



CERI Board Meeting
Bratislava, Slovakia
20 November 2008

Participants: 8 people, JS=Chair; MB=Vice Chair; AG=Interim Executive Secretary; VCh=Logistics & financial issues

Please note that AG=Anna Guttova; BP=Bohdan Prots; CB=István Csaba Botos; GP=George Predoiu; JS=Jan Seffer; JU=Jana Urbancikova; MB=Michael Baltzer; VCh=Viera Chrenkova.

Ioan Abrudan was replaced by GP; Alexandar Vlajic was excused due to a time collision with another meeting.

13:10 Welcome; Approval of Agenda; Review of Old Business and CERI Secretariat Operation in 2008

JS welcomed the participants to this Board Meeting, which was possible to organize thanks to the funds available in BBI Matra project.

The **Proposed Agenda** was approved (below the approved agenda).

Time	Agenda item	Needs/Consideration	Who	Duration
9:00–9:15	Review of old business, approval of the agenda	Key excerpts of the minutes and decisions of the last BM	JS	15 min
9:15–9:30	CERI Secretariat operation in 2008	Changes, financial situation, future plans	JS	15 min
9:30–9:55	On-going projects: BBI Matra, DBU – ecological network Western Carpathians, DBU – World of Carpathians	Summary of current status, upcoming activities	AG	25 min
9:55–10:20	Fundraising: Workplan for 2009	Current situation with project proposals	AG	25 min
10:20–10:45	Activities under Carpathian Convention: Biodiversity protocol, CNPA	Summary	JS, MB, AG, JU	25 min
10:45–11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>			
11:00–11:45	CERI Secretariat operation in 2009		JS, All	45 min
11:45–12:30	Any other business		All	
12:30	End of meeting, lunch		All	

Review (according to the minutes of the last BM held during the GA in Brasov, Romania, November 2008):

No specific tasks were set for CERI Secretariat and Board during since the last board meeting due to the uncertainties with the finances foreseen for 2008. CERI was not successful in getting the grant, that is why there were only very limited funds for operational purposes. Key activities were those which were in on-going projects – BBI Matra and DBU Ecological Network and DBU World of Carpathians. There were no funds available to organize CERI General Assembly 2008.

On-going projects: BBI Matra, DBU – ecological network Western Carpathians, DBU – World of Carpathians

An overview of the activities under the three ongoing projects was given.

BBI Matra project

Country experts who were contracted to collect and analyze specific datasets delivered the outputs of the work for further processing. These included compiled GIS layers on location of roads, settlements, rivers, railways, country borders, ski-locations, FSC forests, adding missing data on ski-resorts, protected areas and mines in the project countries, shape files with Natura 2000 sites and boundaries of the protected areas. Based on these data a map showing principal threats throughout the project area was upgraded and finalized. The map is an important component of input data set to design an ecological network. This process enabled to set so called “cost values” of the project area, considering e.g. threat of agriculture clearance, infrastructure, cost of land.

Big step was done for the land use data for Ukraine. The main problem was that no area-wide land cover map with sufficient details allowing for characterization of habitats and ecosystems existed for the country. This gap was filled by Ukrainian and German team. The product is stratified into coniferous forest, mixed forest, broad-leafed forest, cropland, grassland, succession areas, dense settlements, open settlements, water bodies and bare rock. More information is attached in final report (Annex 7). To perform this work a purchase of Landsat images of relevant part of Ukraine was necessary.

Based on collected data on the distribution of selected plant and animal species and alliances, grid layers of (potential) distribution of species and habitats with maximum two categories of distribution suitable for MARXAN analyses were prepared (for an example of *Osmoderma eremita* see Annex 9).

Data sources and information available:

1. Distribution in orographical units for 143 habitats, 201 plants and 182 animals
2. Information on affinity to land cover units (three categories: low, medium and high)
3. Information on affinity to range of altitude
4. Polygon layers of precise localities for 43 habitats, 7 plants and 13 animals

The process included three steps:

1. Mixing all those data sources together – general distribution layers for 526 features were created
2. Reclassification into two categories – all layers from step 1 were reclassified – this way new layers of 526 features were created
3. Creation of table of distribution data per planning units for MARXAN input – table with 1051 columns and 14650 records was created

Rules for reclassification into two categories were created (re Step 2):

I. high probability

type 1xx0

- all codes 11{2 or 3}0

type 1xx1

subtype of large polygons of precise localities (bigger than 25000 ha)

- all codes 1xy1 where x must be 1 AND y must be 1 or 2 or 3

subtype of small polygons of precise localities (less than 25000 ha)

- all codes 1xx1

II. normal probability:

all the rest after "I. high probability" selection except 1000 code

These created layers combined with threat data will serve for identification of elements of ecological network in the project area.

