of target groups. Based on the Workbook, the national sets of trainings/seminars and educational actions will be organised in the upcoming years.

CERI started to collect the contacts on the Educational organisations and ecocentres within the whole region in order to become part of the Carpathian Clearinghouse, what will provide space for further cooperation and common projects among the Carpathian countries.

Externally, activities planned at the meeting in September 2006 include strategies for stimulating better communication between relevant government bodies over the environment and educating NGO representatives to disseminate environmental information and make their work more transparent, as well as preparing environmental information and education materials, taking as much advantage of the website as possible to improve channels of communication and distribution of environmental information.

Enlargement of the European Union

The structure of CERI as of 2006, including 4 EU members (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia,) and 3 non-EU member countries (Romania, Serbia and Ukraine), as signatory Carpathian Convention countries and partners of the CERI via the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, forms an unique base for the cooperation and experience exchange in the region. The CERI workplan is elaborated and implemented with a rule that all Carpathian countries have equal right to get involved in all the activities. Through participation in the working groups, the CERI members from non-EU countries gain information about the conditions, legislation and its implementation in the EU member states – directly in the area of their main interest. As all the EU members have joined the EU only recently (2004), the changes in policy, legislation and practical nature conservation are significant leading force forming the society. At the same time the conditions in the 4 EU member countries are unique example to be followed by Romania, which joined EU in January 2007. Therefore CERI puts a lot of effort into involvement of Romanian members into all its working groups, in order to support the NGO overview, practical skills and direct involvement in the adaptation and implementation of acquis in all relevant aspects. CERI supports the NGOs and through them also the three governments - in Romania, Ukraine and Serbia not only in helping them meet the requirements of the acquis, but also in helping to leverage Community legislation to raise the standards of Accession, non-EU and Neighbourhood countries.

A new European Governance

As given in the European Community White Paper, CERI supports the most open and participatory form of governance in its work. Institutionally, CERI hosts representative organizations from all seven signatory Carpathian countries, including Serbia & Montenegro and Ukraine, as its “National Focal Points,” to represent the voice of the members, which also hail in an even distribution from all seven Carpathian countries and have equal access to all information. All National Focal Points have implemented their national network meetings and activities for 2006. The first half of year 2006 was the planning phase and in summer the national activities started in each of the Carpathian Countries.

Internally, CERI supports the principles of good government particularly through the support and networking between EU member and non-member countries. The project “Support and capacity building for implementation of Ramsar and Carpathian

Conventions in Serbia,” has shown what can be achieved in terms of internal participatory processes – using a recently joined EU member (Slovakia) built the capacity of a non-EU member (Serbia) in carrying out GIS work for baseline inventory of the most important natural resources in Djerdap national park, and thus helped them meet the requirements of the *acquis communautaire* for possible future EU membership. This project was completed in autumn 2006 with a final conference and with presentation of the results to all CERI members and partners at the CERI General Assembly 2006. The lessons learned will be used to continue to build the capacity of Carpathian research institutes and NGOs, and to provide future examples for “twinning” for CERI through the EPRD WG and ESDE WG. The project results are available at the CERI Secretariat.

CERI is also very much engaged in vertical networking between CERI member and state organizations via the Carpathian Convention as a key partner of its Interim Secretariat. After having drafted a landmark Memorandum of Cooperation with the Interim Secretariat for the Carpathian Convention in 2005, CERI has become an official observer to the Carpathian Convention (and thereby officially recognized by the 7 Carpathian governments) in 2006. The memorandum of Cooperation between UNEP – ISCC and CERI has been signed at the COP1 to the Carpathian Convention. This increased the potential for CERI to communicate its goals in the most open and participatory manner – via local, state and regional governments, other major NGOs and NGO networks, donors and external stakeholders.

3 Main CERI Activities in 2006

Despite the fact that CERI started its independent functioning only in March 2006 by the official establishment of its Secretariat through the support of its board and member NGOs, it has already achieved a significant amount. While some of these activities are natural steps from its past, most have been started and achieved in a single year 2006. This progress has been an essential incentive for its members to restore their connections and interest in supporting and belonging to CERI.

Based on its workplan 2006, CERI has implemented the following activities during the year 2006:

- 1) Established fully operational **CERI Secretariat** in Bratislava, Slovakia in March 2006.
- 2) Organised **3 Board Meetings**:
 - February 2006 – Bratislava, Slovakia
 - May 2006 – Bratislava, Slovakia
 - November 2006 – Poprad, Slovakia
- 3) Organised its **3rd General Assembly** on 23rd - 25th November 2006 in Poprad, Slovakia
- 4) Published first 2 issues of the **Carpathian Newsletter** in 8 languages (English and all 71 Carpathian languages)
- 5) Started the process of elaboration of a new **website**.
- 6) Enlarged the **membership base** from 29 members in autumn 2005 to **43 members** in December 2006.
- 7) Launched the process of identification of methodology for the development of the **Ecoregion Action Plan**. (draft methodology was agreed by the CERI General Assembly in November 2006).
- 8) Launched the process of identification of methodology for the development of the **Carpathian Ecological Network**.
- 9) Identified experts in Serbia, Romania and Ukraine – as the first three countries to launch the data collection and development of the **Carpathian Clearinghouse, Carpathian Biodiversity Information System** as the bases for the Carpathian Ecological Network.
- 10) Identified of the process and technical procedures for developing a design for an **ecological network** in the Carpathian region: data available at present and those required for the system, way to identify corridors, way to include socio-economic developments in design.
- 11) Completed the **Carpathian Biodiversity Expert Database** of CERI.

