



COMMUNIQUES AND DOCUMENTS OF THE STATE ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL OF POLAND

6th Plenary Meeting of PROS

On November 12th, the PROS gathered at the second semi-annual plenary meeting in 2009 with the following agenda:

1. Adoption of Agenda.
2. Granting of the reward entitled *Merit for Environmental Protection and Water Economy* to members of *European Society of Economists for Environment and Natural Resources* and some members of the PROS Presidium by the Minister of Environment.
3. Adoption of Minutes from the 5th Plenary Meeting held on March 12th, 2009.
4. Comments on current environmental issues by the Minister of Environment.
5. *Solid Waste Management Program* presented by the Ministry of Environment.
6. and discussion on the *Statement on Thermal Utilization of Municipal Wastes*.
7. Review of issues contained in PROS recent standpoints.
8. Elaboration of the *Standpoint on removal of insulations and cover materials containing asbestos*.
9. Reports on the carrying out of the 2009 Work Plan by heads of Working Groups.
10. Proposals to 2010 Work Plan by heads of WGs.
11. Information concerning the 17th EEAC APS, Dubrovnik, 22 – 24 October, 2009.
12. Information concerning the Presidium activities since the last Plenary Meeting.
13. Information on PROS budget status.
14. Current situation of the Journal *Problems of Sustainable Development* and preparation for edition of issue No 1 of 2010.
15. Information on R & D projects in the area of the PROS competences.
16. The PROS Members Internet Communication and Creation of the website.
17. Matters arising.

Abbreviated extraction from Minutes of the most important items is as follows:

(2) The reward was granted to following members of the Society: Professors: Leszek Preissner (former Chairman), Elzbieta Broniewicz and Andrzej Graczyk as well as to PROS members Professors: Piotr Paschalis-Jakubowicz and Maciej Sawicki (Deputy Chairmen), Tadeusz Borys, Irena Duer, Edward Garscia, Ryszard Janikowski, Lucjan Pawlowski, Bazyli Poskrobko and Jan Zelazo.

(4) Professor Maciej Nowicki said that there have now been two ways of his membership in the new government and found this to be a good opportunity to sum-up his activities as the minister. He mentioned such crucial issues, as:

- Solving numerous conflicts between highway constructions and NATURA2000 regulations by novel legislation as well as the establishment of the Chief Inspectorate of Environmental Protection. The most controversial case of *Rozpuda Valley* has been solved as well.
- Further implementation of the EU-Legislation in Polish legal system – 13 new acts were passed by the Parliament, while 10 other cases are under consideration. About 70 Ministry Regulations were passed.
- Proper management of the absorption of the EU funds meant for environmental investments. Difficult problems dealing with Warsaw Central Sewage Treatment Plant *Czajka* as well as the sewage collector across Vistula River have been successfully solved. The number of applications for financing have been largely exceeding the allocated EU resources. Therefore, the plan to spend over a 1 billion Polish zloty for those tasks is not undermined.
- Poland has been also perfectly absorbing environmental subsidies offered by the *Norwegian Project*.
- General as well as regional strategies have been elaborated providing long-term vision of the Ministry activities.
- The Ministry has also been supporting the Government in its international activities, such as the organization of COP14 held in Poznan on December 1 – 12, 2008 as well as prepara-

tory works for COP15 in Copenhagen together with other Polish initiatives involving the *Global Warming* issue.

- One the other hand Poland has quite voluminous CO₂ emission quota, the excess of which could be sold out, following the *Kyoto Mechanism*. Poland has formed a coalition of countries having some CO₂ emission excess to facilitate these transactions, similar to these signed between Poland and Spain and prepared to be signed with some other EU-Partners.

(5) *Solid Waste Management Program* was presented by Ms. Malgorzata Szymborska, the Director of the Waste Management Department of the Ministry of Environment. She reported on the current situation in the solid waste management concentrating chiefly on municipal waste. Out of almost 125 000 Mg of all waste collected in 2008 the municipal fraction creates about 10 000 Mg (ca. 8%), but selectively collected were less than 7% which appears to be a small progress comparing with year 2007 (5%). Almost 87% of all volume of municipal wastes were still stored while biologically only less than 3% and thermally 0.7% were neutralized. A positive factor is that there plans of actions were established – on the country, regional and local levels. It implies the introduction of new technologies aimed at prevention of waste generation and reduction of garbage disposal, recycling of secondary useful materials and recovery of energy in thermal and biochemical processes, as well as the promotion environmental education. To meet EU requirements some ambitious figures have been presented: limiting of biodegradable fraction storage to 75% in 2010, 50% in 2013 and 35% in 2020 in comparison to 1995. Other important task is to establish such municipal waste treatment companies which would serve minimum 150 000 to 300 000 persons. The equipment investments required to complete those ambitious tasks have been listed underlining the lack of thermal methods which has been specially noticed.