The target setting meeting was postponed to 9-10 September 2008 because some of the data sets were not available in spring. Thus the preparations for the meeting were ongoing also during this reporting period. The aim of the meeting is to set targets for their main areas of expertise – a certain taxa or habitat or ecological processes. Targets are needed for each species mapped in the planning system. For most species these must ensure the long-term persistence of the species in the Carpathians. For some wide-ranging species (eg large raptors) the target must ensure the long-term persistence of important sub-populations. Besides the core team of country experts, additional experts on freshwater issues from Ukraine and Romania were identified and invited. The agenda for the meeting is in Annex 10.

During the reporting period the working group on CERI issues focused on Activity 8 – Building capacity of CERI members to support implementation of CERI's strategic objectives, with a special attention on the framework of the Carpathian Convention. The activities contribute to increase of sustainability of CERI and pave directions for the future activities of CERI. The activities during the reporting period also address Activity 5 – Elaborate a plan for CERI to maintain and improve the Biological Information System including planning of data gathering, monitoring, management and protection of the ecological network, through exploration of possibilities for implementation of the ecological network.

From this viewpoint a crucial step was done at the COP 2 to the Carpathian Convention in Bucharest, 17–19 June 2008, when the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity to the Carpathian Convention was adopted by the COP 2 and subsequently signed by majority of the parties to the Carpathian Convention. Article 9 on Continuity and connectivity of natural and semi-natural habitats, ecological network in the Carpathians, explicitly highlights the importance of the ecological network as a such, being a tool for maintenance of unique biological and landscape diversity of the region. CERI played active role in the process of preparation of the Protocol and delivered comments based on the work on Carpathian Ecological Network, underlining the key role of endemic habitats and species, importance of compilation of Carpathian Red List of Habitats and species and an element of ecological network coherence.

CERI shared experience from the work towards the design of a Carpathian Ecological Network on several regional meetings (more about meetings in the section Related projects and contacts) and at the same time established links with other regional initiatives and organisations with the vision for future cooperation:

Because of the scope of work on Carpathian Ecological Network and also of the fact that part of the CERI members is from scientific community, CERI joined the

"Science for Carpathians" platform created under the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention. The aim of the platform is to establish a forum on science for the Carpathians, identification of gaps and topics for Carpathian related research and development of common research projects and support in getting funding. This enables further support to the Carpathian Convention by providing the scientific backstopping to decision makers.

CERI cooperates with the Carpathian Network of the Protected Areas (CNPA), established by COP 1 to the Carpathian Convention and shares experience on the approach to develop a design of a coherent regional ecological network. CERI contributed to the elaboration of a Medium-term Strategy and Working Plan for CNPA during the meeting in July 2008 in Bratislava. CERI will also participate at the first CNPA Conference, which will be held 23–24 September 2008, Poiana Brasov, Romania. The aim of the Conference is to bring together people from the protected areas from the Carpathians to develop a platform for cooperation and networking that should help maintain the outstanding natural and cultural values of the mountains.

Element of awareness raising was strengthened through a liaison of CERI's Environment and Sustainable Development Education Working Group with the "Move for Nature" platform under the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention. The aim of the platform is to mainstream environmental issues/education into the practice in the region through transnational cooperation. Currently working on the "World of Carpathians", a project aiming to increase the level of environmental knowledge and awareness of local communities in the Carpathians and visitors about the natural values, threats and protection of this region, the Working Group targeted its activities towards this aim.

DBU – Ecological network in Western Carpathians

The databases for the collection of occurrences of the plant and animal species and habitats in orographical units from the earlier created lists were finalized. They were placed on CERI website, so as they are easily accessible to the country expert teams and can be downloaded. Instructions for the collection of the precise data (preferably polygons) on occurrence of priority species and habitats were prepared too and included into the work flow. Instructions for the workflow were prepared as well and put on the website. They are attached in Annex 2. Exhaustive information can be found on the CERI web: <http://www.carpates.org/dbu/workflow/workflow2008.html>, clicking on particular activities from the workflow (from 1 to 7), see below.

