Exploring the Emerging Governance Principles:

Tracing the Evolution of the Alpine Convention, the Carpathian Convention and
the South East European Mountain Initiative

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Acknowledgements

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AC – Alpine Convention
AGOCA – The Alliance of Central Asian Mountain Communities
ALPARC – Alpine Network of Protected Areas
ANPA – Alpine Network of Protected Areas
ANPED – The Northern Alliance for Sustainability
ARGE ALP – Arbeitsgemeinschaft Alpenländer
ASP – Alpine Space Programme
BFSD – Balkan Foundation for Sustainable Development
BMI – Balkan Mountain Initiative
CADSES – Central European Adriatic Danubian South-Eastern European Space
CBD – Convention on Biological Diversity
CC – Carpathian Convention
CEE – Central and Eastern Europe
CEEWEB – Central and Eastern European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity
CEI – Central European Initiative
CERI – Carpathian Eco-region Initiative
CIPRA – International Commission for the Protection of the Alps
CNPA – Carpathian Network of Protected Areas
CoP – Conference of the parties
COTRAO – Western Alps Working Community
CS – Civil Society
CSD – Commission for Sustainable Development
CWI – Carpathian Wetland Initiative
DEFRA – Department for Environment Food and Rural Development
DEWA – Division of Early Warning and Assessment
DEWA/GRID – UN'S major centres for data and information management
DIAMONT – Data Infrastructure for the Alps Mountain Orientated Network Technology
DLG – Democratic local governance
EECCA – Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia
EfE – Environment for Europe
EMs – Environmental Ministries
ENVSEC – Environment and Security
EURAC – European Academy Bolzen/Bolzano
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation
FAO/SEUR – Sub-regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe
FIANET – International federation of national associations of cable car operators
GoFOR – New Modes of Governance for Sustainable Forestry in Europe Project
GRID – Gloabal Resource Information database
GRP – Governance in this research Project
IENGO – International Environmental Non-governmental Organisation
IGO – Intergovernmental Organisation
IISD – International Institute for Sustainable Development
ILO – International Labour Organisation
IMAs – International Mountain Agreement(s)
INGO – International Non-governmental organisation

INRM – Integrated Natural Resource Management

INTERREG – EU founded programme for European regions

ISCAR – International Scientific Committee for Alpine Research

ISCC – Interim Secretariat of Carpathian Convention

IUCN – The World Conservation Union

IYM – International Year of Mountain

KEO – Carpathian Environmental Outlook

MAP – Multi Annual Work Programme

MEAs – Mountain Agreement(s)

MoC – Memorandum of Cooperation

MOU – Memorandum of Understanding

NATO – North Atlantic treaty Organisation

NENA – Network Enterprise Alps

NewGov – New Modes of Governance Project

NGO – Non-governmental Organisation

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OSCE – Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

PI – Policy Integration

PN – Partnership and Networking

PP – Public Participation

PS – Private Sector

PSAC – Permanent Secretariat of Alpine Convention

PSCC – Permanent Secretariat of Carpathian Convention

PSD – Partnership for Sustainable Development

REC – Regional Environmental Centre

SARD – Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development

SARDF – Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development and Forestry

SARDM – Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountains

SD – Sustainable Development

SEE – South East Europe

SOIA – System for the Observation and Information on the Alps

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNECE – United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

UNEP – ROE – United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Europe

UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme

UNESCO – BRESCE – United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe

UNMIK – United Nations Mission in Kosovo

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

WEHAB – World Environment Health Agriculture Biodiversity

WG – Working group

WSSD – World Summit for Sustainable Development

WWF CP – WWF Carpathian Programme

WWF – DCP – WWF Danube Carpathian Programme

WWF – World Wildlife Federation / Global Environmental Conservation Organisation

Summary

This study attempts to evaluate and understand governance processes and principles in the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions. The main focus is on the principles of participation, policy integration and partnerships. In that attempt various interrelations among the conventions' emergence, strategies, processes and governance principles are determined. Based on the analysis, applicable Alpine and Carpathian practices to be considered in the current South-East European (Balkan) mountain initiative (BMI), are identified.

For this purpose four main subjects are studied: Alpine Convention (AC), Carpathian Convention (CC), South-East European (Balkan) mountain initiative (BMI) and the concept of governance. The subjects are studied by using literature review, questionnaires and interviews. For the purpose of this report, only the results from the literature review and interviews are considered, as they offer descriptive and more indicative data. In addition, it should me noted that the questionnaire return rate was relatively low.

The study findings are presented in seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the problem and relevance of the study. It presents the research question, the goals and objectives and briefly introduces the subjects of the study. Chapter 2 attempts to classify different approaches to define governance. It also introduces some other related concepts, such as the concept of environmental governance, good governance and sustainable development. Finally, it presents the understanding of governance in this study and provides the basic theoretical background of the three selected principles – participation, policy integration and partnerships. Chapter 3 briefly describes the research methods – literature review and interviews. The next two chapters present the results from the literature review, and discuss the interviews, respectively. Chapter 6 discusses the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions as potential models for the SEE (Balkan) Mountain process, identifying the main recommendations and learned lessons. Finally, the Chapter 7 summarises the study, connecting the main findings with the study's objectives. In addition some relevant observations and further research topics are given.

In addition, there are three annexes, containing important information, added. The Annexes 1 and 2 give the structure of the interviews, as well as the full interview analysis of the AC and the CC, respectively. Annex 3 is also based on the interview (question number 5 from the interview) and it reflects the similarities and differences of the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions, in terms of the strategies, approaches and governance issues.

1. INTRODUCTION

New modes of environmental governance are emerging in global, regional, and local policy processes. An increased number of multilateral policy instruments, incorporating the new values, are also emerging. The ways in which governance principles emerge in a policy process and their impacts on the policy dialogue and outcomes are complex and not well understood. This report studies two multilateral conventions for the protection and sustainable development of mountains: the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions, in terms of three specific governance principles – participation, policy integration and partnerships. It further tries to identify those best practices and learned lessons from these conventions that could be relevant for the upcoming South East European (Balkan) Mountain Initiative. For this purpose literature review and a survey (questionnaire and interviews) were conducted. The study aims to trace the development processes of these conventions (from early initiatives to implementation) in terms of selected governance principles and to understand the emergence and roles of these principles in the policy processes.

Tracing the conventions' development processes and the roles of different governance principles in these processes can significantly contribute to the theoretical bases of governance as well as the practical implications of these principles. In addition, the two mountain conventions provide great potential for informing other upcoming mountain initiatives and drawing the best practices. In general terms, by indicating the correlations between specific governance principles and policy outcomes shall contribute to a better application of these governance principles, and improve the ability of policy makers to more effectively achieve desired policy goals.

1.1 Research Question and Objectives

This report studies the evolution and development processes of the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions – their emergence, negotiation, implementation and the applied policy practices and strategies – and the emergence and application of specific governance principles in these conventions. The goal is to understand how some specific governance principles emerge in these Conventions and how they are practically applied in the Conventions' processes.

The main research question is: *How the governance principles – participation, policy integration and partnerships – have emerged in the Alpine and Carpathian conventions' processes, and how they have been further employed in these processes?*

The main three objectives of the study are to:

- trace the development processes of the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions;

- understand the emergence and practical application of the governance principles – participation, policy integration and partnerships – in the Alpine and Carpathian policy processes; and

- identify the relevant points from the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions, to be considered in the future SEE (Balkan) Mountain Initiative.

1.2 Case Studies and Study Subjects

This report studies four different subjects:

- The concept of Governance,

- Alpine Convention (AC) – as a case study,

- Carpathian Convention (CC) – as a case study,

- Balkan mountain initiative (BMI) and related Alpine and Carpathian best practices.

1. Governance is a highly flexible and complex concept as it addresses various and ever changing trends, needs and challenges. Therefore, elaborating on governance in a specific case requires a comprehensive conceptual framework of governance, as well as an identification of the main governance properties addressed in that particular case. Consequently, this report attempts to give a frame and structure of governance discussion.

2. Convention on the Protection of the Alps[1]. The Alpine Convention (AC) is an international treaty for protection of the Alps between Austria, Switzerland, Germany, France, the Principality of Liechtenstein, Italy, the Principality of Monaco, Slovenia and the European Community. It was signed in 1991 and came into force in 1995. The idea for a convention dates back forty years prior to the final agreement. The convention is widely quoted as the first international convention for the protection and sustainable development of mountains; as a successful model for other mountain regions; and a model for environmental governance.

3. Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians[2]. The Carpathian Convention (CC) is an international agreement between the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine. It was signed in 2003 and entered into force in 2006. The CC is the first International Convention for Mountains where the integrated approach and integrated management of natural resources; cultural heritage and traditional knowledge; awareness raising; education and public participation are stated in the original framework convention and in the other strategic documents of the convention.

4. SEE (Balkan) Mountain Initiative (BMI)[3] is at present an initiative for the SEE (Balkan) Convention for protection and sustainable development of mountains, between Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia, Kosovo (under UNMIK), with an appreciated involvement of Greece and Slovenia. While the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions are studied in terms of the governance principles' application and effectiveness; the purpose of involving the SEE initiative is to identify the best practices from the previous two conventions.

The idea of exploring governance issues in the AC and the CC was born at the GoFOR – New Modes of Governance Workshop held in March, 2007 in Budapest. At this meeting the interrelations between the studied subject (the AC, the CC and the BMI) and the concept of governance were emphasised.

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[1] http://www.convenzionedellealpi.org

[2] www.carpathianconvention.org

[3] www.balkanfoundation.org/eng/balkan_convention.htm

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND – CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE

The complexity of the concept of governance, its intensive and ever-increasing political, academic and public discourse, and consequent proliferation in interpretation and uses, makes the analysis on governance a challenging task.

Nevertheless, this chapter tries to put together the basic characteristics and contemporary understandings of governance, reflecting on the notions put forth in the literature. It particularly focuses on:

- Classification of the definitions of governance
- Governance and other related concepts – definitions and interrelations
- Governance in this research project, and the three selected governance principles: participation, policy integration and partnerships.

2.1 Classification of governance definitions

An etymological research on the term *'governance'* takes us back to the 14th century, to the work of Geoffrey Chaucer, who refers to it, as *"a power allotted to woman in marriage life"[4]*. Later, Shakespeare used the term relating it explicitly to the "immense weight of authority", and implicitly to the *ethical dimension of the actions of those in power[5]*. By the end of the 17th century, the term 'governance' came to mean a "method of management"[6]. Finally today, as its meaning is largely broadened, it is often stated that "governance means different things to different people" *(*Hyden and Court 2002: 7; UN 2004: 89).

The term involves significant amount of ambiguity, followed by a proliferation in definitions[7]. The many definitions of governance can result from its strong "intuitive" appeal, which imposes no need for precise definitions (Heinrich and Lynn 2000). On the other hand, the concept of governance has a central role in issues that require precise definitions if they are to be clear and operative. Such issues are public administration, international relations international development agency projects. It is here where the ambiguity of definitions causes problems, making governance a "rhetoric rather than substantive concept" (Stoker 1998).

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[4] "Governance" was a word associated with marriage by Chaucer and refers to the power allotted to women in certain areas of married life. (Peggy Knapp, "Mannes Governance' and 'Wommannes Conseil" - Chaucer and the Social Contest (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 99–113.), in Plant, S. "'Wise Handling and Faire Governance': Spenser's Female Educators." Early Modern Literary Studies 7.3 (January, 2002): 1.1-37 <URL: http://purl.oclc.org/emls/07-3/planwise.htm> (visited 25.06.2007)

[5] "Shakespeare's central perception of governance (and it) stands in the place of any more high-minded ethical object. The actions of those in power have consequences, long-term, inescapable, and impossible to control…" (Greenblatt, S. "Shakespeare and the Uses of Power". The New York review of Books" Volume 54, Number 6 · April 12, 2007. http://www.nybooks.com/articles/20073 (visited 15.06.2007)

[6] Shorter Oxford English Dictionary 1973, 1: 874.

[7] Definitions of governance abound". (Graham et al. 2003a: 2).

"It is sometimes difficult to find areas where governance does not take place*" (*Jachtenfuchs and Kohler-Koch 2003).

The socio-economic, political, and cultural differences of the concerned actors and the variety of issues and levels of governance additionally contribute to the vague and contested governance definition. Definitions of governance vary in terms of their scope, complexity, level, and in terms of the relevant field where they are applied. This implies that governance has been defined and used in many ways and in different contexts.

Despite these different approaches in defining governance, this chapter attempts to conceptualise and classify the various definitions and perspectives of governance.

The first criterion for classification of governance definitions is the *definitions' broadness.* The second classification presents definitions that define *governance in contrast to government*. Then, in order to further clarify the governance concept, few similar and/or overlapping concepts, such as *good governance, environmental governance, and sustainable development* are presented. Finally, the section concludes with "the governance as taken in this study".

2.1.1 Classification according to the definitions' broadness

A relatively stimulating approach to classify governance definitions in accordance to their *broadness or inclusiveness* is offered by Lee (2003*)*. Based on Lee (2003), for the purposes of this study, the definitions are classified in two groups:

- Broad approach in defining governance – Governance as a mechanism for resolving common *public* problems, and

- Narrow approach in defining governance – Governance as 'New Governance'.

Governance as a mechanism for resolving common public problems

Placed in this category are governance definitions that focus on broad issues such as: the wide variety of public, social, organisational, national and international *problems* and the *ways* those problems are addressed. Consequently, the definitions presented in this group essentially focus on the various "uses" of governance in a general inclusive sense.

Table 1 summarises some of the definitions that define governance as a mechanism for resolving common public problems in a broad sense.

Table 1. Definitions on governance as a mechanism for resolving common public problems.

Governance as a mechanism for resolving common public problems		
Author	Definition	
	Rhodes (1997)	Rhodes (2000)*
Rhodes (1997) and Rhodes (2000) ("Various 'uses' of governance")	Governance as a minimal state (governance as a term for "redefining the extent and form of public intervention"); Corporate governance (as a "system by which big organizations are directed and controlled"); Governance as a New Public Management (improving efficiencies of government bureaucracies by introducing private sector management methods); Good governance (mainly refers to the normative components of governance); Governance as socio-cybernetic governance (highlights the importance of networks and denies existence of mono-centric power); Governance as self-organizing networks.	Governance as a new political economy (focuses on the changed relationship among the government, civil society and the market); Governance and International interdependence.
Kooiman (1999)** ("Various 'uses' of governance")	Governance as ' Steuerung"/steering (refers to the role of governments in steering, controlling and guiding societal sectors); Governance as an international order, (governance as a central concept in international relation - 'global governance'); Governance in the economy or in the economic sectors. Governance and 'governmentality' (which builds on the legacy of Foucault).	
Campell et al. (1991) ("Mechanisms of governance")	Governance is a political and economic process that coordinates activity among economic actors. Six ideal mechanisms of governance: markets, obligational networks, hierarchy, monitoring, promotional networks, and association.	
Stoker (1998)	<u>Propositions in Governance</u>: Governance refers to a complex set of institutions and actors that are drawn from, but also beyond, government; Governance identifies the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for tackling social and economic issues; Governance identifies the power dependence involved in the relationships between institutions involved in collective action; Governance is about autonomous self-governing networks of actors; Governance recognizes the capacity to get things done which does not rest on the power of government to command or use its authority. It sees government as able to use new tools and techniques to steer and guide.	

Graham et al. (2003a)	Governance comprises the traditions, institutions and processes that determine how power is exercised, how citizens are given a voice, and how decisions are made on issues of public concern.
World Bank (1992)	Governance refers to *"ways or types of using powers"* in the process of management of national economic/social resources.
Rosenau (2004)	Governance consists of *rule systems* that perform or implement social functions or processes in a *variety of ways* at different times and places (or even at the same time) by a wide variety of organizations.
Dodson and Smith (2003: 1)	Governance can broadly be defined as: *the processes, structures and institutions* (formal and informal) through which a group, community or society makes decisions, distributes and exercises authority and power, determines strategic goals, organises corporate, group and individual behaviour, develops rules and assigns responsibility.

Based on Lee, 2003.

*Rhodes (2000) includes two new definitions in addition to the previous six given in (Rhodes 1997)

** Kooiman (1999) adds four additional definitions to Rhodes' (1997), and so overlaps in two aspects with Rhodes' (2000) categories/definitions of governance ('governance in international interdependencies' and 'governance in economic sectors').

Governance as 'New Governance'

Some authors define governance in a narrower sense. Thus the accent is more on the changing trends such as *shifting and/or extending roles* of involved actors and their interrelations, further emphasising the transformation from *"state centric governance to society-centric governance"* (Lee 2003). The concepts of partnerships and networks, the sharing of power and responsibilities and the shift from hierarchical or "top-down" to "bottom-up" approaches are emphasised.

Many authors refer to these transformations in instruments, methods, modes and systems of governance as *'new governance' or 'new modes of governance'*. Further, some authors when differentiating between 'old' and 'new' governance draw a rather clear line of distinction between the two approaches, giving much credit to 'new' governance:

> *"New governance modes seek to embrace complexity and turn the presence of multiple actors from a problem into a solution. They appreciate the participation of multiple actors in the identification and implementation of policy goals. Perhaps, policy goals can best be achieved by harnessing the creative capacity of forest policy actors to be "policy makers", rather than heavy-handed application of the old fashioned instruments of regulation and subsidy to supposedly passive "policy-takers"* (Glück et al. p. 5).

Other authors however emphasise the overlap and nesting of these two modes of governance. The recent Pan-European project *"NewGov – New modes of governance"*, which examines the transformation processes of governance, emphasises a high order nesting and significant overlap between the two governance approaches. It also takes a more *"sceptical position in terms of the viability, quality and effectiveness of 'new modes' and alerts to the problem of governability they might generate"* (see NewGov Project 2006a). Table 2 presents more narrow definitions.