The presentation was commented upon by Minister Nowicki who underlined the Ministry's determination to modify the appropriate law acts to pass all responsibility on municipal wastes to hands of local self-governments. This tendency was strongly supported by the PROs Standpoint issued during the 5th Plenary Meeting last March. During the discussion numerous voices supported such tendency for the amending of appropriate acts to meet EU Waste Directive recommendations and obligations accepted by Poland. Incineration of garbage has been seen as one of the dominating technologies to fulfill these requirements, so issuing any new standpoints on this matter was found not necessary.

(6) In view of information and discussion in item (5) it was stated that the PROs *Standpoint as regards the management of the solid waste in Poland* was properly absorbed by the Ministry of Environ-

ment. With regard to the *Standpoint on Education On Environmental Education in the Public Media* it was decided to return to this issue as soon as the Parliament will return to discuss the new act on public media.

(7) The PROs Presidium held on September 17th, elaborated a draft *Standpoint on Removal of Insulations and Cover Materials Containing Asbestos* (proposal attached). The document was approved in principle and the Presidium was authorized to introduce some changes suggested by the discussion.

(8) Heads of WGs presented information the current status of 2009 PROs Work Plan. The info had been accepted and it was decided to postpone the adoption until a formal complete report will be composed by the Presidium and presented to the next Plenary Meeting to be held in March 2010.

(9) Some very preliminary suggestions concerning the 2010 PROs Work Plan were proposed, therefore, it was decided to follow the same procedure that had been applied for reporting on the carrying out of the Work Plan and to compose the 2010 Work Plan by the Presidium at its February 2010 sitting to be sent to all members prior to the 7th Plenary Meeting which should approve it.

(10) The PROs representative did not attend the EEAC Annual Summit in Dubrovnik, so the report on that event was based on a few documents already distributed by the EEAC Secretariat after the *APS – EEAC Supporting a major Rio-plus-20 event in 2012... and Press Release*.

Prior to that the PROs page on the EEAC home pages was shown as well as the document *Towards Sustainable European Infrastructure* endorsed by the PROs Presidium. Based on the correspondence with the EEAC Secretary General dr. Ingeborg Niestroy the Chair of the PROs informed that the Polish offer to host the APS and Conference in 2011 is still valid and will be considered by the Steering Committee in spring 2010.

The discussion on the set of EEAC documents and the last information included a suggestion that the 2011 Conference in Wroclaw Poland could be the EEAC preparatory stage to Rio + 20 Summit.

(11) The PROs Presidium met twice – on September 17th to prepare the agenda of the 6th Plenary Meeting and on November 12th, prior to the Plenary meeting. Members of the Presidium – heads of WGs, organized numerous scientific events (presented during reporting on Work Plan) and attended other events representing the Council. Chairman was present at several meetings including anniversaries of institutions and persons addressing them on behalf of the PROs.

(12) PROs 2009-budget planned for 50 000 Polish zloty was cut by 34 000 Polish zloty meant for the PSD Journal and 1/3 of traveling costs. So, the total budget was reduced to 1/5 of the planned.

(13) The described financial situation put in danger the financing of the PSD so some measures were

suggested to the Minister, who in principle supports the issuing of the journal. Professor Lucjan Pawlowski the Co-Editor in Chief has called for contribution to both the scientific part of the journal as well as its information – PROs supervised – part.

(14) This info has not been prepared and will be sent to PROs members via internet and published on PROs home page.

(15) As the standard procedure some instructions were delivered to improve e-communication of PROs members.

Tomasz Winnicki

The Standpoint of the State Environmental Council on Removal of Insulations and Cover Materials Containing Asbestos

Research completed already in the late 60's of the last century showed that asbestos fibers which find their way into the human body via the breathing passage could cause cancer. This was reflected in an inventory of health hazards presented at historical UN-Environmental Summit held in Stockholm in 1972.

Therefore, it is obvious that among numerous EU-Directives dealing with environmental standards, are also these controlling the use of materials consisting asbestos fibers, requiring their removal in such cases when they are causing a certain environmental hazard as well as demanding a safe disposal of the product.

The general knowledge about dangers caused by asbestos came to Poland with other World and European environmental standards. But, it is not clear why this material has been named *a toxin*, since it is known from elementary chemistry that asbestos is a mineral fiber completely insoluble and non-toxic.

The existing practice of removal of building shields made of asbestos – covered with multiple layers of paint and therefore perfectly protected against emitting micro-fibers to the air and the surrounding ground, appears to be a dangerous nonsense. Such removal creates a hazardous secondary distribution of fibers to human body.