The country expert teams confirmed receipt of the databases, namely the information on their location for download and started to fill in the data according to the instruction. They also started to gather information on more precise occurrences for priority species and habitats. The experts are expected to deliver the databases by the end of 2008.

CERI activities supporting building Carpathian Biodiversity Information System and design of the ecological network for the territory of the Carpathians, were promoted through two press releases by press agency TASR and the portal Ekolist CZ Online. They are attached in Annex 3.

Regular exchange of information with German partner IBN was done by e-mail and skype. The meeting with Axel Paulsch was held in 1 October 2008 in Banská Štiavnica, to get update on the achievements under the ongoing activities, update of the time plan and to clarify upcoming actions.

DBU – World of Carpathians

The project "The World of Carpathians" has entered the second year of its implementation. The activities continue to focus on the preparation of a guideline and

resource handbook, *The World of Carpathians*, for primary school teachers and environmental educators. A lot of work has already been done, but there is still a lot ahead.

At the moment, we have managed to complete the texts of the chapters of the handbook in English language. The author team comprises 25 experts from Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Serbia and Romania. Each chapter was commented by editor-in-chief and reviewed by an expert from the given field. The expert review team has 16 members from six Carpathian countries: Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Serbia and Romania. Most of the authors have already incorporated the reviewers' comments into their manuscripts and the final versions of the manuscripts are being translated into Slovak language at the moment. The English versions will go for language editing that will be done by a native English speaker.

At the same time, an environmental education expert has been preparing activity plans based on the information given in the chapters. The activity plans will be translated into English and Polish. In co-operation with a graphic designer she has been developing concept of worksheets and creating simple cartoon proposals.

Content of the handbook including the authors and the reviewers:

Title of the chapter (*Name of the author*) / *Name of the reviewer*

Foreword

1. Introduction to the Carpathians (*Andrea Královičová*)

Mountains that create conditions for biodiversity protection in 7 countries - why we are talking about the Carpathians, importance, natural values, uniqueness

2. Abiotic conditions of Carpathians (*Mária Bizubová*) / *Lidia Turanová*

- Geographical division - map of Carpathians
- Geology and mountain formation
- Water
- Landscape diversity

3. Diversity of life in the Carpathians

General overview on species and habitat diversity (*Erik Baláž, Dobromil Galvánek, Michal Hájek, Marcel Uhrín, Dan Turtureanu, Katarína Mišíková, Anna Guttová, Soňa Ripková, Michal Noga, Marek Brinzík, Tibor Sos, Biljana Macura, Peter Fedor, Jana Fedorová, Vít Zavadil, Jan Dušek*) / *all relevant reviewers named below*

3.1 Forest biotopes

- Importance and functions, forest biotope types (*Erik Baláž*) / *Iovu-Adrian Biris*
- Vascular plants of forest biotopes (*Dan Turtureanu*) / *Lidia Tasenkevich*
- Mosses of forest biotopes (*Katarína Mišíková*) / *Svatava Kubešová*
- Lichens of forest biotopes (*Anna Guttová*) / *Zdeněk Palice*
- Fungi of forest biotopes (*Soňa Ripková*) / *Anna Ronikier*
- Mammals of forest biotopes (*Marcel Uhrín, Michal Noga*) / *Milan Janák*
- Birds of forest biotopes (*Marek Brinzík*) / *Tomáš Brinke*
- Reptiles of forest biotopes (*Tibor Sos, Biljana Macura*) / *Jelka Crnobrnja Isailovic*
- Invertebrates of forest biotopes (*Peter Fedor, Jana Fedorová*) / *Wojciech Sierka*

3.2 Grassland biotopes

- Importance and functions, grassland biotope types (*Dobromil Galvánek*)
- Vascular plants of grassland biotopes (*Dan Turtureanu*) / *Lidia Tasenkevich*
- Mosses of grassland biotopes (*Katarína Mišíková*) / *Svatava Kubešová*
- Lichens of grassland biotopes (*Anna Guttová*) / *Zdeněk Palice*
- Fungi of grassland biotopes (*Soňa Ripková*) / *Anna Ronikier*
- Mammals of grassland biotopes (*Marcel Uhrín, Michal Noga*) / *Milan Janák*
- Birds of grassland biotopes (*Marek Brinzík*) / *Tomáš Brinke*
- Reptiles of grassland biotopes (*Tibor Sos, Biljana Macura*) / *Jelka Crnobrnja Isailovic*
- Invertebrates of grassland biotopes (*Peter Fedor, Jana Fedorová*) / *Wojciech Sierka*

