

Introduction to the CERi, Past and Present

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Who We Were



Ministerstvo životného prostredia Slovenskej republiky



A LARGE CARNIVORE INITIATIVE FOR EUROPE



VERONICA



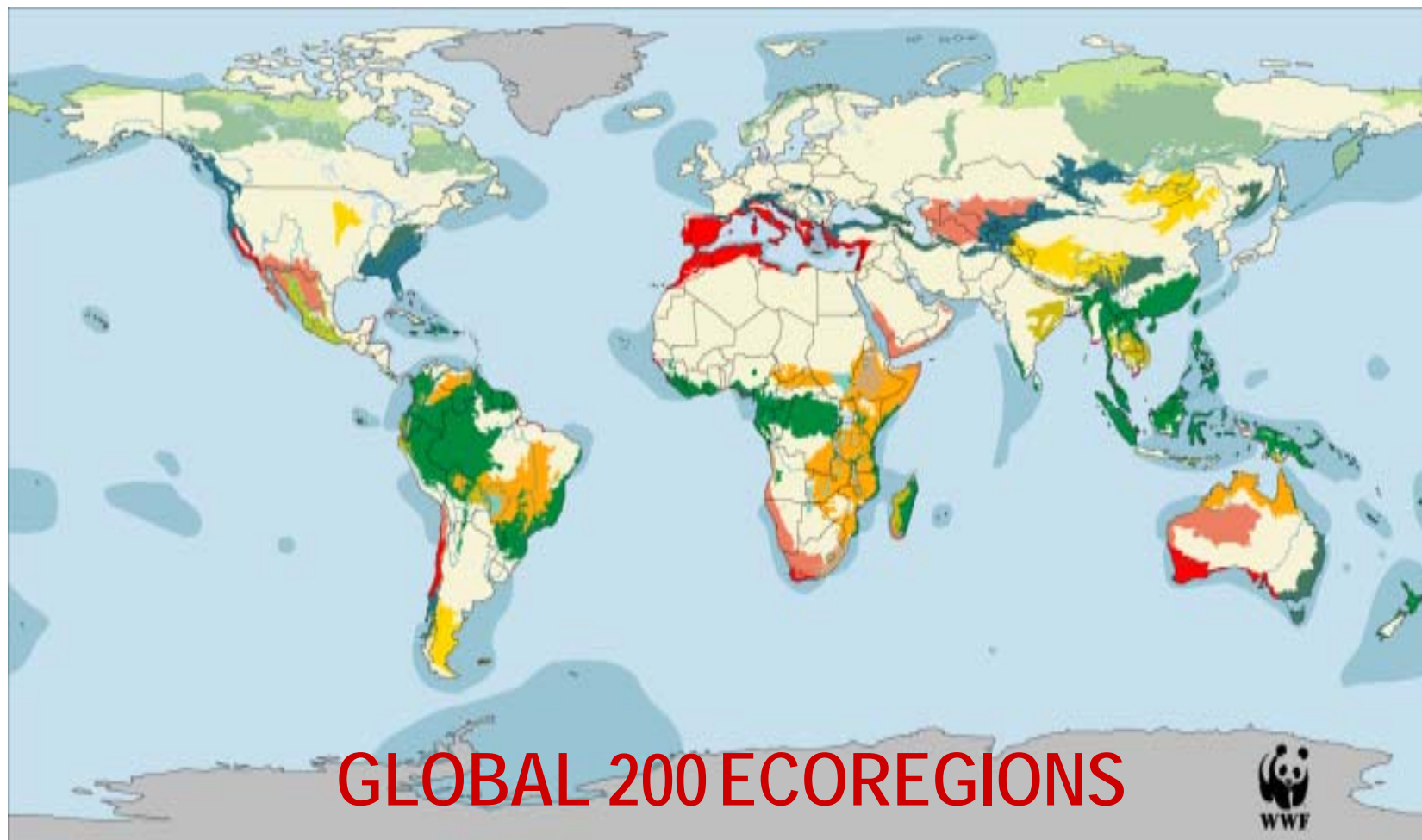
Who We Were

- Around 50 organizations: governmental, NGO, PA management, donors, universities, individuals
- Organizations from 6 signatory Carpathian Countries, Austria
- Mostly natural scientists interested in conservation
- Small, rather centralized “Secretariat” with a lot of ambition and 10-15 core organizations which took on most of the work