This senseless and dangerous activity is now repeated by removing roof tiles, engaging to that procedure even professional firemen. Throwing the roof tiles, which are usually in a good condition, from height causes their crashing into dangerous dusty particles.

Legislation fixed quite a distant deadline for removal of asbestos-containing materials – year 2032. Taking into account the fact that asbestos

trapped in materials covered by paints or air-sediments is not creating any danger, all works dealing with its removal should be completed wisely and professionally. They should be connected with house modernization, re-construction of roofs or thermal renovation of buildings and performed by highly specialized companies. A prompt removal should be applied only to those asbestos containing materials which, due to various reasons, have been decomposed and create a real hazard to the ambient environment.

The Council is postulating to bring up this important issue for discussion at a forum consisting of representatives from the involved ministries and to elaborate a novel legislation which would include both: the EU-Recommendations as well as the domestic regulations. This should exclude multi-billion expenses which have already been planned for that task, but in principle would stop potential hazards to human health caused by not properly recognized nature of danger and resulting wrong procedures.

Warsaw, November the 12th, 2009

State Council on Nature Conservation in Poland, tenure 2009 - 2014

Following an Article 96 of the *Act on Nature Conservation* of 16th April 2004 (Official Journal of Law – *Dz.U.* No 92, item 880) the Minister of Environment appointed the following members of the State Council on Nature Conservation:

1. prof. dr hab. Andrzej Bereszyński, Chairperson
2. prof. dr hab. Wiesław Dembek, Deputy-Chair
3. dr Andrzej Kepel, Deputy-Chair
4. dr hab. Wanda Olech-Piasecka, prof. SGGW, Deputy-Chair
5. dr Maria Baranowska-Janota
6. mgr inż. Jolanta Błasiak
7. prof. dr hab. Tomasz Borecki
8. Mr. Jacek Bożek
9. prof. dr hab. Tadeusz Chmielewski
10. dr Przemysław Chylarecki
11. mgr Jacek Engel
12. prof. dr hab. Joanna Gliwicz
13. prof. dr hab. Zbigniew Głowaciński
14. prof. dr hab. Maciej Gromadzki
15. prof. dr hab. Andrzej Grzywacz
16. dr hab. Jacek Herbich, prof. UG
17. prof. dr hab. Czesław Hołdyński
18. prof. dr hab. Zygmunt Jasiński
19. dr inż. Ryszard Kapuściński
20. mgr inż. Zdzisław Kotuła
21. prof. dr hab. Maria Ławrynowicz
22. prof. dr hab. Zbigniew Myczkowski
23. prof. dr hab. Romuald Olaczek
24. dr Sabina Pierużek-Nowak

- 25. dr hab. Joanna Pijanowska, prof. UW
- 26. mgr inż. Jolanta Prażuch
- 27. dr hab. Bartosz Rakoczy, prof. UG
- 28. dr Jan Maciej Rembiszewski
- 29. mgr Anna Ronikier-Dolańska
- 30. mgr Teodor Rudnik
- 31. dr Lucjan Rutkowski
- 32. dr Paweł Skawiński
- 33. prof. dr hab. Stefan Skiba
- 34. dr hab. Krzysztof Skóra
- 35. dr Wojciech Solarz
- 36. prof. dr hab. Ludwik Tomiałojć
- 37. mgr Ryszard Topola
- 38. dr Hanna Werblan-Jakubiec
- 39. prof. dr hab. Lesław Wołejko
- 40. prof. dr hab. Bronisław Wołoszyn

According to the *Act on Nature Conservation* the main goals of the Council are:

- to assess the proper use of adequate law,
- to give opinions on strategies, plans and programs dealing with nature conservation,
- to assess the proper carrying out of the National Strategy for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity,
- to give opinions on drafts of legal acts relating to nature conservation,
- to present recommendations and opinions issues related to nature conservation,
- to popularize nature conservation.

EEAC supporting a major Rio-plus-20 event in 2012 on a sustainable global society and economy Recommendations taken by the EEAC 2009 Annual Ple- nary Session, Dubrovnik, 24th October 2009

2012 marks the 20th anniversary of the UN Rio Conference on Environment and Development. What became known as the “Earth Summit” produced a number of very important international agreements on climate change, biodiversity and desertification, as well as the overarching Agenda 21. Its success was largely due to an intensive and well managed preparatory process. Furthermore, 2012 also marks the 40th anniversary of the UN Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment and, thus, adds to the sense of continuity and creativity that accounts for the idea of sustainability.

Yet the promise of the various Rio outcomes has not materialised in a way that safeguards the life support processes and ecosystem functions of the planet, which ultimately control the habitability of the Earth for all future humanity. Nor has there been any overall lessening of social disparity, even though incomes and other conventional measures of economic growth have increased for some countries and citizens during this period.