Table 2. Definitions on Governance as 'New Governance.

Governance as 'New Governance'	
Lappe and Du Bois (1994)	Narrowly defined governance means a redefinition of the role of the citizen, from passive consumer of government services to active participation in governance.
Stoker (1998)	Narrowly defined governance involves the recognition of the limits of government, and recognizes the capability of the citizen to get things done which does not rest on the power of government to comment or use its authority.
Rhodes (1997)	Governance signifies a change in the meaning of government, referring to a new process of governing; or a changed condition of ordered rule; or the new method by which society is governed.
Amin and Hausner (1997), Jessop (1997) and Rhodes (2000)	Governance refers to a new type of coordination mechanism, which is an alternative to 'market anarchy' and 'organisational hierarchy'.
New Modes of Governance	
Separating the 'new' from 'old governance	**Linking the 'new' and 'old' governance**
In old governance, the nation state "steers" society and the economy through political brokerage, and by defining goals and making priorities. New governance refers to sustaining co-ordination and coherence among a wide variety of private and public actors with different purposes and objectives. (Pierre 2000)	"New modes of governance are a range of innovation and transformation that has been and continues to occur in the instruments, methods, modes and systems of governance". "New modes of governance' cover a wide range of different policy processes such as the open method of co-ordination, voluntary accords, standard setting, regulatory networks, regulatory agencies, regulation 'through information', bench-marking, peer review, mimicking, policy competition, and informal agreements. (NewGov Project 2006a: 1)

2.1.2 Governance vs. Government definitions

Governance as a concept is often defined by emphasising the contrasts existing with the "*concept of Government*". This typology is somewhat overlapping with the last one that contrasts between the "new" and "old" governance. In these two approaches the terms of "government" is equalised with "old governance"; while, "governance" is equalised with the "new governance". Here are cited some definitions that define governance as opposed to "government".

> *"Governance is not the same as 'government'. Rather it focuses our attention on a much wider range of stakeholders, their relationships and networks, including individuals, government, private sector, and non-government organizations"* (see Sterritt 2001; Westbury 2002).

In the following definition the author differentiates between *self-government* and *governance*, pointing out the importance of a *process and institutional capacities* in the context of governance.

> "While 'self-government' means having jurisdiction and a mandated control over the members of a group, its land and resources, 'governance' is about *having the structures, processes and institutional capacity* in place to be able to exercise that jurisdiction through *sound decision-making, representation and accountability* (Hylton 1999; Sterritt 2001).

Rosenau defines governance as "a more encompassing phenomenon than government". He emphasises the inclusive approach of governance, by saying that "governance embraces government, but it also subsumes informal, non-governmental mechanisms (Rosenau 1992: 5).

2.2 Governance and other related concepts

2.2.1 Good governance

The concept of governance has a central place in issues that directly affect the wellbeing of individuals, groups, communities and nations. Therefore governance which would assure "optimal level" of people's wellbeing is required. In striving to achieve and further define and measure the effectiveness of governance, various principles have emerged. The normative dimension of governance, where the principles of governance receive a particular attention, is widely known as "good governance".

International donor organisations were particularly interested in developing standards for the governments that seek to borrow from them. The World Bank has acted as a leader in developing standards for legitimacy, transparency, representation and accountability. The World Bank's report on Sub-Saharan Africa which characterised the crisis in the region as a "crisis of governance" (see World Bank 1989), and the Bank's latter report "Governance, the World Bank Experience", have had a significant contribution to developing universal indicators of 'good' and 'bad' governance (World Bank 1994).

Still, defining the principles of good governance is a complex and therefore controversial issue. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has proposed a set of principles, which despite slight variations are found in various literature and are regarded as "universal" (Table 3).

Table 3. Principles of Good Governance.

Principles of Good Governance (UNDP 1997)	
Participation	All men and women should have a voice in decision-making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions that represent their interests. Such broad participation is built on freedom of association and speech, as well as capacities to participate constructively.
Rule of Law	Legal frameworks should be fair and enforced impartially, particularly the laws on human rights.
Transparency	Transparency is built on the free flow of information. Processes, institutions and information are directly accessible to those concerned with them, and enough information is provided to understand and monitor them.
Responsiveness	Institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders.
Consensus orientation	Good governance mediates differing interests to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interests of the group and, where possible, on policies and procedures.
Equity	All men and women have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being.
Effectiveness and efficiency	Processes and institutions produce results that meet needs while making the best use of resources.
Accountability	Decision-makers in government, the private sector and civil society organisations are accountable to the public, as well as to institutional stakeholders. This accountability differs depending on the organisation and whether the decision is internal or external to an organisation.
Strategic vision	Leaders and the public have a broad and long-term perspective on good governance and human development, along with a sense of what is needed for such development. There is also an understanding of the historical, cultural and social complexities in which that perspective is grounded.

Adopted from UNDP 1997

The World Bank distinguishes: (i) Voice and accountability, (ii) Government effectiveness, (iii) Lack of regulatory burden; (iv)Rule of law, (v) Independence of the judiciary and (vi) Control of corruption, as six main dimensions of good governance (Kaufmann et al. 1999).

2.2.2 Environmental governance

Despite the long tradition of environmental degradation and pollution, the first global conference on environment was held only in 1972, in Stockholm. This conference, which resulted in launching of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), is generally recognised to be a starting point of global discussion about the environment, and accordingly of environmental governance. Still, it is only in the last twenty years that the environmental and sustainable development challenges have been more intensively addressed at the political agenda.

Governance and environmental issues are closely related, and as Graham notes: "Governance is a concept that resonates well with those involved in environmental issues. One of the central ideas underlying governance – that it is concerned with relationships among a number of political actors – meshes with the ecological notion that "everything is connected to everything else." (Graham et al. 2003a).

The environmental problems have evolved from local concerns of factory pollution, to global concerns of climate change, biodiversity loss, fisheries depletion, etc. Recognising the global aspects of these problems calls for appropriate policies and instruments at the global level. Thus, very often environmental governance is correlated and named as "global environmental governance".

The global environmental governance can be defined *"as the sum of organisations, policy instruments, financing mechanisms, rules, procedures and norms that regulate the processes of global environmental protection"* (Najam et al. 2007).

The above-mentioned international discussion in the field of environment has been fruitful in raising environmental awareness and emergence of new institutions. Nevertheless, there are many challenges in the current environmental governance system, which need to be urgently addressed. Among the many challenges of the current environmental governance system, the following are particularly emphasised:

- Multiplicity and duplication of analytical, normative and operational activities among organisations,

- Institutional and policy fragmentation,

- Lack of implementation, compliance, enforcement and effectiveness of the environmental instruments,

- Inefficient use of resources,

- Incapable and/or under founded international environmental organisations,

- Lack of political will and leadership.

For more details about the Challenges of Environmental Governance, see Ivanova and Roy 2007; Najam et al. 2007.

2.2.3 Sustainable development

Sustainable development is a complex concept, which encompasses economic, environmental, social and cultural aspects, and embraces different temporal and spatial scales. It is often perceived as a normative and/or operational, future oriented concept, which as dealing with economic social and environmental aspects, has high political implications.

These basic, somewhat fuzzy, components of SD do not capture the central idea of SD, which are, however, highly contested. According to Robinson, sustainable development is *"the way of living"* (Robinson 2004; Davidson 2000). Observed from this perspective, two aspects of SD come to the fore – the aspect of *needs* and *limits*. (IISD 2007). Therefore the following aspects comprise the key aspects key of SD: economic, social and environmental aspects; the *temporal* and *spatial* scales; the *long term thinking and planning*, and the aspects of *needs and limits.*

Yet, Davidson (2000) describes SD as a *"most recent economic strategy for addressing concerns about ecological integrity and social justice"*. She particularly emphasises the ethical dimension of

the human "way of living" and strong normative dimensions of the "radical" approach to SD. She argues that *"the radical approach to sustainable development have capacity to relieve what is an inherently acute tension of modern life and to reconcile individual autonomy with the wider social and ecological goods"* (Davidson 2000).

Other authors emphasise the political implications of the concept of SD, perceiving it as a "political or normative act, rather then a scientific concept (see van Zeijl-Rozema et al. 2007). Dovers also emphasises the operational aspects of sustainable development. He analyses the questions of practical operationalisation of the SD concepts and the interpretation and implementation of normative principles on the public policies (see Dovers 2003). Consequently, the 'institutional challenges' and 'policy learning', in this sense particularly gain in importance.

2.3 Governance in this study

The main governance aspects adopted in this research projects are in accordance with the study's objectives and the subjects. Understanding the complexity and "flexibility" of the concept, it is not an intention to shape (another) definition on governance in this research. Rather the basic elements and aspects of 'governance' taken in this project and the reasons for taking these are given.

The main two aspects of "Governance concept" in this research are: (i) *the changing trends in modes of governance, and (ii) normative dimension of governance (the principles of governance).* It further focuses on two key issues: (i) *non-hierarchical governing and (ii) involving of different stakeholders* (private, public and social entities). Both refer to decision-making processes. Putting these characteristics together allows shaping a comprehensive outline of governance in this study:

> Contemporary understandings of governance are mainly related to the *non-hierarchical governing* involving stakeholders and actors from *different levels* in *formal and informal* processes of *cooperation and interactions* from local to global level, towards resolving *societal problems* and creating opportunities through *generative politics*.

The selection of the three governance principles – *participation; policy integration and partnerships* is in accordance with both: the eminent governance principles and the nature of the study subjects – transboundary conventions for sustainable development of mountains.

Public Participation (PP) is the base of the very notion of governance. It is one of the core elements of the contemporary understanding and definitions of governance. In addition, both the AC and the CC convention influence directly a wide variety stakeholders, at all levels and scales by influencing the mountain regions

Policy integration is another basic element of the governance concept and a precondition for effective and efficient policies. A process towards sustainable development of transboundary mountain regions is hardened by inconsistent policies. Policy and sectoral disintegration result in overlapping efforts and investments and consequently in inefficient and ineffective policies.

The principle of Partnerships in this work is also correlated to the networking. The principles refer to the cooperation between various actors from various sectors and levels. Building partnerships and networking is regarded at two different scales: within and outside the respective mountain regions. In addition, a certain level of cooperation with other related instruments in place[8] should be also ensured.

2.3.1. Principle of participation – theoretical background

Parallel with an increasing discussion on governance, the concept of participation is gaining importance. This does not imply that the origin of the concept would date back two decades, but it rather implies a recent extensive promotion of the concept by the major donor organisations. *"The history of the concept goes back to late 1950s, and early 1960s, when the early initiatives of development assistance in Asia and Africa through 'community development movement' sought to build community infrastructure"* (Clayton et al. 1998). The concept meaning and interpretation were largely changing over time. This has contributed for various objectives, goals and approaches to the concept of participation. The social and political approaches in participation are given particular space here.

Social Participation

Social participation refers mainly to participation at the community level. It is understood as a more "direct" way of citizens' involvement, such as their participation in development projects, thus emphasising the importance of rural development. People are mainly seen as 'beneficiaries', the focus is on the project level, and on the peoples' well being. In that sense, community participation is defined as *"an active process by which beneficiary or client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view of enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish"* (Paul 1987). In terms of development projects, participation was also related to decision making process, but this decision making has been limited to the project/programme level, unlike a decision-making in broader issues of politics and governance. As the following definition states: *"Participation includes people's involvement in decision-making processes in implementing programs, their sharing in the benefits of development programs and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programs"* (Cohen and Uphoff 1977).

Political Participation

Unlike social participation political participation is about both direct and indirect involvement of citizens in a broader sense – their involvement in the issues of politics, decision making, and governance. Political participation refers to the actions undertaken by citizens in order to influence and/or to take part in the formulation and implementation of the public policies. It is thus based on the recognition of differences in political and economic power among different social groups and classes. Seen from this perspective, participation can be defined as a *"Process of empowerment of the deprived and the excluded"* (Ghai 1990).

More recent studies indicate a "shift in participation" (see Gaventa and Valderrama 1999: 5), where among other aspects, the role of participants is shifted from 'beneficiaries' to 'actors'. As a definition of OECD, in 1994 put it *"Participatory development stands for partnership which is built upon the basis of dialogue among the various actors, during which the agenda is jointly set, and local views*

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[8] E.g. Convention on biodiversity, Aarhus convention, Convention on climate change, Millennium development goals, etc.

and indigenous knowledge are deliberately sought and respected. This implies negotiation rather than the dominance of an externally set project agenda. Thus people become actors instead of being beneficiaries" (OECD 1994).

There is a recent trend of linking the two spheres: participation in development projects and that in broader concept of politics and governance. Often, states and governments, in respond to donor pressures, have adapted participatory approaches (Holland and Balckburn 1998). This has significantly increased cooperation and interactions among public and private social actors. It has further contributed to a more intensive engagement among the actors from various scales, and so has brought other issues of governance – representation, accountability and transparency - to the fore. (see Gaventa and Valderrama 1999: 3–6). Linking of political and social aspects into a broader concept of governance introduces a more profound discussion on a concept that focuses on people's participation at a grassroots level, known such as: *'democratic decentralisation'* (Gaventa and Valderrama. 1999:.5*), 'democratic local governance'* (Blair 2000*),* or *"governance at the level of local communities"* (Osmani 2001).

Table 4. Participation – opportunities and challenges, based on Blair 2000, Osmani 2001, Gaventa and Valderrama 1995.

Opportunities	Challenges
• improve effectiveness and efficiency of public services, • improve efficiency and equity of resource use • improve resource management, • improve service delivery, • create more conducive environment for resource mobilisation, • improve the accountability of local government; • involve people in local decision • Loss of resources – time, money, information, raw material, legitimacy, status	• establishing a truly participation: devolution of power from 'the top' and the genuine involvement from the people from 'the bottom' • power relations, • citizen organisation, • participatory skills, • political will, • the level of participation, insufficient financial resources at the local level • the challenges of legitimacy and efficiency

A valid argument related to the participation in general, and especially to the challenges, is that these issues are still insufficiently understood, and need further research. It is generally accepted that participative approaches contribute to equitable problem defining and solving, as well as for inclusion of affected actors into the public decision-making, which in turn contributes to wide acceptance and effective implementation. However, some questions require particular attention, such as How to organise the involvement of stakeholders in global and national decision-making? and How to ensure legitimacy and accountability of participative approaches in defining and applying policy issues?

2.2.2 Principle of policy integration – theoretical background

The principle of policy integration (PI) emerges in numerous policy fields that share a common property of involving various issues interrelated by multi-level interactions. Environmental policy making is considered to be "one of the most prominent areas where integration is increasingly recognised as crucial for sustainable development" (Meijers and Stead 2004*)*. The need for integrative approach in decision making can be observed from two interrelated perspectives: the complexity that decision making is increasingly facing on one hand, and the ever greater limitations and negative externalities of sectoral policies, on the other.

In the growing political and scientific discussion on the cross-sectoral issues in policy making, the term of "*policy integration*", is one of the numerous used to refer to the same or similar phenomenon. The other more prominent terms would be: policy-coherence (OECD 2002), policy co-ordination (Challis et al. 1988), holistic government, joined-up policy (Wilkinson and Appelbee 1999), joined-up government (Ling 2002). These concepts – as including the terms such as coordination, collaboration, cooperation, coherence and governance, evidently differ. Briefly, the main focuses of these concepts are given. Goals and output of *cooperation* is "more efficient sectoral policies"; goals and output of *coordination* "more efficient and adjusted sectoral policies towards joint goals", and finally *the integrated policy making* aims at "joint new policy" (see Meijers and Stead 2004).

Policy integration concerns spatial and temporal dimensions, expressed by the horizontal and vertical integration (Lafferty and Hovden 2002). Horizontal integration regards relations between different departments in public authorities, while vertical refers to the relations between different tears of government. Both approaches are crucial for effective PI, extending beyond the sectoral boundaries and disciplines.

Table 5. Policy integration – opportunities and risks, adapted from Alter and Hage 1993 in Meijers and Stead 2004.

Opportunities	Risks
• Opportunities to learn and to adapt, develop competencies, or jointly develop new products	• Loss of technological superiority; risk of losing competitive position
• Gain of resources – time, money, information, raw material, legitimacy, status	• Loss of resources – time, money, information, raw material, legitimacy, status
• Sharing the cost of product development and associated risks, risks associated with commercial acceptance, and risks associated with size of market share	• Being linked with failure; sharing the costs of failing such as loss of reputation, status, and financial position
• Gain of influence over domain; ability to penetrate new markets; competitive positioning and access to foreign markets; need for global products	Loss of autonomy and ability to unilaterally control outcomes; goal displacement; loss of control
• Ability to manage uncertainty, solve invisible and complex problems; ability to specialise or diversify; ability to fend off competitors	• Loss of stability, certainty, and known timetested
• Gain of mutual support, group synergy, and harmonious working relationships	• technology; feelings of dislocation • Conflict over domain, goals, methods
• Rapid responses to changing market demands less delay in use of new technologies	• Delays in solution due to problems in coordination
• Gaining acceptance from foreign governments for participation in country	• Government intrusion, regulation and so on

The pros and cons vary from case to case and are interdependent from various other factors, such as organizational, structural, political, economic and behavioral. It further requires new forms of leadership, different set of competencies, capacities in networking, effective communication, and trust among people. Therefore the process of policy integration is about balancing different factors, strengthens and limitations and it often involve a gap between the need for coherence and capacities.

2.2.3 Principle of partnerships – theoretical background

This part mainly focuses on evolving of the notion of partnerships in general, and specifically on the Partnerships for Sustainable Development (PSD). Partnerships and networking can be discussed from various perspectives. These two concepts differ theoretically but are in practice quite related.