Why We Were

- First opportunity to share, discuss and compare (ecological) data on the Carpathians
- Born during the same time as 'ecoregion conservation' (1998)
- Had 300-400.000 Eur/year from WWF-Netherlands to make ecoregion conservation happen

Mapping Global Biodiversity (1996 - 1998)



What We Achieved

PUBLICATIONS

- Status of the Carpathians - “first approximation,” first overall view of the biological and cultural wealth of the Carpathians
- Carpathian List of Endangered Species
- Numerous other factsheets and flyers on model project areas and species

CONCEPTS

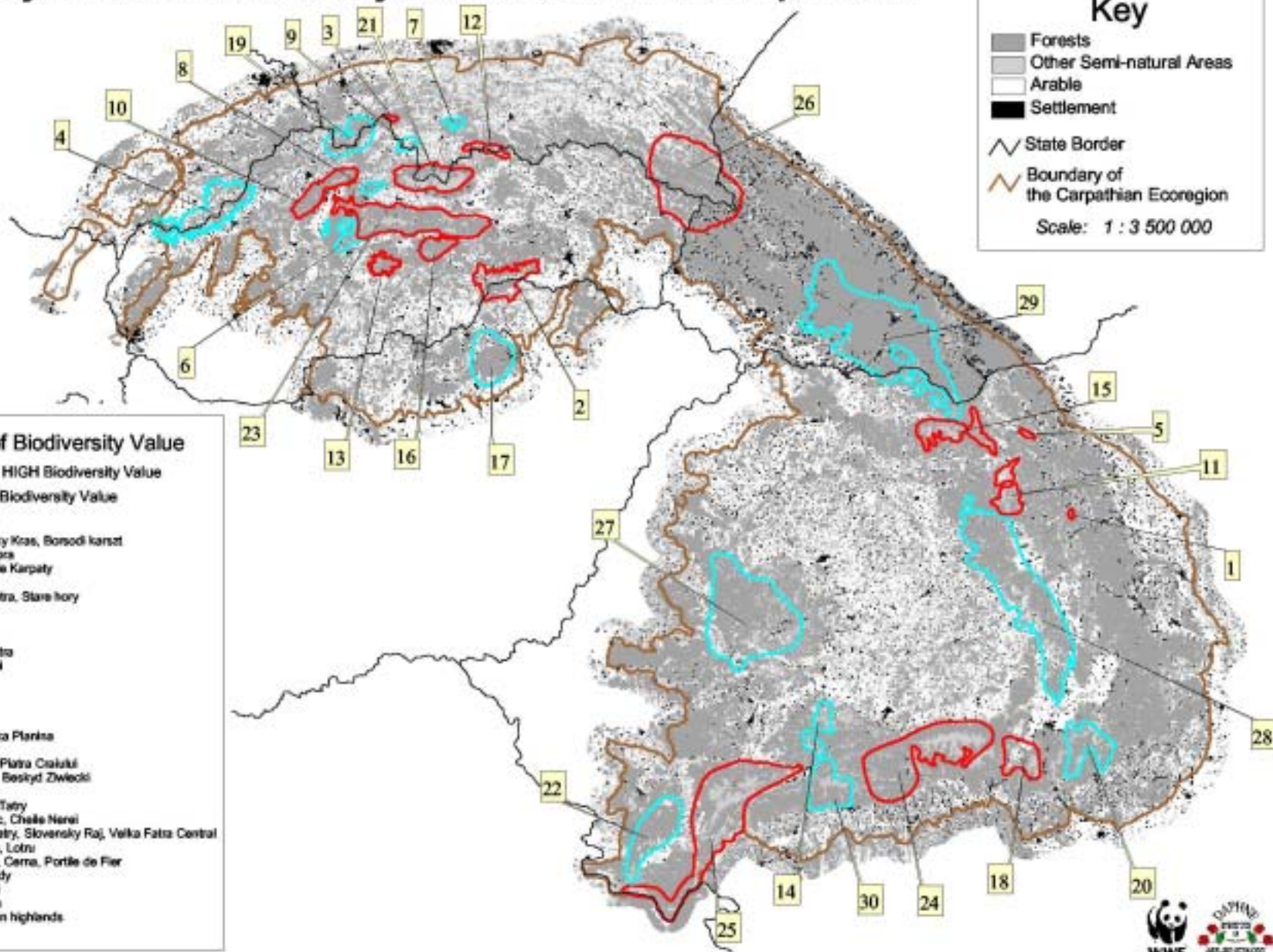
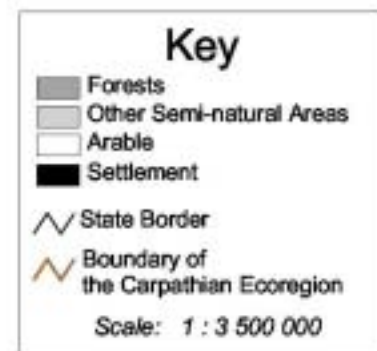
- Ultimate output: “Vision Map” Identification of 30 Priority Areas for Conservation