This somewhat unsatisfactory situation tells us that the basic objectives of sustainable development have not been met, despite the follow up conference on the World Strategy on Sustainable Development, with its Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, held in Johannesburg in 2002.

In the light of the current difficulty facing all nations in trying to pursue conventional measures and objectives of economic growth, and the growing realisation that such pathways are further undermining both the life support of the planet as well as the social wellbeing of its citizens, it is appropriate to take stock and to consider better how to redirect the pathways of social, environmental, and economic betterment in ways of governing and managing that does justice to the original Rio vision.

The Brazilian government has proposed that some initiative to promote a Rio plus 20 momentum should take place in Rio de Janeiro in 2012. Broad support is building up. The UN General Assembly is soon to consider the suggestion. Whatever the scale of the event will be, it should comply with the ecological and social standards of a “green meeting”. What becomes a feature of big world sport events today applies for this event without any doubt. The actual character of this conference will depend on the preparation process. Regardless of the outcome, the dramatically changed world of 20 years later on, requires us to reassess the significance, role and delivery of sustainable development throughout the world. Such a discussion must include the integration of social, economic and environmental betterment as well as the means for achieving such a vision.

This opportunity is all the more timely as there is currently a valuable discussion within the EU of the appropriate role and context of the main policy strategies of the Union. These include the EU Sustainable Development Strategy, the Lisbon Strategy, the Budget procedures together with its various regional funds, the Social Chapter, competition and state aid, climate change and energy security, the European research area, as well as the scope for a sustainable spatial planning and rural land use future for the EU.

In the light of this felicitous opportunity, the EEAC, at its annual conference held in Dubrovnik on 22 -24th October 2009, recommended:

1. That the Swedish Presidency, and subsequent Presidencies, are encouraged to address the Rio

plus 20 agenda as part of the international dimension of the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy.

2. That the EU supports the Brazilian proposal to hold a conference and stock take of the Rio experience and new ways of developing sustainable development beyond 2012.
3. That the EU initiates and carries out a serious and ambitious preparation process for this conference and provides the necessary funding for it. The arrangement should make good use of the existing UN CSD processes by strengthening and consolidating the CSD work flow. Following the successful model of various international preparation processes, a secretariat with appropriate working and convening power for the preparation for the Rio+20 event should be considered.
4. That a UN-mandated Peer Commission (similar to the "Brundtland II Commission", but not a replicate) should be established. Notwithstanding the full range of diplomatic processes along the usual UN channels, such a Commission would need a fast-track-approach to bring in the eminent views of Peers as how to rearrange the current institutional architecture to make sustainable development more effective in the light of the current and foreseeable economic conditions.
5. That independent assessment bodies are established for the necessary review of national and sub-national implementation of Agenda 21. Member states might consider mandating and empowering existing national and sub-national Sustainable Development and Environment Councils (as appropriate) for this task.
6. That all relevant discussion and debate take place in the context of prosperity with redirected patterns of growth, where social wellbeing and social fairness are given due consideration in the reassessment of the economy and environment, and that appropriate attention is given to innovative forms of governance and to local experimental and community led schemes, all set within a strong and focussed sustainable development framework, so that every opportunity is available to test out the suitable redirection of economy, society, and ecosystem resilience.
7. That the primary focus of the Rio+20 conference should be directed to seeking new pathways for attaining a sustainable global society and economy.

EEAC is committed to continuing its work with the EU governmental organisations and civil society organisations, such as in particular the EESC, in taking a lead in the design and outcomes of this preparatory assessment, bearing in mind the range of relevant activity already taking place.

EEAC APS, Dubrovnik Oct 24, 2009

International Coalition to Protect the Polish Countryside (ICPPC)

ICPPC was established in November 2000 with the support of 41 organizations from 18 countries. In 2002 it was registered as foundation. The mission of the organization is to protect and promote Poland's traditional peasant farms, through raising awareness, on a national and international level, of the role they play in maintaining local economies and the overall health and diversity of the Polish countryside. ICPPC recognises that the importance of these farms and the social, cultural, economic and environmental values that they embody, are greatly undervalued. We believe that, with the right support and encouragement, they could – and should – form the foundation for the future of the Polish rural economy.

The lessons of industrial agriculture are increasingly exposing the highly destructive nature of large scale, monocultural, chemical and GM dependent farming systems, throughout the world. Therefore it is of critical importance that existing, genuinely sustainable, environmentally friendly systems are recognised and promoted as the best models for the future.

ICPPC is committed to this task and to demonstrating that by combining traditional farming knowledge with modern organic agriculture and ecological technologies, it is possible to maximise the positive socio-economic benefits to the countryside and its rural communities (<http://www.ocppc.pl>).