The initiatives and examples of collaborative agreements or relationships between the state and non-state actors can be found far in the past, perhaps as far as the post First World War period, when the International Labour Organisation (ILO) was formed. ILO was formed as a tri-partite 'multistakeholder' institution, in which employers and trade unions could participate and vote alongside governments. However "partnerships" with global dimensions that include public and private actors sharply grow in the last few years. Although, currently without a clear and concrete definition on partnerships, many authors give a number of *"50 public private partnerships, in the 1980s to at least 400 today"* (Martens 2007). According to the UN, Partnerships Team, over 200 partnerships were launched at the WSSD in Johannesburg and more than 300 PSD are currently registered under the CSD. (UN Department of Public Information development Section 2007).

Discussing the causes of a "boom of partnerships" would again lead to the explanation of the complexity and changing trends the world is facing and inability of governments as the only actors, to effectively cope with them. Further, relations to the growth and strengthening of the civil society and the trends of globalisation and liberalisation are also relevant. However, in case of partnerships – while the need was increasingly growing – in reality there are few events and still fewer organisations that facilitated the process of partnership building. The "boom in partnerships" is related to the partnerships for sustainable development, largely facilitated by the UN agencies. The work of the United Nations from the early 1990s has largely focused on promoting partnerships for reaching the goals of SD. The Rio Conference in 1992 was a key event. The Agenda 21 is mainly about strengthening other actors and giving them decision-making power. Yet, the crucial event for partnerships as such, was the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in 2002 in Johannesburg. Many refer and remember the Summit in Johannesburg mainly by the *"promotion of partnerships for sustainable development – a new form of global governance"* (Biermann et al. 2007).

The formation of these PSD is highly related to the Millennium development goals, Agenda 21 and the WEHAB Areas (water, energy, health, agriculture, biodiversity). This is obvious from the initial definition on Partnerships, being defined as:

> *"Specific commitments by various partners intended to contribute to and reinforce the implementation of the outcomes of intergovernmental negotiations of the WSSD (Programme of Action and the Political Declaration) and to help the further implementation of Agenda 21 and the Millennium Development Goals"* (Jan and Quarless 2002).

Current UN definition on partnerships reads: *"Partnerships are defined as voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both State and non-State, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits."*

While the partnerships are currently seen as a key requirement in the contemporary understanding of governance and prerequisite for sustainable development; one should not be ignorant to the critics. The discussion on the critics and challenges of the concept of partnerships starts as of the vague definitions and consequent problems the ambiguity of the term involves. Here are given some general "opportunities and limitations" related to the concept of wider public-private partnerships.

Table 6. Partnerships – opportunities and risks (based on Martens 2007; Hemmati Whitfield 2003).

Opportunities	**Risks**
• Quality & effectiveness: a wider range of knowledge, perspectives and capabilities. • Learning: People learn from documents, from individual experiences, from interactions and working with others. • Effectively addressing the problem: Partnerships can tackle problems that cannot be effectively addressed otherwise or where an individual body cannot act alone at all. • Higher ambitions and increased level of international commitments. • Good governance and the development of democracy • Improved policy-making • Process – linking people with processes and structure such as MDGs, Agenda 21 and building the "Culture of SD".	• Growing influence of the business sector in the political discourse and agenda setting. • Risks to reputation - Choosing the wrong partner. • Partnerships can distort competition, because they provide the corporations involved with an image advantage, and also support those involved in opening up markets and help them gain access to governments. • Unstable financing – a threat to the sufficient provision of public goods. • Governance and power gaps – Difference in power and selectivity in Partnerships • Wasting of resources – Are partnerships effective and efficient? • Inequitable access to resources among partnerships

3. METHODS

The study subjects are studied through three research methods: *Literature review and Survey comprised by Questionnaire and Interviews*. The method of literature review is applied in studying of all the subjects, the Alpine Convention, the Carpathian Convention; Balkan Mountain Initiative, and Governance Principles. The results on governance principles, obtained through the literature review are presented in the Chapter 2.

Concerning the Literature review conducted for the AC, the CC and the BMI, the main focus is to trace the history, negotiation, thematic focuses, ratification and implementation, in due relation to their current development phases. The survey is conducted only for the AC and the CC. The survey focuses more specifically on: the conventions' development processes; governance principles; effects and impacts and the transferability of Alpine and Carpathian experience. The BMI, due to the early development stage, is not ripe for such an assessment, and therefore is not directly included in the survey. However, the survey on both Conventions addresses the issues related to the BMI. As already mentioned, the report focuses on the results drawn from the literature review and the interviews, as more indicative for this particular case.

3.1 Literature review

Literature review on the concept of governance and the principles aims to provide the conceptual understanding and theoretical background. The aim is to present the different approaches and understandings of governance (see Chapter 2). *Literature review for the AC and the CC* is based on various sources of information – political, scientific, NGO reports and projects, and includes peer reviewed books and scientific articles, as well as internet search. Main used literature is therefore the conventions' official documents and declarations, the available activity and meeting reports, terms of references, related conference papers, information about relevant projects and activities and scientific articles. *The literature review on the BMI*, strives to briefly present the conditions and challenges in the region, as well as the initiative for the SEE (Balkan) Convention, as such. The main literature sources are the related assessments carried out in the Balkan region, official statements from the negotiation meetings and the Sixth Environment for Europe Conference.

3.2. Interview phase

Interview phase aims to provide an overall picture of the conventions in the light of governance principles. The interviews address the conventions' entire development process, as well as some future related assumptions. Alongside the literature review, the interviews are taken as the main data source, for the discussion and conclusions.

Interviews were conducted separately for the AC and the CC. In total 10 interviews were conducted. The interviews were semi-structured (Case 1990). The structure with the main topics was prepared and sent to the research subjects prior the interviews took place. In the frame of the main questions, there was also an open discussion, which indeed provided valuable information.

The interviews were held using the *Skype Application*. Recording of interviews was arranged by using the *"Pamela Recording System"* software. The permission for recording the interviews was obtained from the interviewed subjects in advance. The Pamela recording system further assures the research ethics, by an informing note about the recording, at the beginning of the conversation.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents results about the Alpine Convention, the Carpathian Convention and the SEE (Balkan) Mountain Initiative obtained through the literature review. It elaborates on the conventions' histories, negotiation processes, protocol development and implementations. In addition, an overview of governance aspects, with the main accent on the principles of participation, policy integration and partnerships, in the AC and the CC is provided. The BMI part is differently organised than the parts on AC and CC are. Concerning the BMI, the aim is to provide some basic information about the challenges in the Balkan region, and the initiative for the SEE (Balkan) Mountain Convention.

4.1. Alpine Convention

This chapter provides an overview of the Alpine Convention in terms of the history, negotiation, protocol development, implementation; and an outline on governance in the AC and the Alpine process.

The Alpine convention is widely quoted as "currently the most advanced example of a regional mountain sustainable development (SD) initiative" (Egerer 2002), and as a "potential model of earth system governance" (Balsiger 2007). However, development process of the convention, from the emergence, to negotiation and implementation, reveal significant challenges related to applied governance practices and implementation. The convention's temporal dimension of emergence/negotiation, at this point should be emphasized (the AC was signed in 1991), as it is generally understood that the relevance of SD and governance issues in policy making has especially arisen after the Rio Summit in 1992.

►   *The Alps:*

The Alps cover an area of approximately 191 000 km^2, with a population of around 14 million. The Alps extend across eight countries covering parts of Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Principality of Monaco, Slovenia, Switzerland and entirely Principality of Liechtenstein. The highest peak in the Alps, Mt Blanc culminates at 4807 m (ANPA 2004). The Alps are a region of high cultural and natural diversity. Four main languages are spoken in the Alps: German, French, Italian and Slovenian, and some minority languages like Ladino and Romansch. Alps central location in Europe and favourable economic conditions has lead to an increasing human pressure on the natural environment. The unsustainable transport and tourism have in particular influenced the Alpine natural resources including biodiversity.

The Convention covers the entire Alpine region, which as defined by the Alpine Convention, includes an area of 190 000 km^2, settled by 13.6 million people in eight countries, 83 regions and about 6200 communities.

Map 1. The Alpine Area to which the Alpine Convention applies is adopted by the draft of the second report of the State of the Alps (2007).

► *Alpine Convention:*

The Alpine Convention is an international treaty for the protection of the Alps, between Austria, Switzerland, Germany, France, the Principality of Liechtenstein, Italy, the Principality of Monaco, Slovenia and the European Community. The Alpine Convention is a framework convention, which defines general obligations, for the contracting parties, towards protection of the Alpine region. The original framework convention identifies twelve areas to be addressed through legally binding protocols. These areas as stated in the AC are: *population and culture, regional planning, prevention of air pollution, soil conservation, water management, conservation of nature and the countryside, mountain farming, mountain forest, tourism and recreation, transport, energy, waste management.*

The governing body of the Alpine Convention is the Alpine Conference, comprised of the Environment Ministers of the contracting parties, who meet on a be-annual base. The Standing Committee forms the executive body of the Convention. It examines the implementation of the Convention and its protocols. The framework convention refers to *the principle of prevention and the polluter pays principle.* It also refers to the prudent and sustainable use of resources and the transboundary cooperation in the Alpine region. On the other hand, the principle of *public participation, stakeholder involvement, ecosystem approach, education and awareness raising* are not considered in the framework conventions, as signed in 1991.

4.1.1 History of the Alpine Convention

This part traces the convention's emergence and evolution, describing the main steps from the initial idea to the convention's status today. It also gives an overview about the implementation and governance related issues, based on the literature review.

The Alpine Convention was signed by the above-mentioned countries in 1991, and entered into force in 1995. However the idea for a convention on protection of the Alps dates back forty years prior to the final agreement on the framework convention in 1991. The first effort to protect the Alpine region dates back to the foundation of the Commission for the protection of the Alpine Region in 1952 (since 1990s, the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps, CIPRA). This organisation was initially founded by the governments of four Alpine States (Austria, France, Italy and Switzerland), the German nature protection mountaineering organisations and the IUCN. However, in 1975 it was reconstructed into a non-governmental umbrella organisation. Today CIPRA is regarded as a NGO that has given birth to the idea of a convention for protection of the Alps. CIPRA in its founding documents states the *"Creation of a cross-border Alpine Convention"* as one of the main goals of the organisation. *(*Götz and Balsiger 2007; Götz 2002).

These early beginnings did not yield significant outputs in the subsequent period of almost forty years. A cross-boundary treaty for protection of the Alpine region was perhaps an ambitious task for the dated institutional structure and approaches. However, there have been a number of attempts to create transnational guidelines for the Alps. More important are the Action Plan for the Alps, drawn up in Trento in 1974, by the IUCN; the Final Declaration of the Conference of Alpine Regions held in Lugano, in 1978; and the Guideline for the development and protection of the Alpine Area, produced by ARGE ALP in 1981 (Götz 2002). Following these less successful "declaration of intents" *(*Götz 2002), the process was re-started in 1987, with a positive input from strengthened environmental movements during the 1970s. CIPRA Germany, in cooperation with the IUCN has prepared the first

proposal position paper for the Alpine Convention (Price 1999). This proposal received support from the Bavarian Ministry for Regional Development and Environmental Questions, as well as from the Board of Social Democratic Parties in the Alpine Region, who issued a Call for a Convention for the Protection of the Alps *(*Götz 2002). One year later, in 1988, the proposal for a draft convention was submitted to the European Commission, who unanimously adopted it. The same year the representatives from the Alpine countries, the Council of Europe, and the European Communities met in Liechtenstein to prepare a draft convention. The next important step was undertaken by then German Minister of Environment, Klaus Töpfer, who further developed the draft convention and organised the first Alpine Conference of Environmental Ministers in Berchtesgaden, Germany, in October, 1989. A Resolution on the Protection of the Alps was formulated at the Conference. With the Resolution the presented parties agreed upon further actions in preparation of conventions and additional protocols.

Finally in 1991, in Salzburg the second Alpine Conference was held, and the Alpine Convention was established and signed by the Environmental Ministers of Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and the European Community. Slovenia and Monaco joined the Convention by agreements in 1993 and 1994 respectively. In 1994, Germany, Austria and Liechtenstein ratified the Convention, so it entered into force in 1995. However, some of the countries lagged behind with the ratification of framework convention. Italy and Switzerland ratified the conventions seven years after having signed it, and still today have not ratified most of the AC protocols. Some of the main reasons for the hardened agreement, in these countries, are related to: the perceived environmental bias and the insufficient focus the convention places to the socio-economic issues; the different power structure and leading roles among the Alpine states, etc.

4.1.2 Implementation of the Alpine Convention

In terms of the implementation, the Alpine Convention has taken a 'specific approach' – an approach of development of protocols in the convention initial phase. The AC has focused from the very beginning, even before convention was ratified, on the negotiation of the thematic protocols. This strategy has resulted in a number of protocols on different issues. However, the protocol development phase was rather "isolated", with no other actions, such as concrete projects and programmes taking place. This has largely contributed for a slow AC process and lack of implementation.

There are also other issues that have possibly had a significant hindering effect on the implementation, such as lack of stakeholder consultation and their involvement in the negotiation processes. If the objective and the goals of the convention is sustainable development of the Alpine region, the process should be participative and should include all concerned actors. On the other hand, as the AC involves twelve different issues, it automatically implies more direct involvement of the relevant sectors such as economic, social issues, foreign affairs, along with the environmental one. The negotiation of the AC was mainly driven by the Ministers of Environment, while cooperation with other sector is mainly undertaken at an individual state level.

► *Protocol development*

The Alpine Convention is a framework convention and its ratification is merely the first step towards implementation. While ratification of the convention is an agreement about some general obligations, its implementation is left to be defined by further protocols on particular issues. Each protocol is an independent agreement in international law and must be ratified individually. A protocol is a legally

binding instrument and enters into force for those contracting parties that have expressed willingness to be bound to that protocol, after at least three states have ratified, accepted or approved it.

The article 2 of the original framework convention provides twelve areas, about which the Contracting Parties shall take appropriate measures (Article 2, paragraph 2), and shall agree upon the protocols (Article 2, paragraph 3). These areas or issues, as phrased in the framework convention include: *population and culture, regional planning, prevention of air pollution, soil conservation, water management, conservation of nature and the countryside, mountain farming, mountain forests, tourism and recreation, transport, energy and waste management.*

At the time of writing, eight of the suggested issues in the original framework convention, have been covered by a specific protocol, and there are still four issues for which a protocol is pending – *waste management, water management, air pollution and population and culture.* Although not covered by a particular protocol, the issues of water, waste and air are partially covered by other related protocols, such as mountain farming, transport, energy and soil protection (Streicher 2001 in Balsiger 2007).

There have been also some changes in the initially suggested themes for protocol development. Namely, pushed by the regional actors, mainly Switzerland cantons, the Protocol in "spatial planning and sustainable development" was negotiated. This topic as such is not stated in the AC framework convention. In addition, to the originally suggested issues, two other protocols have been added - *Dispute Settlement and Monaco's Membership.*

Apart from the protocols, two declarations have been developed; both at the last Alpine Conference in Alpbach, November 2006:

- Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change in the Alps.
- Ministerial Declaration on Population and Culture in the Alps.

The negotiation of the protocols of Alpine Convention was, and still is a relatively complex and complicated issue. Today, sixteen years after the agreement on the convention was achieved, Italy and Switzerland still have not ratified any of the thematic protocols[9].

The reasons for the difficulty in protocol negotiation relates to the way of the protocol negotiation – an "instant way" that does not necessarily reflect the consensus opinion about the needs, interests and priorities. The negotiation of the protocol for transport, tourism and energy, can be considered as the "hardest cases protocols".

Some other challenges that have hindered the process of protocol negotiation, would be:
- the interests of the various countries and the extent to which they are affected by a particular protocol,
- the convention's perceived environmental bias and neglect of socio-economic issues; substantive and linguistic inconsistency (Balsiger 2007; Price 2000);
- inconsistency in the content of different protocols; inconsistency among the protocols within both, the national and European Union legal system (Price 2000).

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[9] For the complete overview of the ratification of the Alpine convention and the protocols see
http://www.convenzionedellealpi.org/page3_en.htm (accessed 23.07.2007)

Ratification of protocols alone is not a decisive implementation tool. However, if the signed and ratified protocols are taken as a measure of the interests of involved parties and the success of implementation; looking at the Alpine Convention's protocols one could reasonably question the contracting parties' interests in terms of the environmental issues. Namely, sixteen years after reaching the agreement on framework convention, there are still no protocols on waste management, water management and air-pollution. This is especially puzzling taking into consideration the convention's perceived "environmental bias". Namely, it becomes an additional mismatch – a mismatch between what has been agreed by the contracting parties in 1991 and what seems to be the actual interest of the parties.

Coming back to the protocol development and ratification issue, in spite of the hardened negotiation processes, urged by the 6th Alpine Conference in 2000, the protocols have been finally signed and ratified, by most of the states and came into effect in December 2002. The general agreement upon the protocols is an important step forward. The entry into force of the protocols is expected to mark a new development phase in the AC Process, with a more significant focus on implementation.

►   *Programmes, Activities and Projects*

A significant number of different organisations are involved and contribute in different ways to the SD in the Alpine region, and therefore to the implementation of the Alpine Convention. The organisations are from different fields and backgrounds; governmental, non-governmental, research and science, local authorities, working groups, etc. The strong Civil Society in the Alpine region is to be particularly emphasised. However not many of these organisations and projects refer to the AC. Some NGOs, such as CIPRA largely stimulate, push and initiate various actions in Alpine region. Some of the main programmes, projects and networks in the Alpine Process are given here.

Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention

The establishment of the convention's secretariat is a necessary requirement for the unimpeded convention's process. Establishing a Permanent Secretariat of the AC (PSAC) has taken an unreasonably long period of time. The decision about the secretariat's seat has been taken only in 2002, at the 7th Alpine Conference, in Mareno. Since 2003 the Permanent Secretariat has opened its offices in Innsbruck, with a branch office in Bolzano, Italy. The late establishment of the PS has been another important obstacle in the entire process.