POLITICAL MILESTONES

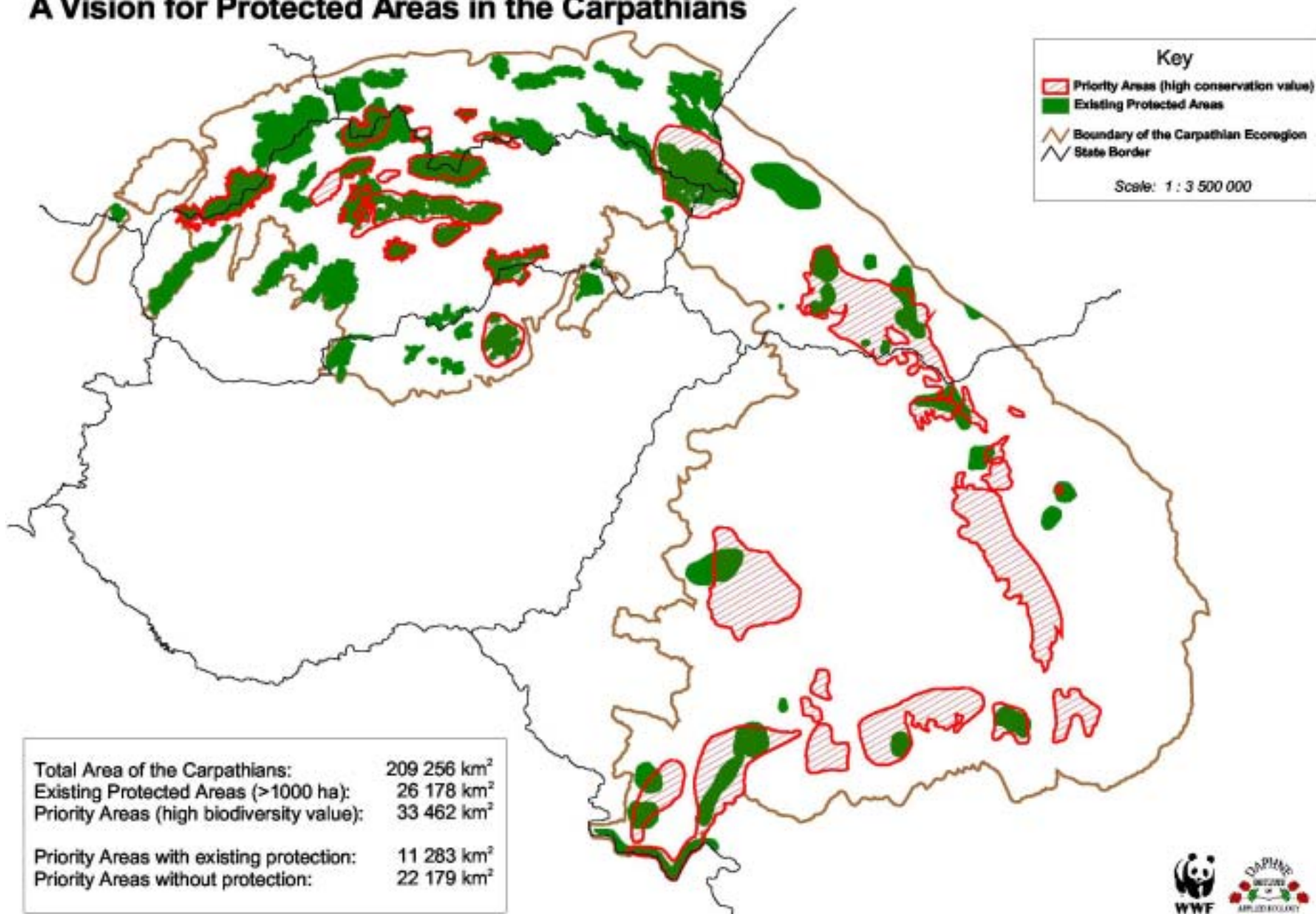
- Declaration on the Environment at Bucharest Summit (2001), signing of draft framework Carpathian Convention in Kiev (2003)