3.3 Water and wetland biotopes

- Importance and functions, water and wetland biotope types (*Michal Hájek*)
- Vascular plants of water and wetland biotopes (*Dan Turtureanu*) / *Lidia Tasenkevich*
- Mosses of water and wetland biotopes (*Katarína Mišíková*) / *Svatava Kubešová*
- Lichens of water and wetland biotopes (*Anna Guttová*) / *Zdeněk Palice*
- Fungi of water and wetland biotopes (*Soňa Ripková*) / *Anna Ronikier*
- Mammals of water and wetland biotopes (*Marcel Uhrín, Michal Noga*) / *Milan Janák*
- Birds of water and wetland biotopes (*Marek Brinzík*) / *Tomáš Brinke*
- Reptiles of water and wetland biotopes (*Tibor Sos, Biljana Macura*) / *Jelka Crnobrnja Isailovic*
- Amphibians of water and wetland biotopes (*Vít Zavadil*) / *Jelka Crnobrnja Isailovic*
- Fishes of water and wetland biotopes (*Jan Dušek*) / *Ivan Jaric*
- Invertebrates of water and wetland biotopes (*Peter Fedor, Jana Fedorová*) / *Wojciech Sierka*

3.4 Extreme biotopes - caves, deep water, rocks and snow at highest peaks

- Description of extreme biotope types (*Marcel Uhrín*) / *Andrea Královičová*
- Vascular plants of extreme biotopes (*Dan Turtureanu*) / *Lidia Tasenkevich*
- Mosses of extreme biotopes (*Katarína Mišíková*) / *Svatava Kubešová*
- Lichens of extreme biotopes (*Anna Guttová*) / *Zdeněk Palice*
- Fungi of extreme biotopes (*Soňa Ripková*) / *Anna Ronikier*
- Mammals of extreme biotopes (*Marcel Uhrín, Michal Noga*) / *Milan Janák*
- Birds of extreme biotopes (*Marek Brinzík*) / *Tomáš Brinke*
- Reptiles of extreme biotopes (*Tibor Sos, Biljana Macura*) / *Jelka Crnobrnja Isailovic*
- Invertebrates of extreme biotopes (*Peter Fedor, Jana Fedorová*) / *Wojciech Sierka*

4. Men in the Carpathians (*Miroslav Tadic*) / *Zbigniew Witkowski*

- Life, settlement
- Culture and traditions
- Modern day impacts on environment and current responses

5. Biodiversity protection in the Carpathians (*Monika Chrenková*) / *Mircea Verghelet*

- Global importance of the Carpathian biodiversity
- EU influence on the Carpathian biodiversity
- Carpathian-wide initiatives for the conservation of biodiversity
- Biodiversity conservation within the Carpathian countries
- Local level - role of NGOs/local people in nature conservation

6. Concrete positive examples of sustainable/wise use of biodiversity in favour of nature and people

(*Monika Ochwat Marcinkiewicz, Józef Michałek, Czaba Botos, Martina Badidová, Alexander Seyboth*) to show benefits and bring motivation to maintain the richness of biodiversity - green tourism, traditional orchards, traditional grazing and local sheep products etc.

Fundraising: Workplan for 2009

Workplan for 2009

Financial resources from grants, which form 100% of its overall budget, support CERI. So far there are no membership fees for the network members. Since CERI has been legally registered in 2005, it was supported by grants from European Commission in 2006 (NGO networks), it is running expert projects funded by Dutch government (BBI Matra, 2006-2009) and DBU (Deutsche Bundestiftung Umwelt, 2008-2009). To secure financial stability of the network is a main concern of CERI Secretariat. The main categories of expenditure include: personnel, travel, other direct costs (accommodation, rent, meals for workshops and conferences), external assistance (subcontracts), materials, office costs and overheads.

Most of the activities, which are foreseen for 2009, will take place on the territory of Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary. BBI Matra project running in Ukraine, Romania and Serbia will be ending in March 2009. Big work will be done to build a "Carpathian Biodiversity Information System" and prepare a proposal for Western Carpathian Ecological Network as a precondition for effective cross-border nature protection. Particular activities include expert work, discussion workshop on trans-boundary level and PR activities. Another block of activities is devoted to the project "World of Carpathians – Awareness Raising about the Carpathian Biodiversity".