The Multi-Annual Work Programme of the Alpine Conference 2005-2010 (MAP)

The MAP was adopted at the 8th Alpine Conference, in 2004 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, and it has an important place in terms of better activity coordination. Although very general, MAP has identified four key issues and implementation priorities for the period of 2005–2010, serving as a guideline for the parties.

Table 7. Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAP) of the Alpine Convention (adopted from MAP 2005).

Multi-Annual Work Programme 2005–2010	
Key Issues	*Implementation Priorities*
• Mobility, accessibility, transit traffic • Society, culture, identity • Tourism, leisure, sports • Nature, agriculture and forestry, cultural landscape	• Public relations • Exchange of experience and co-operation • Trend monitoring and interpretation; • Joint projects on four key issues • Completion of the set of agreements • Co-operation with other mountain areas and conventions

Report of the States of the Alps

The 8th Alpine Conference has taken another important decision, the *Report of the State of the Alps,* to take place for the first time in 2006. According to the MAP the Report "must elucidate the objective of sustainable development of the Alps and therefore focus on ecological, economic and social developments". The draft of the first report of the state of the Alps was presented at the next 9th Alpine Conference, in Alpbach, Austria. The first Report *"Transport and Mobility in the Alps"* was published in 2007, by the Permanent Secretariat of Alpine Convention. The second report focuses on the water issue and is in preparation phase.

EU Community Initiative INTEREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme is a programme launched in 2000. This EU funded programme supports transnational cooperation projects in the Alpine Space, fostering territorial development and cohesion. Its overall aim is to increase the competitiveness and the attractiveness of the cooperation in the region. It funds projects focused on cooperation, joint actions and networking. During the first running period, 2000 to 2006, the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme supported activities from seven countries, involving 58 Projects (Palazo 2007). The programme continues in the next structural fund period running from 2007 to 2013, focusing on the following priority issues: competitiveness and attractiveness of the Alpine Space, accessibility and connectivity, environment and risk prevention (Alpine Space 2007–2013).

An overview of other important projects, programmes and initiatives are presented in relation to the relevant networks in the Alpine process. The three main networks that *"have already made an important contribution towards implementation of the Convention"* are: the *Alpine Network of Protected Areas, Network of Local Authorities - Alliance in the Alps and The International Scientific Committee for Alpine Research (ISCAR). (*UN General Assembly 2005; MAP 2005). In addition the following initiatives and networks are also important: *Alpine Town of the Year, Network Enterprise Alps (NENA), Club Arc Alpin and WWF – Alpine Programme.*

The role of CIPRA should be particularly emphasised. The organisation has official observer status within the Alpine Convention process. It attends the Alpine Conferences and is active in many working groups. Among other issues and initiatives, the organisation largely contributes for a better information system and networking in the Alpine space. The CIPRA's work is greatly supported by the Principality of Liechtenstein.

The Alpine Network of Protected Areas was established in 1995 by France, as a contribution to the implementation of the Alpine Convention. Even though launched as a state initiative, the network is very inclusive and contributes for transboundary cooperation among the protected areas. The network's main working areas include: establishment of an ecological network in the Alps, the common activity with the general public, external collaboration and partnerships (Plassmann) From its establishment in 1995, until recently it was associated with the Les Ecrins National Park. With the decision made by the 8th Alpine Conference, the Alpine Network of Protected Areas is incorporated into the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention as a Task Force, as of January, 2006.

Alliance in the Alps rose from a project initiated by CIPRA, the aim of which was establishment of a network of local authorities in the Alps. It is founded in 1997 by 27 local authorities from seven Alpine countries. Today 230 local communities are members (Siegele 2007). The purpose of the network is close cooperation with the people in the communities, in order to improve the ecological, social and economic situation.

The *International Scientific Committee for Alpine Research (ISCAR)* promotes interdisciplinary research on the Alps. It represents a base of scientific knowledge and information to policy-makers, and the general public. ISCAR promotes interdisciplinary research on the Alps as well as the transfer of scientific knowledge to responsible authorities and to the general public.

4.1.3 Alpine Convention and governance – an overview

Looking at the AC governance related initiatives; it can be argued that the convention is at an early stage of setting the governance institutional structures. This seems to be in harmony with the discussion on governance in mountain development in general. Rather passive role of AC in governance related initiatives is also evident in the convention related reports and documents, where the analysis and importance of specific governance issues are not given an adequate place. The low level of stakeholder and general public involvement in the Alpine process is considered to be "*one of the main reasons for losing many years in the Alpine process*" (Mitreva 2005). The same author, in a report prepared by Euromontana/Balkan Desk, further adds: "*The Alpine Convention never managed to get known to a larger public*". In addition, he AC does not make relations to the environmental assessment instruments, such as environmental impact assessment and/or strategic environmental assessment (see Handbook of Carpathian Convention 2006).

However, there are also some positive trends in the AC process, especially in the last five years. Looking at these changing trends through governance lenses, it can be generally stated that the convention has been evolving *from one initially 'exclusive' to a 'more inclusive' convention*. The positive trends are especially related to the cooperation, joint action, partnerships and networking. The next table represents the researcher's personal view about the changing approaches adopted by the convention over time. It is based on a literature review about the convention's development paths. It should be noted that as these positive changes occur only recently, more tangible results and benefits are yet expected. In addition, it should be noted that there is no necessarily a connection between the issues presented in the two columns, but rather a list of attributes of AC then and now.

Table 8. Alpine Convention changing trends.

AC facilitating Alpine process – 1991 (a more 'exclusive convention')	AC facilitating Alpine process – today (a more 'inclusive convention')
• More focus on the environment • Lack of stakeholders' involvement • Lack of public participation • No focus on awareness raising and education • Sectoral disintegration (involvement of merely Environmental ministries) • Disparities among protocols; and between protocols and national legal system • No references to related instruments and conventions	• Inclusion of other issues of sustainable development • More focus on networking and partnerships • Public participation is still a challenge • General public awareness is spontaneously occurring • Stronger community and municipality involvement • The conflicts overcame, still two countries, have not ratified the protocols • Focus on joint action (in MAP) • Shift towards implementation, after the ratification of the protocols (since 2002)

There are different processes, organisations and programmes going on in the region at the same time, such as European integration, globalisation, INTERREG Programme, etc. This makes it difficult to identify what particular issues can be attributed to a particular process, conventions or organisation. The Alpine Convention however has an important role and place in these processes.

4.1.3.1 Alpine Convention and Participation

Elaborating on the Alpine Convention's facilitation in strengthening the public participation is in particular a challenging issue. It is difficult to identify projects, programmes, documents or reports prepared by the Convention related bodies that strive towards involvement of wider public in the Alpine process. The only identified document that elaborates on the level of public participation in the Alpine process is a *"Questionnaire for consultation process on issues addressed by the Aarhus convention's Almaty Gyuideline"* (see PSAC 2006 – Permanent Secretariat of Alpine Convention*)*.

According to this document *"There are no formalised rules or procedures concerning access to information and access to justice in environmental matters, in the Alpine Convention"*. (PSAC 2006). However, in the field of public participation in decision making, the interested NGOs are assured to be informed about the influencing decisions. Further, the NGOs, accredited with the observer status, participate in the meetings of the Alpine Conference, the Permanent Committee and the Working groups, at all stages of decision-making processes. The observers can make a note and discuss the AC official documents and reports. Such participation may however be excluded according to the Alpine Convention's and other bodies' internal rules. An additional important instrument of public participation is the observer NGOs' entitled right to present requests aimed at verifying assumed non compliance cases to the Compliance Committee of the Alpine convention (PSAC 2006). For a NGOs to receive an observatory status, there are certain requirements to be fulfilled, such as being an organisation that acts on the entire Alpine space. This can be one of the reasons for small number of

the NGOs observers to the AC. Hitherto eleven organisations have official observer status with the Alpine Convention, not all of them are Non-governmental organisations (Götz 2002).

In terms of non-formalised practices concerning to the access to information and public participation in decision making, *"Non formalised practices exists only concerning access to information, but not concerning public participation in decision making and access to justice in environmental matters."* (PSAC 2006). The "access to information" is provided by the Alpine convention's web site, and on request. According to the same document, *"In view of this permissive practice there was no need for establishing review procedures relating to access to information"*. However, in terms of providing of access to information, CIPRA offers additional information services, for the purpose of general public information, such as: CIPRA Info and AlpMedia.

Related to current and/or planned programmes or projects, that would increase or in any mode affect the public participation in the frame of the Alpine Convention, the above mentioned document states: *"There are no current or future work plans in the Alpine Convention that may affect the extent of or modalities for access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters"(PSAC, 2006).* However, the *First Report of the state of The Alps* might significantly add to a better availability of environmental information to the public.

Considering the wide recognition and promotion of the public participation, awareness rising and stakeholder involvement by the donor agencies and international community, a more participative approach in the Alpine process are expected, in the future. An positive example is the *Multi-Annual Work Programme of Alpine Convention (MAP).* The Programme address to the public publication, stating that the Alpine Conference aims to address the general public, politics and the scientific community more directly, to draw up an active communication policy, and to establish a platform for strategic discussions on the future of the Alpine region. (MAP 2005).

The participation in the Alpine Process is increasingly addressed. Most of the projects are supported by the EU INTERREG Alpine Space programme. The Data Infrastructure for the Alps Mountain Orientated Network Technology (DIAMONT) focuses particularly on encouraging participation in the AC. The project aims to advise the Permanent Secretary of the AC on the elaboration of an Alpine wide information system (SOIA) and the selection of appropriate indicators and relevant data for sustainable regional development. It is an INTERREG IIIB-Project. *(see Diamont).* The AlpNaTour project supports the European goal of sustainable tourism land use. One of the work packages of the project AlpNaTour is focused on Crossborder participation and participation methods. The objective is to design a modular concept of participation. Focus is on the cross border cooperation and the participation of the local tourism branch. The project has received European regional development funding through the INTERREG III B Community initiative *(See Alpnatour).* Finally, ISCAR, a research organisation endorses the transfer of scientific knowledge to the responsible authorities and the general public. ISCAR Working programme 2005–2006, put the Participation processes**,** as one of its priorities, focussing at "Organisation of participation processes and bringing the scientific knowledge into participation processes" (see ISCAR 2005).

4.1.3.2 Alpine Convention and Policy Integration

The Alpine convention deals with a real diversity of issues, ranging from purely environmental to developmental issues. This creates a real challenge for the AC to be general and precise at the same time. However, the diversity of issues creates also an opportunity for better policy integration and sector coherence. The policy integration so far is not appropriately promoted and facilitated by the AC. Various protocols have been developed under the convention, however the integration among the AC protocols is not emphasised

The Alpine countries are among the most developed in Europe. The countries have generally well established mountain legislation. However, their different traditions in the legal systems notably challenge the issue of Alpine policies. Over the last three decades respective mountain policies have been established and extended all over Europe which led to the development of European Community Policy (Dax 2002). However, in respect to a transboundary agreement, such as Alpine Convention, there is a need for more integrative policy approach, which would strengthen transnational image of these policies. As of this writing the AC is not specifically involved in a project or programmes that addresses the challenge of policy integration. This leads to an assumption that the policy integration and inter-sectoral working are undertaken at the level of an individual state, and not at the level of Alpine region as such. Concerning the translation of the AC and protocols in the national legislation of the Alpine states, there are not evident examples about it. The reason can be that many of the Alpine countries consider their existing national legislation as already compliant with the AC protocols.

After the development of the EU regional policies, different structural funds programmes cover the Alpine region. According to the INTERREG Alpine Space Programme 2005 Report, there is a recent gradual shift towards multi-sectoral approaches in some of the Alpine countries, such as Austria, Germany, France, Switzerland and Italy. In general this shift has resulted in widening the scope of the mountain policies. Nevertheless, "the mountain policies in Germany and Austria address mainly the issues related to economic development (mainly tourism), infrastructure and environment. Differently, in France, Italy and Switzerland mountain policies are addressed to the overall development, through an integrated approach which reflects a more advanced position towards the concept of sustainable development". (ASP 2005). The differences in the long-term political traditions between the Alpine federal and centralised countries become especially important in the policy implementation phase. Referring for instance to the local stakeholders' autonomy, the difference between Switzerland and Austria on one hand, and Italy and France on the other is still rather great, although in the two later countries decentralisation is also taking place.

The CIPRA's project *Future in the Alps*, involves a component on *'Policies and Instruments'*. The project results are put in a report, which identifies the following challenges for implementation of Alpine policies (Alexandre et al. 2006):

- Lack of information – laws and tools are little known by the addressees,
- Centralised origin of action initiatives, and difficulty to 'translate' these expert defined initiatives at local levels,
- Sectorial working methods,
- Challenge of legitimacy and tendency for safeguarding of power structures, etc.

4.1.3.3 Alpine Convention and Partnerships

The principle of partnerships can be perceived at two different levels: partnerships within the Alpine region and with other mountain regions.

In general the partnership building among mountain regions is facilitated by the international mountain initiatives. The international awareness for mountain ecosystem are embedded in the 'milestones', such as: the Agenda 21 and Chapter 13, the UN Resolutions on the International Year of Mountain (IYM), the Bali Document, the International Mountain Partnership, the Bishek Conferences, etc. (see Chapter "Governance in Mountains"):

Among these international mountain events, the International Mountain Partnership (IMP) launched at the WSSD, and the two Global Meetings of the IMP in Moreno, Italy and Cusco, Peru (in 2003 and 2004 respectively) have particularly facilitated the partnership building among the Alpine and other mountain regions. Countries in Central and Eastern Europe as well as in Central Asia have taken this opportunity to propose initiatives for protection and SD of major transboundery mountain ranges in Europe and Central Asia.

Since the 7th Alpine Conference in 2002 in Merano, the contracting parties emphasised the priority of building mountain partnerships and has expressed a positive view about the inclusion of the Alpine Process in the IMP. In the same year, an International Conference *"The Alpine Process: An Approach for Other Mountain Regions?"* was held in Berchtesgaden, Germany. The Conference adopted *"The Berchtesgaden Declaration",* where the principle of regional cooperation was highlighted (Berchtesgaden Declaration 2002). In 2004, the 8th Alpine Conference welcomed the existing mountain partnerships with the Carpathians, the Caucasus and Central Asia and called for further similar initiatives. The Conference requested the Permanent Secretariat to involve in cooperation with the Interim Secretariat of Carpathian Convention. This cooperation has culminated with a *Memorandum of Cooperation between the two Conventions' Secretariats in 2006*.

Further, the *Multi-Annual Work Programme 2005–2010* emphasises the importance of development of mountain partnerships and supports co-operation and exchange of experiences with other mountain regions.

At the 9th Alpine Conference held in November 2006, the Alpine States adopted a *Declaration for Support of Cooperation between Mountain Regions*. In particular the cooperation and building networks of protected areas with mountain regions in Central Asia, Caucasus, Carpathians and Balkans was emphasised.

Considering partnership and network building within the Alpine region, the AC has also had a significant input. The Convention's contribution for network building and positive impact on establishment of *"large number of transalpine organisations as well as a nascent Alpine identity"* (Balsiger 2007), are considered to be the most important benefits of AC. The convention has had a positive input on building networks among the actors in the Alpine region. Although not initially facilitated by the AC, the various networks operating in the Alpine region: Alliance in the Alps, Alpine network of protected areas, ISCAR, NENA, etc. take the AC as a background for their actions. The AC also had a more direct or indirect facilitation to partnerships in other mountain regions, mainly by sharing the Alpine expiries of partnership building and networking. The following

networks have been established: The Network of Protected Areas in Carpathians (CNPA), The Alliance of Central Asian Mountain Communities (AGOCA), The Alliance of Central Asian Mountain Communities, The cross-border village network in Caucasus.

Even though partnerships and networking can be considered as one of the AC strengthens, many challenges of cooperation in Alpine process remain; both among the countries and within the individual state. Price elaborates on these challenges, in terms of the still strong hierarchical and top-down approaches in the Alpine Process:

> *"Yet, overall in the Alps, within individual states there is a great way to go in fostering cooperation between levels of government and other interested parties, partly because of the convention's history and negotiation and signature of the convention by national governments, with little if any consultation* (Price 1999).

4.2 Carpathian Convention

This chapter gives an overview of the Carpathian Convention in terms of history, negotiation, protocol development, implementation, and it further includes an outline on governance. Although widely recognised to be inspired by its older sibling – Alpine Convention – the Carpathian Convention applies considerably different strategies and approaches. These differences might be a consequence of the different conditions and challenges in two regions on the one hand, and the conventions' different timing of emergence, on the other hand.

At the very beginning it should be noted that the Carpathian Convention is at an initial stage and even though taking a dynamic progress, the convention's further performance and successes are still to be seen.

► *The Carpathians*

The Carpathian region (Carpathians) spread widely over seven countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Carpathians cover an area of about 209, 000 km^2 with a population of 17 million (ANPA 2004). The Carpathian Mountain range extends from the Austrian borders with Czech Republic and Slovakia to Serbia, covering most of Slovakia and Romania and parts of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Ukraine (Map 2).

Widely quoted as "a unique natural and cultural heritage, genetic and ecological link and a haven for widelife" (UNEP-ISCC-b and UNEP-ISCC-c 2007; Knapik 2006; Starunchak 2005; Omelyan 2006). The Carpathians are an important reservoir for biodiversity containing some of Europe's least disturbed ecosystems such as the largest European natural beech forest, as well as vast tracks of mountain primeval forests. They house numerous endemic species (over 480), and threatened mountain plant and animal species (ANPA 2004), such as European bison, moose, wildcat, chamois, Alpine marmot, golden eagle, eagle owl, capercaillie, black grouse. Carpathians harbour one third (3.988) of all European vascular plant species (UNEP - ISCC-a).