Priority Areas for Biodiversity Conservation in the Carpathians



A Vision for Protected Areas in the Carpathians



A photograph of a brown bear swimming in a river, with its head and front paws visible above the water.

How We Worked Then

Geographically: In more or less representative “model project areas” chosen to test approaches for the rest of the Carpathians

Thematically: Projects - everything (ecotourism to large carnivores)/Workgroups - biodiversity, socio-economics, GIS (and later communication and sustainable development)

Structure: Country coordinators with national and workgroup expertise) liaising with regional coordinators synthesizing the various methodologies - worked across sectors, not national issues

Epilogue

- After the successes of the Status Report, Bucharest, except for Kiev and the “Red List,” the CERI went dormant for 18 months..
- Network of 10 NGOs instead of 50
- CERI stalled at the “Assessments” phase, just short of implementing the “Vision” with an Action Plan
- Loss of interest by partners because no longer a network of just NGOs
- WWF blamed for taking too much control (+ institutional changes which almost cost the organization entirely by November 2003)
- Too little multistakeholder input?
- At which level (high, low, regional) was the CERI aiming and was it appropriate?



Achievements/Lessons Learned

- **First truly ecoregional approach**
- **Involved stakeholders right from the beginning**
- **Being aware of difficulties** e.g. differences in goals, perceptions, methodologies, working styles, cultures, languages, etc.
- **Taking the lead**
 - Strategic planning
 - Strong coordination
 - High-level commitment
 - Local involvement
- **Enormity of task regarding communication**
- **Strategy for dealing with monitoring/indicators not clearly defined, comprehensive - too ad hoc**
- **Access to data very difficult**
- **Historical information on human settlement, land-use change, could have been stronger**
- **Better integration of indigenous knowledge**
- **No “institutional arrangements”**
- **Panda overwhelming**



Who We Want to Be ?

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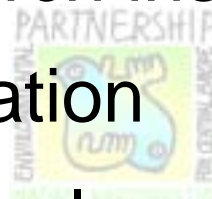
Who We Want to Be

- A network of NGOs and research institutes
- A membership-based organization
- Natural scientists...economists, lawyers and anthropologists?
- Still “Visionary, large-scale and participatory”?
- ?More ‘challenging’
- More ‘grassroots’??