Projects which have been running by the ICPPC:

International Campaign to Protect the Polish Countryside. Huge efforts have been made to create a national and international campaign to protect the Polish countryside. Real gains have been made. 470 Polish and international organizations representing over 30 million people have been supporting ICPPC and have signed its *CHARTER 21 – Manifesto for the 21st Century Polish Countryside* (<http://www.icppc.pl>) During the early years, ICPPC organized and participated in over 100 meetings with Polish farmers and politicians, with representatives of EU and European Parliament. We have continued this approach, lobbying both nationally and internationally, holding conferences and seminars, publishing articles and pamphlets and speaking on both radio and television. We have been urging cooperation and closer working connections for the well-being of the Polish countryside.

The Malopolska Group of Eco-producers "Urodzaj" initiated by ICPPC in 2001 associated a dozen or so traditional and organic farms from

Stryżów area. Simultaneously a group of consumers were formed in Krakow securing constant demand for products. Apart from producing organic food, farmers from the group have opened their homes to ecotourism, offering accommodation on the farm, a warm, family atmosphere and tasty, healthy meals. On some farms educational classes for children, youths and teachers are acquainting them with traditional methods of making butter, cheese or baking bread.

The Educational Centre "Ecocentre ICPPC" in Stryżów near Krakow is the first place in Poland where one can see ecological technology solutions working in practise, like renewable energy systems, ecological buildings and water treatment systems. It is not a static exhibition. In the ECOCENTRE ICPPC – all appliances are working to produce electricity, heating water and rooms or treating wastage. Practical working models make it easier to understand the principles of how they work. We believe that the best way to convince people to use these ecological technologies is by showing that they operate in local circumstances. In the ECOCENTRE ICPPC there is clay and straw conference building powered exclusively with solar energy. There are also organic herb and vegetable fields. Since September 2003 ICPPC ECOCENTRE ICPPC has offered one-day and residential courses and workshops, lectures and conferences. Accommodation and meals for participants of these meetings are provided by local eco-tourist farms cooperating with ICPPC. Activities of the centre contribute to the dissemination of ecological ways of living and show in practice how to protect the cultural and biological heritage of Polish countryside.

Vanishing Occupations – A series of residential 3-days workshops for youth have been another feature of The ICPPC Eco Centre. Here traditional skills are demonstrated: "Basket Making", "Traditional wooden toys", "Pottery," "Weaving", "Clay and straw constructions", "Traditional gardening and food processing", "Embroidery". The main aims of these trainings are to conserve traditional disappearing skills, to give the young generation new opportunities for find occupations and sources of additional incomes and also to show an alternative for free time activities. Participant are also accommodated in local farms to see how organic farming works.

Campaign "Stop GMO in Poland – GMO free zones" . Since 2004 when Poland join to EU this campaign has been our main campaign and has been taking 80% of our time. During years 2004-2006 all Polish regions were helped to make self declarations of "GMO Free Zone" status, which means that the whole Poland achieved the distinction of being GMO-Free. However such a declaration it is not accepted as a legal tool by the European Commission or the Polish Government. In

2006 the government introduced a new act banning the import and trading of GMO in Poland.

We have been cooperating with many local, national and international organizations like: FoE-England/ Europe, GP-Poland, BUND, SOS, Public Eye on Science, GMFreeze, GM Free Cymru, FWWATCH, Stowarzyszenie EKOLAND, ECE-AT-Poland, Bioavena, Federacja Zielonych „Gaja”, Fundacja Kultury Ekologicznej, Fundacja PRO SCIENTIAE, Instytut Ochrony Zwierząt, Instytut Spraw Obywatelskich, Klub Wegetarian, Krajowy Związek Zawodowy Rolników Ekologicznych św. Franciszka „serceEKOziemi”, Magazyn „Obywatel”, Pracownia na Rzecz Wszystkich Istot, Stowarzyszenie Ekologiczno-Kulturalne „EKO-KULT”, Stowarzyszenie Ziarno, Związek Zawodowy Solidarni.

In December 2007 we initiated the Coalition "GMO free Poland" which now has 250 members (organizations, scientists, companies and private person). The Coalition is very active on a national level. In 2008 ICPPC organized a series symbolic protests **"ALERT! Genetic modified mutants attacking our food and fields"**. To get the attention of the media and general public, we organized theatrical happenings in Krakow, Warsaw, Bielsko and Poznan. Using puppets named "GMO mutants" we succeeded in showing the horror and reality of GMOs. And in this same time we were promoting/distributing local, traditional seeds.

The Renaissance of Working Horses was started in December 2006 and since then we have involved more than 150 farmers in the project, who work with horses and with the Polish Association of Users and Friends of Working Horses. We organised a big photo exhibition of this project in the Małopolska Voivodship Office main building. The exhibition promoted the use of horses on farms, especially in the mountainous regions of Malopolska. Then we printed a booklet *Renaissance of Working Horses, Benefits of Using Horse Power on Small, Family Farms*. This was distributed among interested farmers and it included material representing the voices of scientist and farmers concerned with using working horses.