Despite the vast natural value the Carpathians face various challenges, posed by the recent multidimensional changes in Central and Eastern Europe.

"Unemployment and poverty have accelerated rural decline in many areas. Traditional forms of forestry and agriculture are being replaced by more intensive methods. Land seized by the State during the Communist era is being returned to private hands. This is resulting in a highly fragmented land-ownership structure and is encouraging short-term forms of exploitation. With increasing outside investment coming into the region, political decentralisation and planning systems unable to cope with the new demands, the chances of inappropriate development are high. Major new road programmes, crossing and dividing the Carpathians, are being planned." (CERI 2001)

Regarding the scope of application of the CC, there have been some difficulties in delimitation of the Carpathian area. A comprehensive report *"Implementing an international mountain convention: An approach for the delimitation of the Carpathian Convention area"*, with the scientific support of the EURAC has been prepared. However, different maps of the Carpathians are applied by the different projects. Map 2 is from the *Secretariat Note on the Scope of Application of the Carpathian Convention – Article 1 of the Carpathian Convention*.
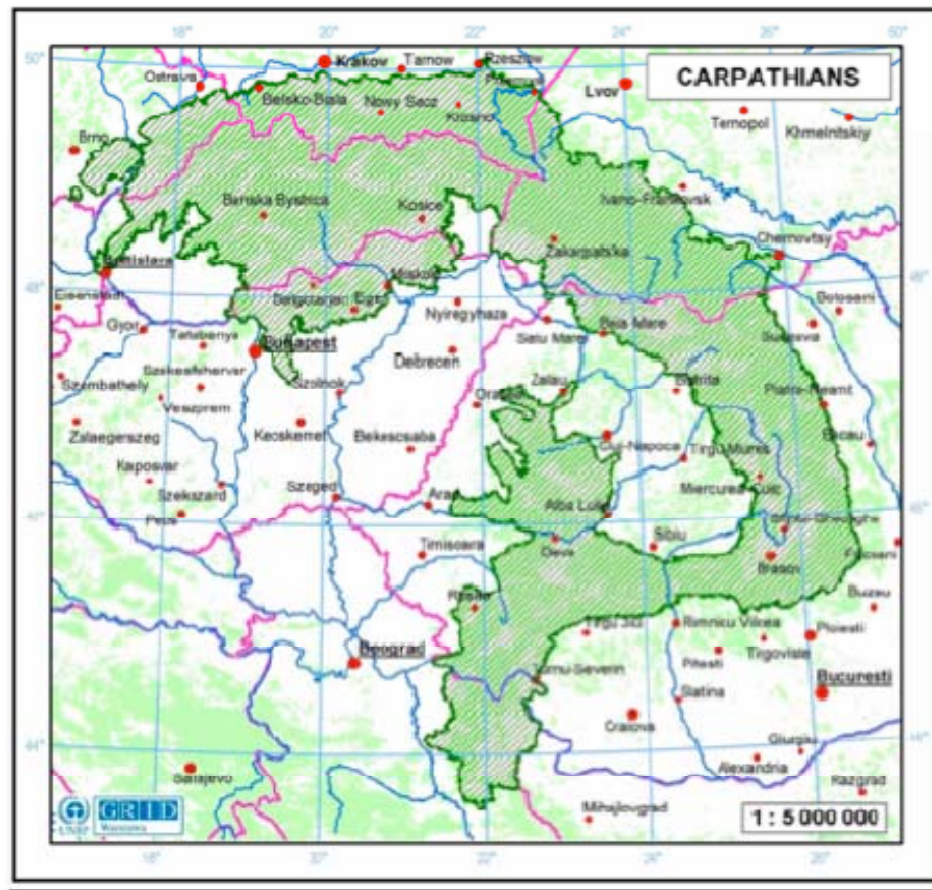
Map 2. Carpathian region scope of Carpathians Environment Outlook KEO. Source: UNEP CC COP1/16.

► *Carpathian Convention*

The Framework Convention of the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians is an international agreement between seven Central and Eastern European States: The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine.

The Carpathian Convention is widely presented as *"a unique partnership, providing a transnational framework for cooperation and multisectoral policy integration, an open forum for participation by stakeholders and the public, and a platform for developing and implementing transnational strategies, programmes and projects for protection and sustainable development"*. (Carpathian Declaration 2006). The Carpathian Convention's official documents, background papers and reports from various workshops and meetings refer to the following principles: *policy integration, awareness rising, education and public participation, integrated approach to land and water resource management, sustainable development, a programmatic and eco-system approach, environmental assessment/information systems, monitoring and early warning, cultural heritage and traditional knowledge.* (Framework Convention 2003; COP1 2006; FAO/SEUR 2006).

In addition, the CC makes references to the relevant international agreements and instruments, such as: the Rio Declaration on environment and development, the Johannesburg Declaration on sustainable development, the Millennium development goals, the UN General Assembly Resolution on IYM 2002, and the declaration on environment and sustainable development in the Carpathian and Danube region. (Framework Convention 2003; Carpathian Declaration 2006). Further references to the importance for cooperation with / and work in accordance to the Aarhus Convention and CBD are highlighted (COP1 2006).

Carpathian Convention was also evaluated as a *"framework convention on the scale of mountain range, which would possibly respond to the current lack of an appropriate internationally-recognised legal framework"* (Fall 2005). The author highlights the convention's *"commitment to transboundary protected areas, as a tool for balancing sustainable development and environmental protection"*. She concludes that this "commitment to protected areas" makes the Carpathian convention *"innovative and the first internationally negotiated convention that makes explicit reference to transboundery protected areas"*. (Fall 2005).

4.2.1 History of the Carpathian Convention

The formal start of the convention for protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians was the Carpathian-Danube Summit in April 2001 in Bucharest, and the Declaration of Environmental Protection and SD in the Carpathian-Danube region, adopted by fourteen countries. (Ruffini et al. 2006; Fall and Egerer 2004; Egerer 2002). Following the Summit, governments of the concerned Carpathian countries, non-governmental national and international organisations, and scientists convened for a first informal meeting "Cooperation for the Protection and SD of the Carpathians" in Kiev, Ukraine, in November, 2001. Subsequently, Government of Ukraine officially requested UNEP/ROE to facilitate the intergovernmental negotiation for the Carpathian Convention. UNEP/ROE has positively responded to the request and has promoted the Alpine-Carpathian Partnership. The Partnership was launched in the UN IYM 2002, by Italy, which at that time presided over the Alpine Convention. This was followed by an exceptionally dynamic negotiation process, involving five negotiation "expert meetings", in less than a year.

The first negotiation meeting "Sharing the Experiences", took place in Bolzano, Italy, in June, 2002. Following that first one, there was a range of meetings, as follows: Valduz (Liechtenstein), October 2002; Geneva (Switzerland), December, 2002; Vienna (Austria), February, 2003 and Bolzano II (Italy), March, 2003. Apart from the UNEP's facilitation, the entire process was supported by the governments of Austria, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, WWF International, Italian Ministry for Environment and EURAC. This dynamic process convenes experts from different agencies to draft and negotiate the Carpathian Convention. The negotiation of the CC is considered to have proceeded in a transparent and participative way. The CC negotiation involved representatives of the Carpathian countries' AC representatives, experts from UNEP/ ROE, WWF, the European Mountain Forum, and many others international organisations, programmes and non-governmental organisations.

An important contribution in the entire process was provided by the Vishegrad Group Countries – The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. They were particularly working on the strengthened dialogue and support from the European Union. The final draft of the Convention was agreed and signed by all the countries of the Carpathian Region – The Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro[3], at the 5th Ministerial Conference Environment for Europe, in Kiev, Ukraine, in May, 2003.

Similar to the Alpine Convention, the Carpathian Convention is also a framework agreement; hence it does not assign any specific duties to the parties. It includes general provisions concerning the thematic areas of cooperation, which are to be further specified through decisions of the Conference of the Parties, as well as future protocols. The Convention entered into force on 4th January, 2006, with instruments of ratification prepared by four of seven contracting parties.

► *Status of Ratification*

The Carpathian Process proceeded as agreed on the first Bolzano meeting, with the convention final draft version set for the 5th European Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe". Further the ratification of the convention was also going rather smoothly, and as of this writing it is only Serbia that still has not ratified it yet (table 9). There have not been some conflicts about the CC ratification by Serbia. However, one of the possible reasons is the countries' different positions to the CC and the shares of Carpathian region. Compared to the long and conflicted Alpine process, the Carpathian Convention was negotiated in record time. In any case, and even though *"having a deadline was highly beneficial in negotiating the CC"* (Egerer 2005), there is a possibility that rapid negotiation might cause difficulties in the further convention's implementation phases. However, hitherto the convention performs rather vividly, with many meetings, produced documents and initial national assessments.

Fall (2005) notes that the CC has a significant merit for the progress in the Carpathians, stating that *"...the Convention is no doubt helping to promote the under-funded and prospective projects in marginal areas into more secure, better supported programmes linked to central government priorities"*. (Fall 2005). Table 9 shows the status of ratification, as of this writing (03.09.2007)

Table 9. Ratification of Carpathian Convention.

	Czech	**Hungary**	**Poland**	**Romania**	**Serbia**	**Slovakia**	**Ukraine**
Signed	May 2003	May 2003	May 2003	May 2003	May 2003	May 2003	May 2003
Ratified	June 2005	May 2004	Feb. 2006	Oct. 2006	/	March 2004	May 2004
Instrum. of Ratificati on	July 2005	Oct. 2005	March 2006	Dec. 2006	/	May 2004	May 2004
Entry into Force	January 2006	January 2006	June 2006	March 2007	/	January 2006	January 2006

Adopted by the Carpathian Convention official website:
http://www.carpathianconvention.org/status.htm (accessed 31. 07. 2007)

4.2.2 Towards implementation of the Carpathian Convention

As for the Alpine Convention, the ratification of the Carpathian Convention is solely a beginning of an indefinite process. Considering the short time of convention's existence, some precise and more certain information in terms of its implementation is difficult to give. This is especially true considering the protocols, as there are no protocols to the CC signed yet. However, the main conventions' structure are set up, the working groups established and various initiatives and programmes are taking place, in relation to the CC.

It was discussed that the Alpine Convention started the implementation by shaping somewhat complex legally binding protocols on complex sectors. The CC, perhaps already learning from the Alpine experience, started its initial way forward on a smaller scale. It firstly focuses on identification of relevant issues to be addressed by the thematic protocols. For that purposes, national assessments have been done in the fields of policies, institutions and stakeholder consultations in the Carpathian countries.

Fall (2005) argues in favour of the convention's adequate initial approach to implementation, concluding that:

"Focussing initially largely on environmental issues and concrete, small-scale projects, rather than attempting to negotiate workable protocols on the much more controversial topics of transport or energy, the Carpathian Convention may have already started to build confidence among a variety of actors throughout the mountain range" (Fall 2005).

► *Programmes, Activities and Projects*

This part gives an overview of studies, projects and main organisations that contribute and are related to the Carpathian Convention and Carpathian Process.

A significant scientific support for the Carpathian Convention from the beginning of the convention is provided by the EURAC. In accordance with the Article 1/1 of the CC, referring to defining the Carpathian Region and the Scope of Application of the CC, EURAC in cooperation with UNEP has prepared a comprehensive report *"Implementing an international mountain convention: An approach for the delimitation of the Carpathian Convention area"* (Ruffini et al. 2006). This proposal, along national proposals for the scope of application, was submitted to the CoP1. Apart from the study on the geographical scope of Carpathians, a study on tourism of the Carpathians, *"Sustainable Tourism Opportunities in the Carpathians"* (Gebhard et al. 2006*),* has been prepared in the framework of the Transnational Framework Project - Carpathian Project.

FAO-Sustainable Agriculture and Rural development (SARDM) Project: The Framework Convention provides an integrative platform for multi-sectoral policy coordination, including sustainable agriculture within the scope of Article 7 on Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry. In 2005, the *FAO SARD-M Project and UNEP-ISCC* agreed on performing assessments of the strengths and weaknesses of mountain policies in Carpathian countries, in relation to SARD principles. The National Assessments for three selected Carpathian countries – Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine – took place in 2005. The assessment was extended to the rest of the Carpathian region, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Serbia, in 2006.

REC&EURAC National Assessment of the policies, legislation and institution: *"National Assessment of the policy, legislative and institutional frameworks related to the Carpathian Convention"*, has been addressed under the umbrella project *"Support for the implementation of the Carpathian Convention"*, in implementation by REC and EURAC. The National Policy Assessments have been done in all Carpathian countries, in 2005.

Handbook on the Carpathian Convention is another part of the above-mentioned umbrella project. The handbook was produced by EURAC and REC. The final version of the Handbook of CC, to serve as "a guideline document for stakeholders in Carpathian Process" (Rec & Eurac 2006*),* was published in April, 2007.

Carpathian Network of Protected Areas (CNPA) and Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI). The Carpathian Framework Convention suggests a "development of an ecological network in the Carpathians, as a constituent part of the Pan-European Ecological Network. As a response, the CNPA and CWI have been set up. The representatives of the Carpathians countries already met in June, 2003 for an informal meeting, while the 1st Meeting of the Steering Committee of CNPA was held in Vienna, 26 January 2007.

Interim Secretariat of Carpathian Convention. One of the main steps forward in the Carpathian process is the establishment of *Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (ISCC).* The ISCC is provided by UNEP Vienna and is seen as the main facilitator of the cooperation and communication between the Carpathian actors. UNEP-ISCC is part of the Secretariat of the Mountain Partnership located at the FAO in Rome and an observer to the Alpine Convention. The Secretariat is a Focal Point for South-Eastern Europe in the UNEP-OSCE-UNDP-NATO Environment and Security (EnvSec) Initiative. It further supports the implementation of related projects, such as *"Rapid Environmental Assessment of the Tisza River Basin" and "Reducing Environment and Security Risks from Mining in the Tisza River Basin"*.

First Conference of the Party (CoP1) The CoP1 was held in December, 2006 in Kiev. Prior the CoP1 two preparatory meetings took place, one on December, 2005 in Bolzano, and another in September 2006 in Vienna. The CoP1 was attended by 200 participants, including 50 NGOs (UNEP-ISCC-c. 2007). The CoP1 has established six working groups and the Convention implementation committee, which will oversee the function of these working groups. It has further produced *"The Carpathian Declaration"*, and made a *Work Plan 2006–2008*. It has subsequently decided on the place and date for the Second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to take place in Romania, in June 2008.

The Carpathian Project is an important tool for implementation of Carpathian Convention (COP1 2006). The project is carried out within the EU Community Initiative INTERREG III B CADSES Neighbourhood Programme. The Carpathian Project has been developed in 2005 by UNEP – ISCC and RTI Polska and the Convention Parties. It builds upon the intergovernmental cooperative platform of the Convention, and has a wide consortium of partners from 11 countries. The project official time frame is from September, 2005 until August 2008. In general the Carpathian Project is focused on the transnational aspects of the Carpathian Convention, and aims to the implementation of the most relevant EU policies across the Carpathian region (UNEP-ISCC-b 2005).

Carpathians Environment Outlook Report is a sub-regional examination and synthesis of the environmental situation in the greater Carpathian region that includes part of the seven Carpathian Countries. The project was initiated in 2004 by UNEP's Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA)/GRID-Europe and the Regional Office for Europe (ROE). In support of implementation of the Article 5 and the Article 12 of the CC, KEO should provide the strategic environmental assessment contributing to the Carpathian spatial development vision, to be submitted to the COP2. Draft versions of the first KEO report is already prepared and submitted for stakeholder consultation (KEO report 2006).

In addition there are other relevant projects and activities, such as ANPED, Carpathian Project, SARD-M Project. These as particularly related to the strengthening of the three governance principles – public participation, policy integration and partnerships – are given space in the part on the CC and Governance.

► *Protocol development:*

For adequate protocols to be developed, identification and involvement of stakeholders is a first prerequisite. There are in addition many principles to be considered and applied in the protocol development phase, such as: policy integration among the protocols, transparency, efficiency, equity, sound and informative decision-making, system approach, iterative and learning process, etc. As of this writing there are no signed protocols to the CC, and it is to be seen how the CC will proceed regarding these principles. The Alpine experience in protocols development provides a valuable know-how for the CC. Some of the main messages can already be stated: avoiding an irrational focus on the complex sectors such as transport, tourism or energy; avoid sectoral approach with insufficient interrelations among the different protocols; and finally the low level on consultation and participation should be avoid.

The preparation and identification of key points for the CC thematic protocols has already started. The main protocol preparatory work is related to the: *Protocol on conservation of biological and landscape diversity, Protocol on sustainable agriculture and forestry and Protocol for cultural heritage and traditional knowledge*. The *Draft Protocol on Conservation of Biological and Landscape Diversity* has been submitted to the CoP1 by Ukraine. The key items for a draft Protocol on *sustainable agriculture and forestry,* was prepared at the CC Meeting on Protocol in relation to the

Article 7 "Sustainable agriculture and forestry", held in Budapest, 8-9 May 2006 *(SAF report, 2006)*. Building on this, the FAO/SEUR in collaboration with Padua University and the UNEP–ISCC organised an international seminar from 19-20 September 2007. At this seminar the opportunities for a common approaches (articles or terms of references) of the protocols for forest management and biodiversity, were discussed. This is very important step towards a better coherence among protocols and policy issues.

The Working Group on sustainable tourism, pursuant the decision of the CoP1, has developed the draft Protocol on Tourism, and has submitted it to the Bureau of CoP1 / Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee, with request for submission to CoP2 in 2008 (Terms of References for Sustainable Tourism 2007). Concerning the cultural heritage and traditional knowledge issue, so far no protocol have been drafted, but the ANPED project have provided an initial background information on this topic. The ANPED Project results were submitted to the CoP1. The basis for the Protocol on culture and traditional knowledge were set on the 1st Meeting of the respective working group in July, 2007 in Venice.