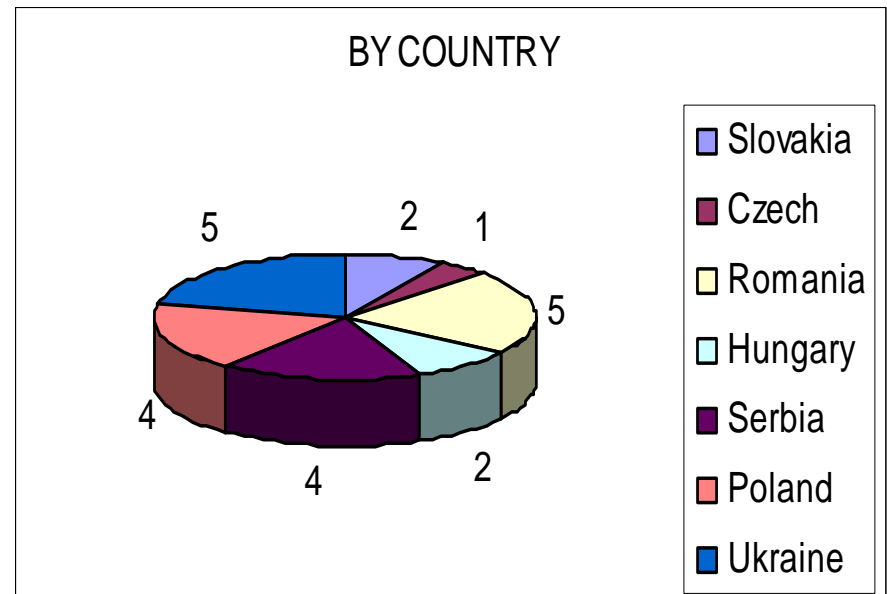
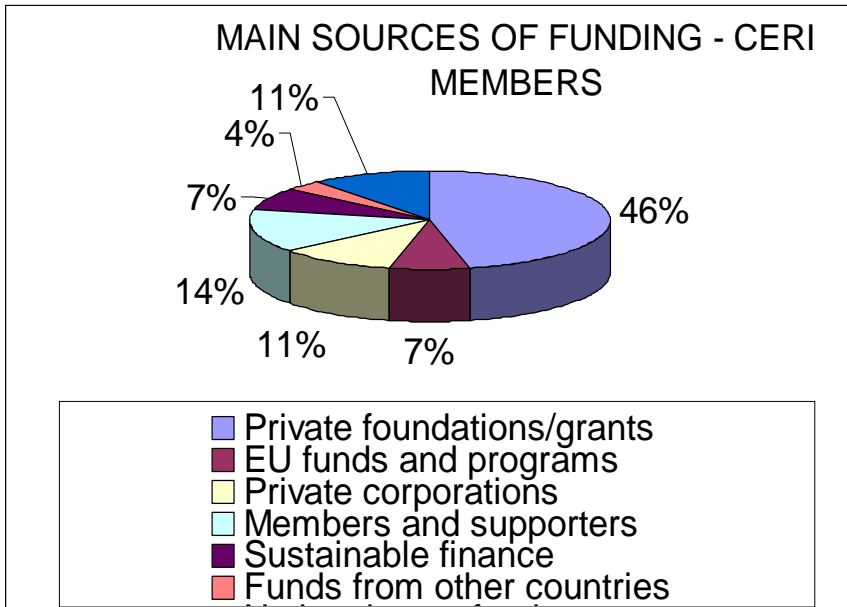
CARPATHI

CEEWEB





Who We Are



On average, 15 employees, 193 members, 40 volunteers...

What We Want to Do: “Ecoregion Action Plan”??

- Old CEI team just stopped short of drafting the Ecoregion Action Plan (“EAP”)
- CERI in the last year has laid some of the foundations for reestablishing it via GEF
- More later..but do we still want to go for it?
 - Funding for CERI core + small grants and network platforms (monitoring/indicators and sustainable finance, e.g.)
 - Framework for “latching” CERI member projects + partner projects into the EAP
 - EAP planning process perfect for CERI – like the “Status Report, Part II” – an 18-month process to allow CERI to take the lead in ecoregion planning again and forge ahead with assessment



Why We Still Want CERI

- CEI was interrupted during the most critical phase: implementation
- Belief in the original vision: ecoregion approach still the best, most efficient way
- Coordination, overview and ‘scaling up’ even more urgent now (EU Accession, developments) than 7 years ago, fate of UKR, SE interlinked
- Unprecedented political momentum (Carpathian Convention and CBD, donors moving East)



Why We Still Want CERI

- “To be part of a pan-Carpathian movement”
- “To be part of an NGO framework for cooperation”
- “Our culture as part of the European Community in the Carpathians”
- “Possibility for financing our projects”
- “We share the same vision and goals”