- 12) Established, made operational and coordinated **seven expert working groups** (WG), involving representatives of NGOs and research institutes from all Carpathian countries. Developed Terms of Reference and Workplan for each of the Working Groups. The WGs have following focus:
 - Biodiversity WG – coordinated by Anna Guttova, CERI Secretariat
 - Biodiversity Information System WG – coordinated by Jan Seffer, Daphne IAE, Slovakia
 - Communication WG – coordinated by Tamara Malkova, Green Dossier, Ukraine
 - Tourism WG – coordinated by Hildegard Meyer, WWF DCP, Austria
 - Environmental and Sustainable Development Education WG – coordinated by Miroslav Tadic, Endemit, Serbia
 - Environmental Policy and Rural Development WG – coordinated by Nenad Robajac, Ecolibri Bionet, Serbia
 - Management Planning WG – coordinated by Milan Janak, Daphne IAE, Slovakia
- 13) Initiated and coordinated the commenting process on the draft **Biodiversity Protocol to the Carpathian Convention** among the NGOs and research institutes in the region.
- 14) Organised the **CERI Side Event** at the **1st Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention** and introduced CERI activities and its individual members to the representatives of the Carpathian governments.
- 15) Signed the **Memorandum of Cooperation between UNEP-ISCC and CERI**. The contents of the memorandum include collaboration on the development of common projects for achieving ecological connectivity of the Carpathians and cooperation on efforts to support the Governments of Carpathian countries in the implementation of the Carpathian Convention and the establishment of a Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA), a regional thematic network of cooperation of mountain protected areas in the Carpathians. Joint action plans between the organizations will be elaborated in a separate document on an annual basis. CERI has been an ongoing observer at regular ad hoc expert meetings for discussion of a workplan, geographic scope of and financing for the Carpathian Convention since 2004 and since December 2006 a member of the CNPA Steering Committee.
- 16) Contributed to the establishment of the **Carpathian Network for Protected Areas** in order to improve cooperation among protected areas in Carpathians for more effective nature protection.
- 17) Initiated **cooperation among network organisations** in the Carpathian region (UNEP, ISCC, WWF-DCP, CEEWEB, REC, ANPED) in order to join initiatives and prevent overlaps in activities.
- 18) Initiated the process of identification of **threats and obstacles** to sustainable development of the Carpathians.
- 19) Defined the **Rules of Procedure** for the National Focal Points and Working Groups.
- 20) Elaborated the 1st draft of the **CERI Communication Strategy**.

21) Developed characteristic **CERI branding signs** for all its materials.

22)

23) Established **information gathering, dissemination and exchange process** in the whole Carpathian region via the CERI website, e-mail conferences, Newsletter and discussion fora.

24) Supported **national activities** for network establishment, coordination, cooperation and information exchange in seven Carpathian countries. Among others, the tasks of national networks in all countries included:

1. Strengthening the CERI network, Cooperation among NGOs

Activities related to CERI Organisation

- Adhere to the requirements listed in Article 4 of the CERI Statutes, in particular, representing a nationally coordinating organization responsible for CERI activities on the national level with a mandate to represent the Carpathian EcoRegion Initiative at the national level;
- Help organize the program content of board meetings, general assembly and other internal meetings;
- Attend all board meetings, 1 general assembly and other internal meetings;
- Represent CERI at relevant initiatives and fora in the region;
- Communicate with CERI Secretariat and members.

Developing the CERI Network

- Provide feedback on the issues/topics discussed within CERI;
- Help draft and implement the Rules of procedure;
- Contribute to CERI Communication Strategy;
- Participate in and contribute to CERI fundraising activities;
- Represent CERI at the national level.

Participating in the expert work of CERI

- Nominate and approve members for the Working Groups;
- Review the documents and reports produced by WGs, provide feedback on them with special focus on work plans and budgets of WGs;
- Identify Experts for the CERI Expert Database (minimum of 1 expert);
- Provide feedback to draft questionnaire for Fact sheets of current situation regarding the protection and management of the Carpathian mountains;
- Supply information on the current situation regarding the protection and management of the Carpathian mountains as given in questionnaire;
- Support assessment of training needs in the field of N 2000 implementation, responsible forestry and ecological network design;
- Nominate persons to participate in set of trainings to increase understanding of the members on the principles and techniques of ecological network development and implementation;
- Inform Secretariat about national projects in the Carpathian Ecoregion.

Coordinating national CERI network

- Maintain communication among the national members;

- Coordinate the CERI related activities of the members;
- Disseminate relevant information among the national members;
- Organise coordination meeting at the national level in order to discuss ongoing CERI issues;
- Support national projects contributing to the sustainable development of the Carpathian Ecoregion.

2. Coordination of CERI policy activities at the national level

- Contact the Carpathian Convention (CC) and Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) focal point and define possibilities for cooperation at the national level;
- Collect comments from members to the Biodiversity Protocol of the Carpathian Convention and provide them to CERI Secretariat.

3. Dissemination of information

- Disseminate all CERI materials and publications
- Translate to national language, print and disseminate among all relevant stakeholders the CERI Newsletter (1st and 2nd issue);
- Contribute to preparation of 2nd issue of CERI newsletter by national article and list of events;
- Regularly contribute to the CERI website with the information related to Carpathian ecoregion and CERI national activities.