Specific activities:

Develop educational material about the Carpathian biodiversity "World of Carpathians" – comprehensive teaching material for primary school teachers and environmental educators with special chapters including important aspects of Carpathian nature and their value in European context : educational manual World of Carpathians (ca 300 pages) in English, Slovak and Polish versions finalized

Workshop for environmental education experts from all Carpathian countries to share experiences and methods of environmental education and awareness raising in individual countries and CERI Environmental and Sustainable Development Education WG (ESDE WG): principles for common approach to present biodiversity issues to pupils in the Carpathian countries summarized, an objective to improve conservation efforts through increase of public support of the Natura 2000 multiplied among CERI members and ESDE Working Group coordination and meeting

Produce set of teaching aids based on the workshop outcomes as the practical result of the common approach to dealing with these issues in the region

Promote the approach to ensure effective education and awareness and access to information about the natural values of the Carpathians with an emphasis on elements of Community interest, streamlining biodiversity-oriented education throughout the Carpathian region with an emphasis on European unique elements of wildlife as well as regional peculiarities, to contribute to halting misunderstanding about the aim of the Natura 2000 and improved conservation efforts through increase of public support of the Natura 2000 on European fora (e.g. Green week, 5th Biodiversity in Europe" Conference etc.) : Carpathian experience replicated on effective education and

awareness and access to information about the natural values, streamlining biodiversity-oriented education, strengthening safeguarding of Europe's most threatened habitats and species, contribution to halting misunderstanding about the aim of the Natura 2000 and improve of conservation efforts through increase of public support of the Natura 2000

Finalize the design of a trans-boundary ecological network which will form the backbone of the protected area system in the Carpathians, identify corridors on regional scale securing interconnectivity of core areas: draft design of a trans-boundary ecological network covering Western Carpathian countries commented by the experts from Biodiversity Working group and Carpathian Biodiversity Information System Working group, corridors identified on regional scale

Merge the results from Eastern and Southern Carpathians with the Western Carpathians to obtain an interactive map with zonation of the Carpathian region based on biodiversity and socio-economic data (trans-boundary ecological network). This will enable to see the most valuable zones/areas to be conserved to prevent their fragmentation. Furthermore the corridors, securing interconnectivity of the areas on regional level will be visualized: interactive map with zonation of the Carpathian region based on biodiversity and socio-economic data (trans-boundary ecological network) as a result of merging the maps from Eastern and Southern Carpathians

Building a Carpathian Biodiversity Information System as a core part of a "Carpathian Clearinghouse" – a metadatabase for mutual information and data exchange, for gaining information about indicators for an array of threats and mitigation of threats: on-line accessible metadatabase

Propose a process for implementation of the trans-boundary ecological network in the Carpathians as an initial step towards achieving ecological connectivity of the Carpathians: the link between Carpathian policy makers and CERI members and their expert work provided

Promotion of the most rigorous and comprehensive standards of biodiversity collection, assessment and analysis towards realization of CERI's vision: the link between Carpathian policy makers and CERI members and their expert work provided

Support to the building of Carpathian Network of Protected Areas: the link between Carpathian policy makers and CERI members and their expert work provided

So as to provide a voice for the public's concerns, with special emphasis on nature conservation issues, from the CERI member countries, to secure human well being, address transboundary nature conservation issues (regional cooperation), the following operational actions are foreseen:

- Running CERI Secretariat on day-to-day bases

- Organization of two Board Meetings

- Organization of CERI General Assembly 2009

- Updating and improving the structure of CERI website

- Maintaining CERI e-mail conferences

- Coordination of national network, organization of meetings of national CERI members

- Communication with CERI Secretariat and members

- Representation of CERI at the national level, regional and European level

Fundraising

For 2009 two proposal to raise operational funds for CERI were prepared and submitted.

1. Stefan Batory Foundation (www.batory.org.pl) – grant for 2009

The program aims at strengthening NGOs coalitions in Visegrad countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) that undertake efforts to articulate civil society interests on the basis of broad citizen involvement and to influence public policy for the

common good. In the first round of the program the Foundation intend to select ca 10 coalitions (2-3 in each Visegrad country) and offer a maximum 3-year core support grant of an average value of 15 000 EUR per year.