4.2.3 Carpathian Convention and governance – an overview

As already pointed out in the introductory part of the CC, the Convention refers to many important governance related principles, such as: the precaution and prevention, public participation and stakeholder involvement, transboundary cooperation, integrated planning and management of land and water resources, a programmatic approach, and the ecosystem approach. Comparing the principles emphasised by the CC to those emphasised by the AC, the positive influences of the promotion and recognition of the concepts of sustainable development and governance are evident. The fact that the convention refers to these principles – even though important – doesn't necessary imply to the principles' application in practice.

Considering the CC recent entrance into force, it is difficult to elaborate on the convention's real impact on governance. Above all, there is no information or reporting systems to the convention developed yet. However, this part is based on the available data and meeting reports and documents, just as the part on the Alpine convention is.

4.2.3.1 Carpathian Convention and Participation

The text convention, specifically the Article 13 *"Awareness raising, education and public participation"* refers to both access of public participation in terms of access to information and in decision making processes: *"The Parties shall pursue policies aiming at increasing environmental awareness and improving access of the public to information on the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians, and promoting related education curricula and programmes. The Parties shall pursue policies guaranteeing public participation in decision-making related to the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians, and the implementation of this Convention".*

The First Conference of the Parties (CoP1) and the Carpathian declaration address the public participation and refer to the Aarhus Convention:

"We encourage full participation and involvement of the Carpathian communities in decisionmaking and implementation of relevant development policies, in accordance with the Aarhus principles" (Carpathian Declaration 2006)

Similarly as PSAC, UNEP-ISCC has also been invited to reflect on the *"Access to information, public participation and access to justice in international forums dealing with environmental issues"* in the Carpathian Convention, by the *Aarhus Convention, the Almaty Guideline*. Considering that this consultation has been done only after about nine months from the CC entrance into force and before the CoP1, the document does not offer more concrete information.

The UNEP-ISCC expressed an interest in participating in the international workshop of the Aarhus parties and representatives of the other international forums. Considering the formalised rules or procedures on the access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters: The rules of procedures of the CoP are *"progressive in respect to providing broad international access opportunities to information. The CoP rules promote the public participation in decision-making, allowing the observers to participate in the proceedings of any meeting and to present any information or report relevant to the Convention"*. (Almaty Guideline 2006).

Regarding the "Observer status of the Convention" it should be noted that so far there is no procedure for a NGO to become an observer of the CC. Any interested party or NGO can participate to the Convention's meetings, with no relevance of their activities and location, as in case in the Alpine Convention. The CoP1 convened about 200 participants, 50 of which NGOs.

In terms of non-formalised practices concerning the above mentioned issues, some more precise information are not provided, apart from the cooperation and partnership building between the organisations from the region, which often result in consultations, workshops, round tables, etc. On the question about the current or planned work that may affect the PP and related points, the ISCC emphasised that *"a mechanism to inform and involve public into the ongoing work and decision-making process on the convention matters should be established"*. It further referred to the ANPED Project for participation towards the implementation of the Carpathian Convention.

ANPED – Northern Alliance for Sustainability – Public Participation to Support the Implementation of the Carpathian Convention Project (ANPED, here after). The project's main goal is to ensure local communities' and stakeholders' views and priorities in the official decision-making processes and, in particular at the CoP1. This project is supported by DEFRA and UNEP-ROE. The UNEP-ISCC welcomed the project and has invited ANPED to deliver a stakeholder side-event at the first CoP1. The project's main activities are related to the stakeholder consultation in all Carpathian countries. Based at these consultation processes, stakeholder consultation reports have been produced. The stakeholders' views and priorities reflected in the reports have been presented in the final ANPED Proposal submitted to the CoP1. The ANPED further activities are related to the cultural heritage linkages with the stewardship of natural resources and sustainable development in the region.

Considering all the challenges and opportunities, a general positive feeling about the CC influence on public participation, is observed. This is especially true for the access to information and stakeholder involvement in the Carpathian process. The positive trends in stakeholder involvement are evident, not only through the involvement of the civil society, but also involvement of other sectors, such as the foreign affairs and economics, alongside the environmental ones.

However, the challenge of involvement of private/business sector remains. The reasons for this are many, and perceptions about the reasons perhaps even more. This issue is addressed in the interviews and more thoroughly explained in the Chapter based on the interviews. As future challenges about public participation and transparency, to be addressed in the future, are development of information and reporting systems in the CC.

4.2.3.2 Carpathian Convention and Policy Integration

Unlike in the most of the Alpine countries where well-developed legislation towards mountain areas has been established from seventies onwards – such as in Switzerland, France, Austria and Italy – in most of the Carpathian Countries, mountain laws are at various stages of preparation or approval in Bulgaria and Romania. *("Mountain Areas in Europe – Final Report", EURAC).*

There is an urgent need to evaluate the relevant legal instruments and initiatives in place, in terms of scopes, integration, strengths and weaknesses. The process of the EU integration in the Carpathian region provides a good opportunity for strengthening of the regulations and legislations in terms of environmental protection and sustainable development. The CC therefore is in a favourite position to impact the national mountain policies, involving the Carpathian issues in the countries' national legal systems.

The policy coherence, as well as development and implementation of mountain legislation in accordance to the EU policies, are already emphasised by the parties in the Carpathian declaration (Carpathian Declaration, 2006). An additional point related to the policy integration is the integrated natural resources management. Integration of environmental concerns into agricultural policies and land management plans are well-emphasised in the framework convention itself *(refer to the Articles 3 and 6 and the Article 7, paragraph 2 of the Framework Convention).* The multifunctionality of ecosystems is also emphasised in the recent discussion on protocol development, going further into the high level interactions between the Biodiversity and Forestry that might result in common articles and terms of references.

The challenge of integrated policy approach is related to involvement of economic and social aspects in the management of natural resources, respecting local tradition and cultural values and responding to the local and regional conditions and constraints. The first steps addressing this challenge are national assessments undertaken by two different projects at different scales. The National Assessment in Carpathian Countries under the umbrella project *("Support for the implementation of the Carpathian Convention in the framework of the Alpine-Carpathian Partnership)"* is carried out by REC and EURAC. Under this project, *National assessments of the policy, legislative and institutional frameworks related to the Carpathian Convention,* for all seven Carpathian Countries have been produced. This assessment, carried out by methodology of a comprehensive questionnaire provides valuable information on relevant issues and comparability of data among the Carpathian countries.

Sustainable agriculture and rural development mountain policy project (SARD-M) is a project carried out by the FAO and UNEP-ISCC. The base for the project is inspired by the CC, in particular the Article 7 on Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry (SARDF). The Project aims to a Global overview and cross-sectoral understanding of strengths and weaknesses of mountain policies, institutions and processes for SARD. The project has resulted in: Identification of problematic areas and priority issues facing a mountain region; evaluation of the overall strengths and weaknesses of SARD-M Policies; recommendations on improvements at the three levels: policies, processes and institutions;

proposals for concrete action-oriented follow-up activities (in progress). Addressing the issue of SARD related policies, the project is directly interlinked to many other issues at various levels, such as: CC Biodeiversity Protocol, CC Tourism Protocol, Carpathian Opportunity Initiative, KEO, Mountain Partnership Initiative of SARD and Europe, EU Policy development in the region, National Development Plans, integrated cross-sectoral rural planning, capacity building of Carpathian institutions and stakeholders, Public participation, Awareness rising, biodiversity conservation, sustainable land use, etc.

Taking into consideration the project's relevance for the wide variety of issues, here are given some project's related issues specific results and expectations:
- Terms of references (ToRs) for CC WG on SARDF,
- Establishment of a network of partners,
- Elements and ToRs for the Protocol for SARDF in the Carpathians,
- Draft decision for CoP2,
- Concept paper on SARD-M in the Carpathians to be submitted to the CoP2,
- Formulate possible/needed follow-up activities,
- Finally, an important aspect of the assessment is to assess the potential impact of the CC on SARD.

4.2.3.3 Carpathian Convention and Partnerships

Despite a relatively small number and resources of existing local organisations in the Carpathian region, they are increasingly using the convention as a background of their activities and are referring to it in implementation of their projects. The large international NGOs and scientific organisations have been acting as promoters and leaders of many programmes and projects from the beginning of the process. However, when it comes to the organisation acting at a national or regional level, a certain degree of lack in their number, involvement and capacities is observable.

The private (business) sector until present misses in the Carpathian process. And this is an important issue to be addressed in the future, as the private sector is a relevant actor in the regional development. Therefore, if the SD of the Carpathian region is a goal, the involvement of private sector in negotiation and the entire discussion is a requirement. Many of these different actors take decisive roles in promoting SD of the Carpathians and carrying out the implementation of the Carpathian Convention. It is important to note that the role of NGOs in Carpathian Process is significantly promoted and facilitated by the Convention officials – essentially by the UNEP-ISCC. The NGOs are assigned important roles and tasks in different fields and CC working groups. A good example is CEEWEB involvement in the Sustainable tourism; CERI and WWF International in the field of Biodiversity; FAO in Forestry; ANPED and UNESCO-Bresce in Cultural Heritage. The involvement of Universities and experts from appropriate fields is being well established as well.

Even though there are many partners involved in the Carpathian process and the awareness about the importance of the Carpathian region and SD is increasing, still the general awareness among people and locals is a challenge to be improved. The early stage of the convention in this term should be pointed out. The most important partners directly involved in the Carpathian process and implementation of the CC, at different scales adn levels are given here: Ministries of Environment, Agriculture and Foreign Affairs of the Carpathian Countries; MoEs of Italy and Austria; Permanent secretariat of the Alpine Convention; Alpine Network of Protected Areas (ALPARC); Central European Initiative (CEI); Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative (CERI); European Academy Bolzen/Bolzano (EURAC); Central and Eastern European Working Group for the Enchantment of Biodiversity (CEEWEB); EUROMONTANA; FAO Sub-Regional Office Budapest (FAO-SEUR);

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands; FAO SARD-M Project; UNEP Global Resource Information Database - GRID Budapest and Warsaw; The World Conservation Union – IUCN Belgrade; Safeguard for Agricultural Varieties in Europe (SAVE Foundation); UNDP Regional Centre Bratislava; UNEP Vienna; Regional Environmental Centre (REC) Budapest; WWF Danube Carpathian Programme (WWF-DCP); Mountain Partnership Secretariat; Austrian Federal Environment Agency.

The text of the CC acknowledges the importance of cooperation and partnership building, particularly in the article 14 and 15:

> "*The Conference of the Parties should seek the cooperation of competent bodies or agencies, whether national or international, governmental or non-governmental and promote and strengthen the relationship with other relevant conventions while avoiding duplication of efforts*".

In accordance to that the following Memoranda of Understanding (MoU)/Cooperation (MoC) and official partnerships hitherto are promoted:

- MoU with the Alpine Convention and Alpine-Carpathian Cooperation in the field of conservation of biological and landscape diversity.
- MoC between the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention and UNEP ISCC and Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI).
- MoU between the Executive Secretariat of the Central European Initiative (CEI) and UNEP Vienna ISCC.
- MoC between the Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative (CERI) and UNEP ISCC.
- Cooperative agreement with the EURAC, Bolzano.

4.3 South East European (SEE) or Balkan Mountain Initiative

This chapter is structured differently than the chapters for the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions, since the Balkan mountain process is an initiative for convention, and not a legal instrument in place, yet. The main focus is at: the Balkan region – characteristics and challenges and the Balkan Mountain Initiative – from Cusco to Belgrade. A specific accent is placed on the Sixth Environment for Europe Conference (EfE or Belgrade conference), as it was expected to be a *"landmark for facilitating and launching the formal process of cooperation for the protection and SD of mountain regions in SEE"*.

4.3.1 The Balkans – the region and challenges

Defining the Balkans as a region is not as simple as it might seem. Defining the geographical boundaries of the Balkan, involves also the historical, political, socio-economic and cultural aspects, apart from pure geographical characteristics. In the broadest, geographical sense, the Balkan Peninsula encompasses the area where there are 11 states today: Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Turkey, and six countries former Yugoslavian Republics: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, and Slovenia. However, Greece, Turkey, Slovenia and Romania are often omitted from this group, either for geographical, cultural or socio-economic reasons (IUCN 2004). The actual geographical definition of the Balkans – as defined by the Soča-Krka-Sava- line –

includes: Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Croatia (see Map 3).

Concerning the possible legal framework for protection and SD of mountain areas in the Balkans, the participants of the second official meeting in Pelister recommended involvement of the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia, Kosovo (under UNMIK); and a high appreciation of association of Greece and Slovenia. However, in the last draft of the text convention Slovenia and Kosovo – UNMIK are not included in the list of the countries (SEE Draft Convention 2006).

Map 3. Balkan Peninsula as defined by the Danube-Sava-Kupa Line.

The Balkan region is highly mountainous. The main ranges are: Dinaric Alps, the Balkans, the Rodopes mountains, Shara and Pindus. The region occupies an area of around 550,000 square km, and a population of around 53 million (Andonovski et al. 2007).

Slightly different natural conditions – geology, topography and climate, and socio-economic features, bring for different situations, challenges and opportunities in the countries. The political and economic changes from the late 1980s onwards contributed for intensive political, economic and social reforms in the countries. The changes were especially dramatic in the countries of former Republic of Yugoslavia, which experienced ethnic conflicts of distressing dimensions and war. The region in general is adapting to open market economy and is striving to EU integration. These

changes, combined with the emerging development strategies and approaches, such as SD and governance, impose numerous challenges to the SEE (Balkan) Countries.

The Balkan Peninsula is regarded as one of the richest regions within Europe when it comes to natural habitats, with unique mountain areas, karst phenomena, lakes and rivers ranging from the Adriatic Coast up to the Dinaric Alps and Carpathian Mountains. The Balkan Mountains stretch across South Eastern Europe, crossing 8 national borders, including those of the EU member states. The high mountain ranges or massifs of South-East Europe are characterised by a great biological diversity. They are one of the six European biodiversity hotspots, with a particularly high number of relic and endemic species, habitat of a remarkable flora and fauna, multitudes of people and a rich conglomerate of cultures and religions. (UN 2007*).*

While having high ecological, cultural and socio-economic importance, natural richness and beauty, SEE Mountain regions are facing many problems. The region is under strong economic development pressure, and the need to generate income and improve the living standards of the population is leading to the growing exploitation of natural resources. According to a background paper *"Protection and Sustainable Development of Mountain Areas in South-Eastern Europe",* submitted at the Belgrade conference by Macedonia, the following major current and future threats are identified: *habitat fragmentation or destruction, over-harvesting, illegal logging, deforestation, inappropriate management methods, unregulated development, unregulated exploitation of natural resources, etc*. In addition, problems of: depopulation, poverty, high unemployment rate, environmental degradation, communication and infrastructure difficulties and the political, social and economic marginality, are identified by the participants on the first official meeting in Bolzano, 2005 (Bolzano Statement 2005*)*. It should be noted that even though the challenges vary among the SEE countries, they are identified as common for the BMI involved countries.

4.3.2 The Balkan Mountain Initiative process

BMI – from Cusco to Belgrade

The above mentioned challenges reflect the needs for a sophisticated framework for common action for protection and SD of Mountain regions in the SEE. The idea for a legal transboundery agreement for the Balkan mountains, was discussed, for the first time, at the second global meeting of the Mountain Partnership in Cusco, Peru in 2004. At the meeting in Cusco, UNEP – Vienna, EURAC – Italy and Makmontana – Macedonia discussed the possibility for a regional legal instrument for the SEE Mountains' protection and SD (referred here as Balkan Mountain Initiative - BMI). The actors on one hand, even though aware about the existence of the similar instruments in the SEE, encouraged by the AC and the CC experiences, and established institutions and networks, opt for a convention, as a tool for protection and SD of Mountains.

Prior to the Cusco meeting, an important step for establishing networks for protection and SD in the SEE mountain regions was made by the SAB and Euromontana. As a result three associations for mountain regions were established in Macedonia, Bulgaria and Romania – Makmontana, Bulmontana and Romontana respectively. Following the meeting in Cusco, Macedonia officially requested UNEP to facilitate the intergovernmental negotiation in December 2004. UNEP-Vienna, EURAC-Italy and the Italian Ministry of Environment and Territory, from then are supporting the BMI. An organisation (Balkan Foundation for Sustainable Development – BFSD), with the aim to support the activities related to the SEE Convention Process was formed in Macedonia. The BFSD was formed through an

initiative and support by the UNEP-Vienna and EURAC-Italy. Apart from them, there are other involved organisations, such as: Makmontana, Bulmontana, Euromontana, FAO/SEUR, FAO SARD-M, FAO-Mountain partnership and REC-CEE. The organisations such as IUCN, WWF, UNESCO-BRESCE, CEEWEB, Balkan Peace Park, etc. as already involved in the region are part of the emerging networks, as well.

Perhaps the most important and beneficial meeting for the BMI was the first official meeting *"Sharing the experience – Capacity Building on Legal Instruments for the Protection and Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions in South Eastern Europe",* held in Bolzano, Italy in December 2005. At the same event meetings on Caucasus Mountain Initiative and the Carpathian Convention, were also held. This was a good possibility for the SEE countries to have an insight in the experiences of other mountain regions, especially these from the CC and the Alpine-Carpathian Partnerships and activities. The meeting resulted in a common *"Bolzano Statement"*; where the participants agreed that the "SEE Governments may consider to develop a legal framework for co-operation between relevant national authorities and regional/local stakeholders". (Bolzano statement 2005). The Mountain Partnership and UNEP were pointed out as the "lead partners" (Schaaff 2005). In addition the meeting was especially beneficial for the process, due to the established cooperation with FAO SARD-M project for conducting policy assessments in the SEE.