Traditional seeds our national treasure and heritage. Traditional and ecological agriculture instead of GMO – The initial research project. We have been doing an initial research (till October 2008) to learn what seeds are being saved and replanted on Malopolska farms and what potential there is to establish "living seed banks" amongst farmers who follow this practice. In this same time we have also been warning farmers of the problems associated with purchasing seeds from large commercial firms, where GMO and poor quality hybrid seeds are impossible to detect in advance. We have interviewed 50 farmers, staged "seed happenings", distributed leaflets and done many media interviews in the course of this programme.

Get to know the natural and cultural biodiversity of the Polish countryside. This is a ten day programme for youth with workshops and lectures, for example: milking, feeding the animals, butter and cheese making, collecting grain and hay, making haystacks and sheaves, cutting grass by hand (using scythe), collecting potatoes, clay and straw building class, baskets making, organic farming and using horses on the farm. In August 2008 we had a group of 15 students and professors from USA on this course. They said afterwards: *We all enjoyed the experience. Several of the students said several times how much the experience changed their lives and views about the world. You are having a very positive and strong impact!*

Jadwiga Lopata, who initiated ICPPC and became co-director of the ICPPC and director of ECOCENTRE ICPPC, <http://www.eko-cel.pl>.

*Sir Julian Rose, the ICPPC president, he is a farmer, forester, writer and social entrepreneur. The author of a book *Changing Course for Life, Local Solutions to Global Problems* (2009): <http://www.changingcourseforlife.info>*

The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians

Carpathian Mountains chain covers about 160 000 km² of Central Europe – 1500 km long from Morava Gate to the Iron Gate. This area presents a unique nature and cultural values, being the home of about 18 mln inhabitants. The *Framework Convention* appears to be a basic instrument of inter-governmental collaboration of seven Carpathian countries: Poland, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Hungary, Ukraine, Romania and Serbia. This act is the second (after Alp's) convention, all over the World, dealing with protection and development of a certain mountain region. Signed in Kiev on May the 22nd, 2003 was ratified by Poland in 2006.

The main goal of that treaty is to implement a policy and rules of cooperation for the sake of sustainable development of Carpathian Mountains to improve the quality of life, reinforce the local economy as well as to support the local society, the same time protecting both: nature values and a cultural heritage of the area.

Word *Framework* means that convention describes general political goals not creating detailed obligations, inviting partners to cooperate in implementing agreed rules. There are various forms of such collaboration – mutual bi- and multi-lateral programs – international aid or domestic resources.

Convention is open to accept successive introduction of subject protocols developing already established rules concerning specific areas of interest, which include:

- integrated approach to management to the land resources management,
- conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity,
- spatial planning,
- sustainable and integrated water/river basin management,
- sustainable agriculture and forestry,
- sustainable transport and infrastructure,
- sustainable tourism,
- industry and energy,
- cultural heritage and traditional knowledge,
- environmental assessment/information, monitoring and early warning,
- awareness raising, education and public participation.

The most important body of the *Convention* is the Conference of the Parties. The first meeting of that body (COP1) was held in December 2006 in Kiev. 19 decisions were made, dealing with such issues as:

- adoption of the Rules of Procedure and the Financial Rules,
- establishment of the *Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee*,
- adoption of the work programme based on Carpathian Project financed by EU INTER-REG IIIB CADSES,
- Memorandum of Understanding for the cooperation between the Alpine Convention and Ramsar Convention,
- Establishment of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas and its Steering Committee.

Sites of the Network became areas exceeding 100 ha and having its own management authority. Among Polish protected areas included to the Network have been 6 national parks and 13 landscape parks.

The second meeting (COP2) was held in June 2008 in Bucurest and dealt with such issues, as:

- Protocol on protection and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity,
- Continuation of the preparatory work towards development of a protocols on sustainable forestry and tourism,
- The need for the establishment of the Carpathian Space Programme within the European Territorial Cooperation for the 2014-2020 budget period,
- the Memorandum of Cooperation with *Convention on Biological Diversity*,
- Terms of reference of the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee.

The third meeting (COP3) has been planned for 2011 to be held in Slovak Republic.