CERI submitted a proposal with a budget of 12 000 EUR for 2009:

Category of expenses	Amount in EUR
Workshop for members of Environmental Education Working Group:	2800
Workshop for members of Biodiversity Working Group:	2600
CERI Board meeting:	3700
CERI Secretariat operation	2900
TOTAL	12000

2. NGO Operating Grant for 2009 Life +

Objectives

CERI's challenges for the upcoming year 2009 are operational as well as target driven. Besides maintaining the CERI Secretariat, improving the functioning of the network and coordination of the working groups, CERI aims to focus on strengthening its position at the international level, building new partnerships and getting more involved in international discussions, initiatives and activities for biodiversity conservation. CERI will focus on implementation of Habitats Directive, coherence and interconnectivity of NATURA 2000 (with special focus on Art 10) in 7 Carpathian countries, support implementation of the environmental acquis in EU members states and replication in the neighbouring countries for setting the "baseline" for an overall "high Carpathian standard" for conservation in the Carpathian Mountains. Another issue CERI will particularly address in 2009 is raising awareness on biodiversity, NATURA 2000, climate change issues, links to health and environment, resources and waste and sustainable tourism.

Actions and means involved

Climate-related activities contribute to mitigating the effects of anthropogenic-induced climate change, through a consistent approach. With building a Carpathian Biodiversity Information System as a core part of a "Carpathian Clearinghouse" – a metadatabase for mutual information and data exchange, for gaining information about indicators for an array of threats and mitigation of threats. Educational materials and teaching aids that are not available now in a Carpathian will help to disseminate the issue to local population.

Nature and biodiversity-related activities aim to implement important EU directives, articles of Carpathian Convention and to save Europe's most threatened habitats and species and also living environment for people. Further use of the Carpathian Biodiversity Information System is to improve the implementation of the trans-boundary ecological network based mainly on the principles of Natura 2000, Pan European Ecological Network, Emerald, in the Carpathians as an initial step towards achieving ecological connectivity. In one hand with design and develop awareness raising

and capacity building project targeted to promote alternative energy (biomass treatment) in a model area of Western Carpathians. In the other hand focusing on environmental education via publishing the book "World of Carpathians" in 3 different languages and holding workshops to share experience of experts from the Carpathian countries.

Resources and waste work concentrates on natural values as important resources and provides information about the importance of sustainable use of the vulnerable natural elements. It also uses the transboundary ecological network as a base to better understand the need to save the connection among elements.

Horizontal and cross cutting issues involve mainly policy making activities for sustainable tourism of the Carpathians as an essential part of Sustainable Rural Development.

Expected results and outputs

fully operational Secretariat and network, enhanced internal and external communication, financial management, membership development and network capacity building

enhanced position of CERI at the international level through its target driven activities, mainly interactive map of the Carpathian region (trans-boundary ecological network) with defined the most valuable zones to be conserved to prevent their fragmentation and the corridors, securing interconnectivity of the areas on regional level, supplemented with a position paper on conservation targets for selected species and habitats with an emphasis on EU Habitats Directive Annex species and habitats; public awareness on natural values of the Carpathians, NATURA 2000 principles raised

Estimated operating budget			
Eligible expenditure/costs categories	€	Income and revenues	€
a) Personnel	69050	a) Contribution requested from the Commission by the present application	95 687
b) Travel and subsistence	43 252	b) Contribution of the applicant (beneficiary)	0
c) Rental, equipment and depreciation	5 700	c) Membership fees	0
d) External assistance / Subcontracting	21 000	d) Co-financing from member organizations	0
e) Other direct costs	5 200	e) Other sources of co-financing	54 915
f) Overheads / General administration	6 400	f) Other revenues	0
TOTAL	150 602	TOTAL	150 602

Activities under Carpathian Convention: Biodiversity protocol, CNPA

First meeting of the Carpathian Convention implementation Committee (CCIC), 2 – 4 April 2008, Sibiu, Romania

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss :

the progress in implementation of the Carpathian Convention (with special focus on particular articles of the Convention covering sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity, sustainable and integrated water/river basin management, agriculture and forestry, transport and infrastructure, industry and energy, spatial

planning, sustainable tourism, cultural heritage and traditional knowledge and awareness raising, education and public participation)
cooperation with the European Union
Carpathian Network of Protected Areas

Preparations for 2nd Conference of the parties to the Carpathian Convention

CERI prepared a report on activities contributing to implementation of the Carpathian Convention through the on-going projects. CERI also submitted a proposal for organisation of side event during the 2nd Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention.