In July 2005, a first study report assessing the feasibility of "Balkan Convention" *"Convention on the Protection of the Alps, Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians and Balkan Convention Initiative"* was prepared by Makmontana through Euromontana /Balkan Desk. Following the Bolzano meeting, an *"Assessment on the current situation and needs of cooperation on the protection and sustainable development of mountain regions/areas in South-Eastern Europe (Balkans)",* was elaborated in May, 2006. The report was produced by the BFSD, in collaboration with UNEP-Vienna and EURAC-Italy. The study was produced in the framework of the project *"Legal instruments for cooperation in Mountain regions of Europe"* supported by the Italian Ministry of Environment and Territory.

The parties met for the second official meeting *"Intergovernmental consultation on the Cooperation for the Protection and Sustainable Development of Mountainous Regions in South Eastern Europe (Balkan region)",* 12–13 May in Pelister, Republic of Macedonia. Here, the participants produced the so called *"Pelister Statement"*, where they expressed themselves in favour of a legal framework for cooperation in SEE. The Pelister meeting established key recommendations for the issues of: transboundery aspects of biodiversity conservation; sustainable local development and territorial planning; integrated water/river basin management; agriculture and rural development, forestry; transport; infrastructure; tourism; and energy (Pelister statement 2006).

At the third official Intergovernmental meeting *"SEE Mountain Convention Process"* held in Bolzano from 3–4 November, 2006 the experts from the SEE countries adopted a draft of the Framework convention. Apart from these official intergovernmental meetings where the BMI was discussed and the "SEE – Balkan Convention" negotiated, some regional workshops relevant to the BMI process also took place. The workshop *"Integrated rural development in the CEE and the Balkans",* held from 24–26 October, 2005 in Slovakia, during the Euromontana Conference. The conference resulted in *"Declaration on Integrated Rural Development in the Mountain Areas of Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans"*. The Regional workshop *"Drawing lessons and good practices on policies for sustainable livelihoods in the Mediterranean mountain regions",* held in September, 2006 in Tabarka, Tunisia. The workshop was especially beneficial in terms of sharing the experiences in policy making processes, implementation and evaluation for SARD activities conducted in the Mediterranean Countries. A stakeholder consultation meeting on *"Activities towards Proclamation of Shara National Park",* within the ENVSEC Initiative was held in Tetovo, Macedonia on 12th

September 2007. The principal goal of the Stakeholders Consultation Meeting was to discuss the results of the local stakeholder survey and the feasibility study and multi-stakeholder participation over the management of natural resources.

It is now one year from the last BMI official meeting in Bolzano, when the SEE Framework Convention was drafted. Having the sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Belgrade conference) behind, the involved national and international actors and stakeholders, should meet as soon as feasible and further plan the BMI related activities.

4.3.3 Sixth European Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe"

The sixth "Environment for Europe" Conference was held from 10-12 October, 2007 in Belgrade. It is one of the major environmental political events bringing together the key environmental players of the UNECE region. "While the Ministerial Conferences remains an important political platform for all UNECE member countries, in recent years the work focus of the Conference has shifted from the new EU member countries to the countries of SEE and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA)". (EfE Newsletter 1). The Belgrade Conference, with its regional focus on SEE and Eastern Europe and high relevance of discussing issues, was a perfect possibility for promotion of the BMI.

EfE and BMI:

The cooperation for protection and sustainable development of mountain areas in the SEE was mentioned in few conference documents and sessions. In the opening speech His Excellency president of Republic of Serbia Borislav Tadic, while emphasising the importance and potentials of regional cooperation in solving the environmental problems, referred to the BMI: *"the idea of adoption of a convention for protection and sustainable development of mountain regions in SEE deserves attention"* (Tadic 2007).

The conference topics were structured into five main topics – assessment and implementation; capacity building; partnerships; the future of the EfE process and the special thematic processes of biodiversity and education in SD. The topic on *Capacity building,* included a plenary session *"SEE Perspectives"*, where among others the representative of Republic of Macedonia highlighted the Macedonia's role in the protection and SD of mountain areas in the SEE region. The part on "Partnerships" was also of great importance for the BMI in future, as many relevant background papers, documents for action by ministers and discussions were raised and produced.

The EfE resulted in many background and Ministerial action papers that can be beneficial to the BMI. Among the more relevance are:
- Policies for a better environment – progress in environmental management in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia
- Recommendation for Pan-European cooperation in biodiversity
- Pan European Ecological Networks
- Environmental policy and international competitiveness - challenges for low-income countries from UNECE region
- Modernising environmental regulation and compliance assessment
- Environmental and security partnerships
- Acceptance and implementation of UNECE MEAs in SEE

- Municipal environmental investment in SEE
- Environmental financing and payments in SEE
- Integrating environment in key economic sectors in Europe and Central Asia

Two papers directly addressed the initiative for protection and SD of mountain region in SEE:

- UNEP Paper *"Cooperation and Frameworks for the Protection and Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions in Europe"*. This document describes the process of the BMI, emphasising the SEE countries willingness for a legal framework for cooperation. (see UNEP 2007).

- *"Protection and SD of Mountain Areas in South-Eastern Europe",* submitted by the Republic of Macedonia, with support of UNEP, REC, BFSD, Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea and EURAC.

The Ministerial Declaration *"Bridging the Gaps"* also highlights the SEE Mountain initiative, stating *"recognising the benefits from the existing legally binding instruments for the protection and sustainable development of the mountain regions such as the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions, and welcome the initiative of South-East European and Caucasian countries to develop such instruments"* (Ministerial Declaration 2007).

4.3.4. Balkan Mountain Initiative concerns and discussion

Having the Sixth Environment for Europe Conference behind, the BMI is at a crucial, but also uncertain phase. Considering the BMI previous efforts, the current conditions in the region, and the inputs from the EfE, at this stage it requires a strategic thinking and approach how to proceed on. Apart from the opportunities provided by UNEP-Vienna and some other international organisations, the BMI face huge challenges, mainly related to delicate multilateral relations in the region. Some main concerns are related to the following issues:

Political will and political challenges in the Balkans. Political will of the involved countries is crucial for negotiating a convention. This is a serious challenge in the case of the BMI. Apart from the Republic of Macedonia, the efforts of the other countries for the SEE Convention are insignificant. In addition the multilateral relations and cooperation in the region are still delicate and fragile.

The capacity building. Apart from the needed SEE states\ movement, a larger movement from other actors is a prerequisite for negotiating the convention. There is a necessity for mobilising and strengthening the available resources in the region. Currently, the main priorities and values in the Balkans are mainly related to pure economic development issues. This might cause a certain neglect of the other aspects of development (environmental and social aspects). Therefore, a more holistic notion of SD and governance issues needs to be promoted.

Necessary assessment and research. While there is a sound expertise in most of the related fields in the SEE countries, there is also a recognised need for assistance and involvement of modern approaches and strategies. This implies that updated and holistic research, adequate for a transboundary instrument for protection and SD of mountain regions, is necessary.

The risk to fail and the need for an initial external assistance and leadership. Considering the

transitional socio-political and economic situation, the uncertain political will, and multilateral relations and the fragile actor structures; the entire discussion about a bottom-up SEE (Balkan) Convention involves a reasonable risk of failure. This implies that the external assistance and leadership at the beginning of the process is crucial. It is not to interpret that the entire lead should come from outside, as there are potentials in the Balkans, as well. However, learning from the relevant experiences, a certain level of assistance in order to mobilise the existing economic, social, institutional and political resources, can be considered as essential to the BMI.

5. INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

This chapter is based on the results obtained through the interviews. For complete interview analysis please note the Annexes 3, 4 and 5, where each question is thoroughly analysed and supported by an original statement. All the discussed issues/questions are taken into consideration and presented together for both, the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions. The way the data is presented offers a close look into the respective issues in the two conventions. However, it should be pointed out that a simplistic comparison between the two would be inappropriate, due to the different conditions the regions and conventions involve.

5.1 The emergence of the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions

Table 10. The emergence of the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions.

Alpine Convention	Carpathian Convention
- The AC initiative was a more governmental issue (Germany, Switzerland, Austria have mainly run the process)	- The role of states (not only the Carpathian, but also the Alpine states) was important in negotiating the CC
- Not many various actors were lobbing for the AC	- CC was promoted by variety of actors: international and regional NGOs, intergovernmental organisations, Carpathian and non-Carpathian states
- CIPRA was the main and only NGO pushing for it, along with the Alpine states and ARGE ALP, the ARGE Alpen-Adria and COTRAO	- UNEP has a leading role in the CC, from the beginning and it is still facilitating the process, acting as an interim secretariat
- CIPRA, an international NGO has the crucial role in the AC, from the time it started lobbing for it, until the present	- The international NGOs play an important role in the Carpathian process
- There were some small scale ad-hoc initiatives in the Alpine region, prior the AC	- The local actor structure is rather small, which limits their role and involvement in the process
- The long history of the AC negotiation is perceived as an indicator for a lack of initiatives, cooperation and political will or "deficit of governance initiatives"	- There were transboundary activities among some of the Carpathian states, prior the CC.
	- The CC was negotiated in a record time.

In order to avoid misinterpretation of the briefly presented findings, prior making conclusions, the following notes should be considered:

- *CIPRA was initially founded by four Alpine states* (Austria, Switzerland, Italy and France) and German nature protection and mountaineering organisation. It was in 1975 when the organisation was restructured to include only non-governmental organisations (Price 1999).

- *The AC has emerged in the early 1990s* (signed in 1991, entered into force in 1995). At this point, the concepts of Governance and SD were not theoretically structured, and politically relevant to the extent they were at the time of the CC emergence (CC signed in 2003, entered into force in 2006). This, however, does not imply that before the 1990s, and before the Rio Summit, the good governance and SD initiatives were not of relevance.

- *The fact that CC was negotiated in a record time can be observed from two different perspectives.* On one hand, it can imply the ripeness of the idea and consensus for the CC. On the other hand, the prompt Carpathian process can be brought in relation to the inadequate involvement of local actors. The research indeed finds both issues to be true to a certain extent. While, the actors show the willingness to negotiate the CC, the involvement of the local actors is yet insufficient. Therefore, even though the process adopted a participatory approach, the lack of the local actors' involvement could have arguably contributed for an easier negotiation.

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5.2 Alpine and Carpathian Convention - Initial impacts on governance

Table 11. The Alpine and the Carpathian conventions' initial impacts on governance

Alpine Convention	Carpathian Convention
- The AC operates in rather official and formal way of working, based on rules of procedures. - The AC has not made much impact on the participation. It has positive impact on partnership building and networking and moderate impact on policies and policy integration (see Chapter 6.3)	- There are very positive impressions about the CC impacts on the governance processes - There is a risk or challenge that the CC can become an "inflexible" convention, in the future. - The CC has contributed to a better access to information and participation. It has positively impacted the development of new national legislation, bringing for policy integration. It has already built partnerships and has improved the networking (see Chapter 6.3).

While the findings presented in the table 11 indicate different trends in the two conventions', it should be noted that these findings are relevant only in consideration of the following issues:

- The CC is at an early stage, and it is difficult to elaborate on the CC impacts. Consequently, the received feedback and presented findings can be considered as "*stakeholders' feelings*" about the CC. However, these initial impressions about the CC are highly indicative, and the positive trends expressed by the interviewed subjects are encouraging the responsiveness of the Carpathian process. In addition they reflect the large expectations from the convention.

- The Carpathian local NGOs need capacity buildings for a more effective involvement in the CC process. It was pointed out in the interviews that "*There are many organisations that are increasingly distancing from the CC, as they don't understand all the procedures, lots of reports, etc*". A possible explanation can be the lack of capacities of the Carpathian local NGOs.

5.3 Alpine and Carpathian Convention and the principles of governance

Table 12. Alpine Convention, Carpathian Convention and Governance Principles.

Alpine Convention	Carpathian Convention
Public Participation (PP): - The AC did not have a significant impact on the PP in the Alpine process - PP in the Alpine convention and process is generally perceived to be "very low" - The AC involves the civil society in an official observatory process - The "Report on the state of the Alps" starting from 2007, should contribute to better access to information - PP is expected to be more properly addressed in the AC next phase, expected to be focus on public relations and communication	**Public Participation (PP):** - CC has had a positive *input* to the PP in the Carpathian process - CC applies an open approach to civil society with no conditions for their participation - The CC has especially contributed for a better access to information and involvement of NGOs in the working groups
Policy integration (PI): - AC diversity of topics provides positive input to the policy integration - There was no need for the Alpine countries to change the existing national legislation in order to comply to the AC protocols - The AC address different issues, but they are separately addressed through different protocols, which are not significantly coherent. - The protocol on spatial planning and SD give more space for policy integration - The policy integration is not addressed by the AC as such. The PI differs from country to country, and it is up to the national administration in each individual state to ensure the policy integration in the respective country.	**Policy integration (PI):** - CC diversity of topics provides positive input to the policy integration - No protocols to the CC are developed yet - CC has positive impact on development of new mountain legislations in the Carpathian countries. - The CC considers the interrelations between different sectors/protocols in to date process of protocol development. An example is the preparation of the biodiversity protocol that is tightly related to the protocol on forestry.
Partnerships and Networking (PN): - The AC positively impacts the partnership building and networking in the Alpine region and other mountain regions (caucuses, Central Asia, SEE, etc). - The most important partnerships and networks are those between the Alpine protected areas (ALPARC); municipalities (Alliance in the Alps) and in the research (ISCAR). - The EU INTERREG Alpine Space Programme has largely contributed to the joint actions and cooperation among different actors in the Alpine region.	**Partnerships and Networking (PN):** - The CC positively impacts partnership building and networking in the Carpathian region. - There are no larger networks among municipalities and among research institutions, established yet. - The Carpathian network of protected areas (CNPA) is established in reference to the CC - The partnership approach is especially well established in the Carpathian project, which involves 18 partners. - There are MoUs established with other institutions, organisations and initiatives

Discussing the three selected principles in the two conventions, without considering the existing differences in conditions and structures between the two conventions, would not be complete.

> ➤ **Differences the AC and CC inherently involve:**

• The organisation, structure and capacities of actors involved in the AC and the CC processes significantly differ. In the Alpine region there is relatively large and well structured local governance (e.g. local NGOs and municipalities). The Carpathian local governance structure is rather young and in a phase of formation. Stronger local actor structures, providing for better networking and implementation, is a strong point of the AC, and the main challenge of the CC. These differences have an impact on the conventions' approaches and performances in terms of governance principles. One example is the participation of civil society (CS) in the two conventions. The AC is criticised to be "selective" or "exclusive" to the CS, having only eleven official observers to the convention. Unlike, the CC applies an open approach to the participation of the Carpathian and non-Carpathian CS, with no rules and participation procedures. Before making conclusions, it should be considered that many of the Alpine observes are umbrella organisations with up to 100 members. It could be therefore argued that the smaller organisations are indirectly involved in the official observation process. This structure of large umbrella NGOs is still missing in the Carpathian region. This therefore might be a reason for the conventions' different strategies to openness to the CS.

• The more favourable political, social, economic and democratic conditions in the Alpine region have an inherent positive impact on governance principles. In general the Alpine region compared to the Carpathian has longer democratic tradition, decentralised structure and more stable economies. Thus, the Alpine countries are in better position in terms of the three selected governance principles and economic power. However, this should not be misinterpreted that there is a lack of democracy in the Carpathian regions. It is merely to highlight the conventions different starting points.

• The national legislation and related policies are at different development stage in the Alpine and the Carpathian countries. The differences in legal tradition and mountain policies differ from country to country, as well. However, observing the two mountain regions, a general conclusion about the legal systems can be made. In the Alpine countries there were relatively stable legal systems and policies established prior the AC was negotiated. Unlike, the Carpathian countries, especially urged by the recent EU integration process, are currently in a phase of restructuring their legal systems. Therefore, concerning the translation of the conventions' principles and protocols in the national policies, it is more challenging for the AC to make an impact on the existing well-established national legal systems, than it is in the case of CC.

> ➤ **In addition to the different conditions, the following should be pointed out:**

• The AC and CC impacts are difficult to compare as there is a whole decade (11 years) difference between the conventions' entrance into force (AC in 1995 and CC in 2006). This, among other, can partly explain different partnership and network structures in the region.

• Both conventions involve different issues and sectors. However, considering the policy integration, the CC has an added value by referring to the sustainability concept in each policy issue. As discussed above, this might be a consequence of different temporal emergence of the two conventions.

• The AC and the CC approach differently to the Protocol development issue. While the AC has primarily started with the protocol development, the CC balances between the protocol development and programmes, working on both issues simultaneously.

• It is difficult to elaborate on the policy integration in more details, since the CC has not established thematic protocols yet. The observations are based on the protocol development approach and the protocol preparatory events and documents.

5.4 Main actors and their roles in the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions

Table 13. The Alpine and Carpathian Actors – role and involvement.