The Protocol on the Protection and Sustainable Use of Biological and Landscape Diversity (being at present in ratification procedure by Carpathian countries) added details to Article 4 of the *Convention* on the following issues:

- Policies aiming at conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians.
- Integration of the objectives of conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity of the Carpathians into sectoral policies.
- Participation of regional and local authorities, and other stakeholders.
- International cooperation.
- Conservation, maintenance, restoration and sustainable use of natural and semi-natural habitats.
- Continuity and connectivity of natural and semi-natural habitats, ecological network in the Carpathians.
- Restoration of degraded habitats.
- Conservation and sustainable use of species of flora and fauna of the Carpathians.
- Conservation of endangered species including endemic species, and large carnivores of the Carpathian Prevention of the introduction of invasive alien species and/or genetically modified organisms threatening ecosystems, habitats or species, their control or eradication.
- Carpathian Network of Protected Areas.
- Enhancing conservation and sustainable management in the areas outside of protected areas
- Consultation, harmonisation and coordination of measures undertaken in border areas.
- Development and implementation of management plans.
- Compatible monitoring and information systems.
- Coordinated scientific research and exchange of information.

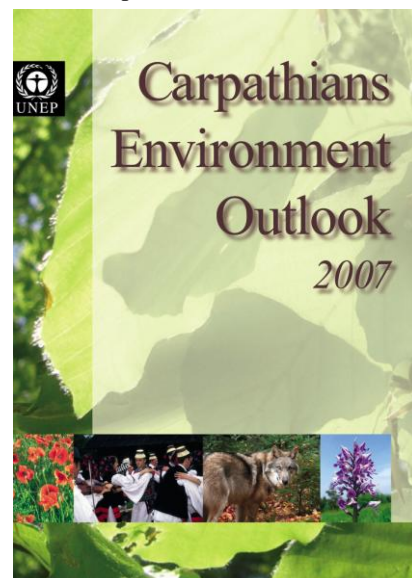
National Contact Point for the *Carpathian Convention* is hosted by the Department of Nature Protection of the Ministry of Environment. The Minister of Environment is responsible for implementing of the Convention in Poland and to facilitate and complete this process. He established the Steering Committee consisting of representatives of those ministries who are responsible for specific areas covered by the *Convention*, representatives of country districts (Voyevodships) and Spokesmen (Marshals) of those three districts which territories belong partly to Carpathian Mountains – Silesia, Malopolska and Podkarpackie – as well as faculties of scientific institutions and leaders of NGOs.

The document was signed by all interested countries in 2003

Carpathians Environment Outlook 2007 (KEO) Report

The importance of mountains is increasingly recognised, as shown by the inclusion of a specific chapter in *Agenda 21* and the declaration by the United Nations General Assembly of the year 2002 as the International Year of Mountains. Europe has many mountain ranges, occurring in almost all parts of the continent; most European countries have at least some mountains. These mountains are very diverse at every scale, in terms of geography, ecology, economy and social conditions. European mountain landscapes are cultural landscapes reflecting long-term interactions of human activities with biogeophysical systems.

Figure 1. The cover of Carpathians Environment Outlook 2007 Report



Europe's mountains are of vital importance to the continent's population in four main ways: 1) as water sources supplying much of the continent's water for different uses (drinking water, hydro-energy, irrigation etc.); 2) as centres of biological and cultural diversity; 3) for providing opportunities for recreation and tourism; and 4) because of their sensitivity to environmental change. Mountain geo- and ecosystems are highly sensitive to environmental change, and extreme events likely to derive from climate change may have major consequences in both mountain areas and downstream.

The Carpathians are one of the most important and unique ecosystems of the world. The region is also very rich in cultural values including language and ethnic diversity. *The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians* (the Carpathian Convention) was signed by all interested countries in 2003. The Convention refers to the region (not yet finally

defined) known as *a unique natural treasure of great beauty and ecological value, an important reservoir of biodiversity, the headwaters of major rivers, an essential habitat and refuge for many endangered species of plants and animals and Europe's largest area of virgin forests.*

The preparation of an environment outlook report covering the Carpathian region derived from a governmental demand. It was conceded that such a report would considerably enhance future implementation of the Carpathian Convention. Ultimately, the report would inform both the Interim Convention Secretariat (Vienna, Austria) and its signatory countries on the state and trends of the environment within the Carpathian region, and contribute to science-based decision-making and good governance.

The resulting *Carpathians Environment Outlook (KEO)*¹ was intended to become a sub-regional report covering the seven Carpathian countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic, Serbia, and Ukraine). KEO thus includes countries differing greatly in political, economic, social and environmental conditions, of which four countries (at that time) were EU member states, one was an EU candidate country, and two remaining countries were to join EU in more distant future.

Major objectives of KEO are to provide an integrated assessment on the status of the Carpathian environment, identifying socio-economic and environmental trends have been taking place since mid-1970s, applying the broadly accepted DPSIR²-model to make a comprehensive retrospective analysis of the three pillars of sustainable development and their interfaces. The outlook formulates different development scenarios (“business as usual”, “EU policy first” and “Carpathian Dream”) that take into consideration the above-mentioned differentiation among countries and regions, as well as broader Pan-European processes.