A meeting with the representatives DBU Foundation (Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt), 14 May 2008, Bratislava, Slovakia

Dr Ulrich Witte (Head of Department Environmental Communication and Protection of Cultural Assets) and Ms Romana Cermanova (representative of DBU foundation for the Czech Republic and Slovakia) visited the office of Daphne – Institute of Applied ecology, hosting also Secretariat of Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative, during their mission in Slovakia. The aim of the meeting was to give an overview of the activities which were supported by DBU foundation here in past as well as about the on-going activities and to discuss visions for potential cooperation in future. The CERI projects as well as the other activities in the region were presented.

Carpathian Strategic Workshop on Spatial Planning, 26 – 27 May 2008, Vienna, Austria

Except of Working group on conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity to the Carpathian Convention, to which CERI is an observer, it is of importance to follow the outputs of the Working group on Spatial Planning to the Carpathian Convention. The outputs related to socio-economic analysis, which is exploring development opportunities and sets priorities for development actions in the Carpathian region, are important for the upcoming analyses and preparation of scenarios for Carpathian Ecological Network. They will be gathered in a document VASICA (Visions and Strategies in the Carpathian Area). The main elements of the work, being a draft of VASICA were presented on the workshop. CERI was not participating at this meeting due to other obligations of all members of PMT. However, CERI is in touch with the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (ISCC) on regular basis, who is coordinating body for the Working groups. ISCC provides CERI relevant information and further contacts to be updated on the stage of the work on spacial planning in the region. More information on www.carpathianconvention.org.

Science for Carpathians (S4C) – Strategy Development and Networking Workshop, 27 – 28 May 2008, Kraków, Poland.

The objective of the meeting was to define the current status of Global Change research in the Carpathians in specific disciplines, to draft a research strategy for the Carpathians focusing on topics relevant to the region, to identify potential partners for jointly developing research proposals and projects on Global Change impacts in the Carpathian mountains and to establish an active S4C Network. CERI had possibility to present its current activities under the on-going projects to 72 participants from Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Hungary, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and Germany. More information on <http://www.carpat.es.org/news.html> and <http://mri.scnatweb.ch/events/mri-events/s4c-science-for-the-carpathians-27-28-may-2008-krakow-pl.html>. The meeting was organized by Jagiellonian University Kraków – Poland, Mountain Research Initiative, EURAC, Joanneum Research Graz, University of Applied Sciences Eberswalde – Germany, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin – Germany with a support of UNEP and Interim Secretariat of Carpathian Convention – Vienna.

REC Workshop on Implementation of the Carpathian Convention in Slovakia, 2–3 June 2008, Modra, Slovakia

The workshop aimed at raising awareness about the Carpathian Convention and some of its key requirements and to serve as a capacity building exercise for national, regional and local authorities and to bring together a wide range of stakeholders for discussions and networking. The workshop was largely based on the findings and methodology of the Handbook on the Carpathian Convention. It also covered some of the key findings of the Regional Assessment of the Policy, Legislative and Institutional Frameworks Implementing Carpathian Convention. The key topics which were discussed during the workshops included biodiversity/nature protection, sustainable tourism and sustainable forestry/agriculture as well as public participation. CERI shared with the participants of the Seminar its experience from work towards protection of Carpathian and promoted the activities of this on-going projects on development of a Carpathian Ecological Network. The workshop was organized by REC Slovakia, REC, UNEP and EURAC.

Pan-European Conference on Population level Management Plans for Large Carnivores, 10–11 June 2008, Postojna, Slovenia

One of the major challenges in the implementation of European legislation in the field of nature conservation is the management of large carnivores, especially after the enlargement of the European Union and due to the increase in the number of Member States with larger populations of carnivores. Related to these issues, the European Commission initiated drawing up guidelines on how to manage large carnivores in population level, which included broad discussions at the national level. One of the aims of the Conference was to present the Guidelines in final version. The event was organised by the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning in cooperation with the European Commission, the Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe (LCIE), the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation and the Slovenia Forestry Service. The topic of the conference is closely linked to the project goals, that is why CERI actively participated there with a poster.

2nd Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention, 17–19 June 2008, Bucharest, Romania

The Carpathian Convention is a framework type convention pursuing a comprehensive policy and cooperating in the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians. The meeting in Bucharest was the second one. The main agenda items were: cooperation with EU, other conventions and international bodies, scope of application of the Carpathian Convention, permanent secretariat arrangements, preparation of the Ministerial Declaration, arrangements for COP 3. For high level segment the main items covered: achievements and future of the Carpathian process, stakeholders message, adoption and signature of the Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity. More information on www.carpathianconvention.org. There were up to 150 registered participants of the Conference from seven Carpathian countries and international organisations

CERI organized a side event during the Conference. The programme of the event was to promote CERI activities towards design of Carpathian Ecological Network, which contribute to implementation of the Carpathian Convention and the adopted Protocol on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity. During the time allocated for the CERI side event a second meeting of the Steering Committee to the project was held.

Redaction meeting for the elaboration of Medium-term Strategy document and Working plan 2010-2015 for the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA), 25 July 2008, Bratislava

Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) has been established according to Article 4 of the Carpathian Convention. The Steering Committee of the CNPA, of which CERI is a member, has developed a draft of the internal structure, a medium term strategy and the work programme for the CNPA during the meeting. The main aim of the meeting was to include into pre-draft documents remarks of Steering Committee members, as well as of the ISCC and to prepare these documents for the future reworking during the CNPA Conference in September by the protected areas managers. Any suggestions for the improvement of these documents are welcomed.

1st CNPA (Carpathian Network of Protected Areas) Conference: 23-24 September 2008

CERI is an observer to the Steering Committee of the Carpathian Network of the Protected Areas (CNPA), a thematic network of mountain protected areas in the Carpathian region, established by the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention 1/14. The objective of the CNPA is to contribute to the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians, and in particular goals listed in Article 4 of the Carpathian Convention. The first CNPA conference took place 23 – 24 September 2008 in Poiana Brasov, Romania.

The conference is a platform for protected areas specialists to meet, network and discuss important issues. At the same time the conference's task is to promote the unique natural and cultural treasures of the Carpathians. CERI participated at this conference (up to 100 registered participants) and shared with the audience experience from on-going projects leading to the design of ecological network in the Carpathians.

CERI Secretariat operation in 2009

Operation of CERI Secretariat in 2009 depends on success of fundraising. It will be partially covered from on-going BBI-Matra project (until the end of March 2009)

Next steps – Discussion of BM members on key issues for upcoming period

1. further profile and strategy of CERI, links to the Carpathian Convention, CNPA, Mava project etc.

Remarks by JU:

very important issue is common coordination of regional projects in the Carpathians to avoid multiplication and wasting of resources

CNPA would welcome tangible outputs of the projects, which could be followed up and elaborated in future

What would CERI role be on regional level (e.g. other regional networks e.g. ANPED have clear profile)? CERI is strong in biodiversity. One of CERI roles could be monitoring how the "Biodiversity protocol" will be implemented

Question by JS:

How is MAVA project doing and how is it supporting CNPA

Responses and further remarks by JU:

JU reported on the current status of CNPA after the First conference of September 2008 in Poiana Brasov. There are two offers for CNPA "Secretariat", came from Romania and Slovakia

How the outputs of the ecological network projects can help on national levels? There is a national meeting foreseen in the Czech Republic for the 2009, supported by Interim Secretariat of Carpathian Convention. That could be one of the presented topics.

What is the situation with the map of protected areas in the Carpathians?

JS:

Explained the situation with the map of Carpathian protected areas

2. possibilities for fundraising

Remarks from MB:

to follow up Interreg projects under preparation in the region and try to join the team. Potential prefinancing could be solved out afterwards; other possibilities Swiss fund, Darwin

liase with Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention

Remarks from CB:

list of possibilities and suggestions for project proposals sent to the Board members prior to the meeting

3. Structure and role for CERI in future

Brainstorm facilitated by MB:

strong line – biodiversity research, networking organisation

personnel preconditions for future operation of Secretariat: to create potential for 2 positions (1/2 time each), responsibilities – lobby at international level, assistant position and administrative work

important actions: annual meeting, national meetings

deliverables for ISCC, CNPA

Action List

What?	Who?	By when?
Gather feedback to Core grant proposal from Board members, finalize the proposal for 2009 and submit	AG + BM	30.11.2008
Finalize Báthory foundation proposal for 2009 and submit	AG + BM	30.11.2008