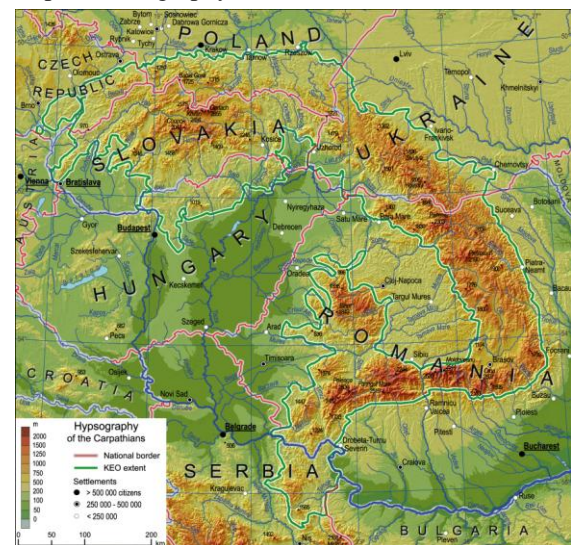
The report aims at providing comprehensive information and evaluation in a standardised manner following UNEP's Global Environment Outlook approach, while focusing on some subregional and transboundary issues such as biodiversity, forest, sustainable use of natural resources, environmental security, traditional lifestyle, poverty, ethnic minorities, Roma population, etc. Some specific issues could be discussed as case studies, if necessary.

Concerning the geographical scope of the KEO, attempt was made to make it flexible as much as possible, combining physical-geographical (landscape) and administrative delimitations, taking

into account environmental, media-dependent, thematic (issue) oriented etc. approaches, as well as data availability and comparability among regions. However, the scope of the KEO report was ultimately largely based on the delimitation developed by the European Academy (EURAC) in Bolzano as the proposed scope of application of the Carpathian Convention and based on a combination of natural, political/administrative and socio-economic criteria (the so-called Integrated Transnational Approach, or ITA). In Poland, the delimitation used for the KEO report is almost identical to the area proposed to be included in the Carpathian Convention on the Polish territory (with the only exception: the city of Przemyśl has not been included in KEO but is included in the Carpathian Convention area).

One of the most important outcomes of the report is a scientific (professional) contribution to the efficient implementation of the *Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians* and its possible future protocols.

Figure 2. The Carpathians and scope of the KEO Report (cartography: UNEP/GRID-Warsaw).



Main clients targeted by the report are decision-makers at national, regional and local level, as well as scientific community, civil society and international community including international financial institutions and business sector. In order to raise public awareness and interpretability (understandability) KEO focuses on the visualisation of the main trends and processes through maps, charts, graphs, photographs, tables presented in a well-balanced combination with the analytical text.

KEO serves not only as a background for decision-makers, as well as a first step in a continuous process. It also plays a role as an integrating document for the Carpathians region as a whole, and helps the respective countries to work more closely together. It also acts as a means of harmonizing indicators, and as a stimulus for a complete Frame-

¹ Acronym KEO refers to the initial letter (K) of the name the Carpathians in national languages (except Romanian).

² DPSIR: Driving forces – Pressure – State – Impact – Response conceptual model of the European Environment Agency.

work Convention information system supporting the Secretariat. For the purposes of decision-makers, it also helps formulate policy recommendations.

The thematic scope of the KEO report is in line with the interest of the Convention and focus on the most important national issues. KEO is not a scientific monograph or does not go into too much detail, it rather focuses on subjects included in the Convention.

In connection with the Convention the main goal of the preparation of KEO, based on main economic, social and environmental trends, was to elaborate different future development scenarios. In preparing the outlook some boundary conditions (international agreements, EU enlargement, development funds etc.) were taken into account, as well as information availability of environmental, economic and social processes and their internal and external comparability.

The outlook wishes to present environmental aspects of different policy scenarios based on a retrospective trend analysis of three decades from Stockholm to Johannesburg (1972–2002) using foreseen changes in key driving forces. This approach was feasible using modern techniques (e.g. thematic mapping) and information/database col-

lected in the framework of the international data gathering system, through a network of KEO National Focal Points in each of the 7 Carpathian countries, supported by the UNEP/GRID-Warsaw Centre in the role of KEO Lead Data Centre. KEO was prepared under the co-ordination and overall professional leadership of UNEP's Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA Europe Office) and the UNEP Regional Office for Europe (ROE). Part financing was also provided through the INTERREG IIIB CADSES *Carpathian Project* coordinated by the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention at the UNEP Vienna Office.

The KEO Report can be downloaded (as a PDF file, in whole or in individual chapters) at the following address: <http://www.gridw.pl/keo>. At the same address, a Polish language executive summary brochure is also available.

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