Alpine Convention	Carpathian Convention
The State as an actor	
The role of the state in the AC is "principal one" compared to the other actors. Many governance related issues are largely arranged at an individual state level	The role of the state in the CC is not superior compared to the role of the other actors.
NGOs as actors	
- There is a strong NGO sector in the Alpine region. - The AC involves Alpine NGOs in the official observer status to the AC. - There is a low level of awareness about the AC among the NGOs. - Local NGOs do not "use" the AC enough, and not many refer to it in their activities (with the exception of NGO projects supported by the Alpine Space Programme). - The INTERREG, Alpine Space Programme have largely promoted the NGO involvement in the Alpine process, by supporting the projects and activities in relation to the AC.	- The NGOs in the Carpathians lack capacities compared to NGOs in the Alpine region. - CC is open to broader CS within and outside the Carpathians, with no official "observatory status to the convention". - There is a low level of awareness about the CC among the local NGOs. - Many large international and fewer regional NGOs are involved in the process of the CC. They participate to the CC meetings and are involved in the CC working groups. - The local NGOs do lack resources and capacities to get involved at larger scales, but they are performing important activities at the local level.
Research Institutions and Academics as actors	
- Research institutions are very involved and well organised in the AC related activities. - The role of EURAC and the ISCAR are of particular importance in the AC process	- The scientific support of the CC is from the beginning provided by the EURAC. - There are no networks among the research institutions referring to the CC in the region. - Establishment of the Carpathian Research initiative is currently being discussed and is in a preparation phase.
Local communities as actors	
- Local communities are well organised and structured in the Alpine region - The Alliance of the Alps, a network of Alpine communities counts more then 200 members and play main role in the AC implementation.	- Until present the role of local communities in the CC is difficult to describe, due to a lack of relevant data and information. - There is no network of local Carpathian communities.
Regional Governance (Cantons, Provinces, Länder, etc.) as actors	
- The early involvement of regional governance actors differs in the countries, yet it is generally perceived to have been very low. - The lack of their involvement was an obstacle for convention negotiation and implementation - Still today the regional level actors could be better involved in the AC processes	- The role of regions in the CC to date is difficult to describe, due to a lack of relevant data and information.
Private Sector (Businesses) as actors	
- Private sector for a long time was not involved in the AC activities. - Still apart from tourism sector where there are some business organisations involved, the businesses are not generally well incorporated in the AC process. - However the businesses play an important role at the national level where they do have a voice on	- The business sector is not well involved in the Carpathian process. - There is particular interest to involve the businesses in the renewable energy and forestry. - WWF is working on an initiative for better integration of the business sector in the Carpathian process.

the Alpine issues. - Recently, there are initiatives for involvement of businesses in the Alpine process, mainly supported by the Alpine Space programme. - The AC observer FIANET (an international federation of national associations of cable car operators) and NENA (network enterprise Alps) were mentioned to be involved.	
Intergovernmental Organisations (including the EU) as actors	
- The EU is an AC party and has been always supportive to the AC. - The role of the other intergovernmental organisations until do date is irrelevant. - The role of other international agreements and strategies especially in climate change issue can become relevant concerning the AC Climate Action.	- The role of intergovernmental organisations in the CC is very important. - UNEP Vienna acts as an Interim Secretariat of the CC as of 2004. - The EU is not a part of the CC, however it supports the Carpathian project. - To date there is no EU programme referring to the CC, as it is the case of EU INTERREG Alpine Space programme in the AC. - The CC can benefit from the EU involvement concerning many issues.

5.5 Main strengthens and challenges of the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions

Considering all previously discussed issues, the following part summarises the most relevant strengthens, weaknesses, success, achievements and challenges of the AC and the CC. This part is particularly important for drawing the most relevant experiences from the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions for the SEE (Balkan) Mountain initiative.

Table 14. Alpine and Carpathian conventions' strengthens and challenges.

Alpine Convention	Carpathian Convention
Strengthens and/or Success	
- Creating or strengthening the Alpine identity - EU INTERREG Alpine Space Programme - Well established local actors, NGOs and local municipalities - High level of democracy, good economic and social conditions, and relatively strong institutions - The variety of issues the AC embraces - Existence of the partnerships that work on AC implementation - Development of the AC protocols - Openness to civil society	- Creating the image of the Carpathians as one region – "Carpathian identity". - Having an external facilitating body, such as the UNEP, acting as an ISCC - The cooperation and facilitation provided by other non Carpathian countries, such as Italy, Austria, Switzerland - Strengthen of the CC operating as an umbrella for different actors structuring their activities towards a common goal - Creating of national mountain policies that refer to the Carpathian issues and the CC - Participative and open approach - Programme and protocol approaches at the same time
Limitations and/or Challenges	
- Little focus and impact on communication, information and public participation - Weak implementation and enforcement mechanisms - Top-down approach	- Challenge of raising the general awareness among the local people and NGOs - Limitation of a relatively weak local actor structures - NGOs and local communities, and the challenge to strengthen and

- Limitation of secretariat rotation - Challenge to use the AC as a platform for discussion and implementation on bilateral issues - Limited funding of the AC to support activities and projects, and promote a more participative approach - The history of the convention, in terms of the top-down approach and perception of AC as a "green treaty" - The very general approach of the framework convention that does not offer the tools doing the things on the ground level	empower them - Challenge to keep the CC flexible and not to become very official or bureaucratic - Challenge of development of protocols as a necessity for using the tools of the CC - Building the Carpathian Space Programme that will refer to the Carpathians as one region. - Establishment of a reporting system and compliance mechanism - Lack of the strategies to promote economic and social activities and funding - Challenge of preventing and developing the "unique natural and cultural heritage". - Countries' heterogeneous positions, interest and involvement in the process

As Table 14 indicates, the issues related to the AC are largely perceived as "successes and weaknesses", while these of the CC as "strengthens and challenges". It is due to the fact that the AC is longer period of time into force (12 years); while the CC less than 2 years. In summary, the Alpine Convention's main challenges are related to the convention's history, implementation, weak governance principles and lack of implementation tools. The CC main challenges are related to better structured bottom-up initiatives from the local actors, and establishment of the Carpathian regional programme.

6. ALPINE AND CARPATHIAN CONVENTIONS – MODELS FOR SEE (BALKAN) MOUNTAIN INITIATIVE

This chapter discusses the AC as a possible model for other mountain conventions. The chapter focus on the AC and the CC practices in the light of the possible future South-East European (SEE) or Balkan Convention. The Carpathian Convention has somewhat double role here. The CC on one hand is a "model" providing the know-how to the BMI, and on the other it can itself benefit from the Alpine practices.

The question of sharing the conventions' experience, with a particular stress on the AC experience, was addressed in the survey. The chapter is based on the survey results and the literature review. Analysing the AC or the CC as possible "models" for other multilateral mountain agreements, goes hand in hand with the analysis of the conditions, in different mountain regions. Related to that, it is crucially important to consider the following aspects:

- the level of democracy and political structure in the regions of concern,

- the economic conditions and capacities in the regions of concern,

- the structure and capacities of different actors in the regions of concern,

- the structure and capacities of existing legal, social and political institutions in the regions of concern, and

- the main issues, problems and needs in the regions of concern.

Before discussing the Alpine convention, as the possible "model for other conventions", it should be pointed out that:

No "blueprint method" is possible".

There are many reasons why the blueprints would not work. Here are given merely a few. Firstly, the Alpine region has a unique socio-political and economic structure, based on democratic understanding of the state and mainly decentralised system. Secondly, most of the institutions and different governance levels in the Alpine countries are well established (this won't be always a case in other mountain regions). Different priority issues in the Alps compared to those of other mountain regions is also a relevant point. Thus, it is clear that the approaches and strategies cannot be simplistically transferred in any other convention and region. However, in the condition of appropriate analysis it is possible to identify and use some key learned messages.

- Identification of the *common interests* is a prerequisite for sharing of the experiences and main challenges.

Sharing of the experiences among mountain conventions can be beneficial, but every region needs to find what their common interests are. Building "common interest" means bringing different stakeholders together – *the challenge of participation*. Common interests will vary between different types of stakeholders and one answer will not satisfy the different needs – *the challenge of consensus building*. The Alpine experience of partnerships and networks among different actors working across the same region (communities, towns, NGOs, governments) is of particular relevance for other mountain conventions.

6.1 Recommendations for the SEE (Balkan) Mountain Initiative

The messages presented below are based on the identified strengthens and weaknesses of the AC and the CC on one side, and the conditions in the Balkan region and BMI current stage, on the other.

Therefore, not all the Alpine practices, strengthens and weaknesses are pointed out, but only those appealing for the BMI.

Learning from the AC history, the actors involved in the BMI should:

- *From the very beginning avoid the top-down approaches.* The top-down or largely state driven approaches were found to be the main obstacles in the Alpine process. They were associated to the lack of broader participation, as well as to the hardened negotiation and problem of ratification in some countries.

- *Include all the aspects of sustainable development and focus on a broader picture.* The perception of the AC being a "green treaty" has had hindering effects on the implementation, over the years. Further the AC being based within the national environmental agencies was associated with the lack of broader participation. The argument is that the peoples see the environmental agencies as bias actors promoting merely the ecological interests. The AC environmental orientation was also related with the low level of business involvement and regional governance. However, until present, it should be clear that the environmental protection is an indispensable part of the SD, and goes hand in hand – not against – the overall development.

Learning from the AC and the CC practices the actors involved in the BMI should:

- *Promote networking among different actors in the region.* The enthusiastic results of the Alpine networks such as the Alliance in the Alps, the ALPARC, ISCAR, CIPRA (umbrella of NGOs), CERI and Carpathian network of protected areas (CNPA) offer a valuable experience to the BMI. The AC continuity and the main accomplishments are mainly related to these organisations and their bottom-up initiatives and projects.

- *Do not focus on complex, "single-sectoral" issues in the phase of protocol development.* The complexity of transport and tourism protocols in the AC is an example. The priority issues for developing protocols should be carefully and commonly identified and negotiated. In addition a necessary level of coherence among the different protocols should be assured. Concerning the protocol development, the BMI should possibly consider the CC strategy, which is based on both programme implementation and protocol development.

- *Strengthen the capacities of local, national and regional actors and their involvement.* Both, the AC and the CC experience, even though in a different way, imply the importance of multi-stakeholder involvement in the convention implementation. Considering the actors' structures in the SEE, one could assume that the challenge of weak local actor structures in the Carpathian process, might be a challenge in SEE (Balkan) region, as well. Therefore the BMI should in particular focus on the capacity building of the local and regional actors.

- *Promote the cooperation and involvement of the private sector (businesses).* There is relatively small private sector involvement in the AC, and hitherto insignificant involvement in the CC. Businesses are indispensable partners in sustainable development. Considering that, the BMI should assess the possibilities and strategies to better involve the private sector. However the benefits and involvement of the business sector will depend from variety of factors, including the compliance mechanism, as well as the private sector structures and interests in the region.

- *Timely seek and ensure means and strategies for actors to work together on one defined and common region – the region of the SEE (Balkan).* The benefits provided by the EU INTERREG Alpine space programme, which promotes the joint action, partnerships and cooperation in the Alpine region, is an example. On the other hand, the CC challenge to establish the Carpathian Space, furthermore implies the importance of such a programme.

- *Ensure that the convention provides tools, instruments and strategies for implementation.* Both framework conventions are based on very general approach and rather loose contents. This has been an obstacle in the implementation phase, as the actors are lacking clear tools for implementing the convention's principles. One way to address this issue is to *balance between the general approach and concrete tools and strategies for action*.

- *Focus on communication, information, awareness rising from the beginning of the process.* In the Alpine and the Carpathian conventions, the lack of stakeholder involvement and top-down approaches have hindered the policy formation process. This has resulted in a lack of ownership of the process by the local actors, insignificant stakeholders' diversity in the process, and problems in negotiation, ratification and implementation.

- *Focus on implementation activities and concrete projects from the beginning.* The projects are good instruments to communicate the convention among the actors. The AC little focus on implementation is one of the reasons for the low level of awareness about the convention. The convention needs to be visible among the local people. They need to see that the convention is there, that there is a work going on, and it is for their good. Therefore the projects apart from being a tool for implementation are also tool for convention communication.

- *Timely ensure an interim or permanent secretariat of the convention.* The AC has been struggling for over ten years of shifting the entire convention's "apparatus" on be-annual base. This has contributed for discontinuity of the process and various disagreements related to the power relations and investments. On the other hand, the CC benefits of having an interim secretariat further emphasise this..

- *Promote the convention as an instrument for cooperation between the countries in the region.* Mountain conventions in the Carpathians, apart from providing a legal base for protection and SD, have an additional value of strengthening the multilateral cooperation in the region. Considering the economic and political transition, heterogeneity among the countries and the recent conflicts in the Balkans, the convention in the region should be promoted and used as "a peace keeping" and cooperative instrument, as well.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND MAIN FINDINGS

7.1 Answering the research question and objectives

In accordance to the study's objectives and research question, here are summarized the main findings and conclusions. The findings and conclusions are organized in a way to answer the posed research question and objectives.

The conclusions are based on the results received by the mean of literature review and interviews. The literature review provides the frame and background information of the studied subjects. The interview-based results give the overall picture and are taken as the base for making conclusions.

The main research question to be answered within this paper is: ***How the governance principles – participation, policy integration and partnerships – have emerged in the Alpine and Carpathian conventions' processes, and how they have been further employed in these processes?***

The findings are presented in relation to three main issues that are also posed as the main objectives of the study: (i) Development processes of the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions, in terms of governance principles; (ii) Emergence and practical application of the governance principles in the Alpine and Carpathian policy processes; (iii) The best practices from the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions, to be considered in the future SEE (Balkan) Mountain Initiative.

- ***Tracing the development processes of the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions.***

Concerning the emergence of Alpine and Carpathian Conventions, it is concluded that the two Conventions, for different reasons, were not promoted through bottom-up initiatives and strong multi-stakeholder approach. Yet, the processes in which the AC and CC have emerged significantly differ.

In case of the Alpine convention, it was largely accepted that the convention was a top-down approach, led by some Alpine states. The stakeholder group urging for a convention was not diverse, and there were no significant initiatives to involve more stakeholders in the process. The role of CIPRA, an international NGO (as of 1975), was vital in promoting the idea and negotiation of the AC. It took almost 40 years from the idea to the agreement on the AC. The long negotiation processes are brought in relation to the "lack of governance initiatives", broader participation and stakeholder involvement.

In case of the Carpathian Convention, a more diverse structure of stakeholders was involved in promotion and negotiation of the convention. Along with the Carpathian states, the external actors, such as UNEP, large international and regional NGOs, Alpine countries and some smaller NGOs were involved. The international actors continue to facilitate the Carpathian Process. However, the role and involvement of other actors – local NGOs, communities, and businesses is relatively small.

Concerning the development processes of the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions; it was found that the Alpine Convention have marked a relatively slow and "phase-separated" development process, with a strong procedural way of working. It has focused mainly on protocol development and less on implementation. The Carpathian Convention, on contrary, operates in a more flexible way, involving different actors in formal and informal way of working and cooperation. The implementation of the CC is a combined approach of protocol development, programmes and national assessments. In

addition the Alpine convention changing trends should be pointed out. The AC is changing in terms of the content (becoming more "integrative") and in terms of governance principles (focusing more on governance principles, such as partnerships and networking).

- ***Understanding the emergence and practical application of the governance principles – participation, policy integration and partnerships – in the Alpine and Carpathian policy processes.***

The governance elements and principles have been developing differently in the Alpine and Carpathian processes.

In case of the Alpine Convention, despite the recent governance positive changing trends, the governance principles are still weakly established in the AC processes. Considering the three selected governance principles (participation, policy integration and partnerships), it is to conclude:

The participation to date has not changed or improved due to the AC existence. Despite the established information system and well-established local governance structures, the principle of *public participation* is not properly addressed in the Alpine process. This has resulted in low level of actors' involvement in the process, and lack of awareness and support for the convention at local and regional levels. However, the existing networks provide an important counter balance to the top-down approaches, through the bottom-up initiatives and implementation programmes.

The AC provides an input to the policy integration, as it addresses various policy themes. However it does not directly address the coherence among these policy issues. The policy integration is mainly addressed at the individual state level, and is not promoted by the AC, as such. The Alpine protocols have not made significant changes to the national legislation and policies, as the existing policies in most of the Alpine Countries were already in compliance with rather general convention's protocols.

Networking and partnership building in the Alpine region was positively influenced by the AC. There are networks that largely implement the AC objectives and that refer to the AC. The networks among the Alpine research institutions, Alpine municipalities and Alpine protected areas perform valuable activities towards AC implementation.

In case of the Carpathian Convention, it was generally accepted that the CC largely considers and applies most of the governance principles. Concerning the three selected principles, it is to conclude that:

Public participation in the Carpathian process is widely promoted and encouraged by the Carpathian convention. While the structures of local governance are rather small, the convention applies an open and participative approach to the civil society, with no procedures and rules for participation. However, due to the local actor small structures and capacities, their involvement in the processes is still to be improved.

The principle of policy integration is emphasised in the convention's documents and meeting proceedings. Yet, so far the Carpathian convention has not established a any protocol; thus it is difficult to elaborate on the principle of policy integration and CC principles translation in the

national policies. However, due to the process of policy transformation in the region, the CC has a good opportunity to promote the Carpathian priorities and principles in the national legislations.

There is a positive tendency to partnerships and networking, evident through Memoranda of understanding and some established partnerships and networks. However, there are many challenges related to partnership and networking, mostly related to the weak structures of local and regional actors in the region. An additional obstacle for better networking is the challenge of building Carpathian Space programme that would focus on the Carpathian region, as unique geographical and mountain space.

- **Identifying the best practices from the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions, to be considered in the future SEE (Balkan) Mountain Initiative.**

Summarizing the Chapter 8, where the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions are regarded as a "model for SEE (Balkan) Mountain Initiative", the following main recommendations are summarized:

- Initiate and further head the policy reform process through public-private partnerships and increase public participation. The issues of capacity building and sustainable means of funding are particularly important.
- Adopting a holistic approach, including all the pillars of sustainable development, as well as a complex system thinking approach. Multi-sectoral negotiation of the convention and cooperation with other legal and managerial instruments in place should be assured.
- Towards a durable and effective implementation, the following aspects deserve particular pronunciation: Implementation of the convention through protocols and programmes; Timely setting a permanent or interim secretariat of the convention and Defining of the implementation tools and strategies.

7.2 Conclusions related to the concept and principles of governance

The Conventions' emergence, development processes, challenges and opportunities illustrate some important conclusions concerning the concept of governance. The main conclusions refer to:

1. **Positive correlations between governance principles and policy changes (emergence of new conventions).**

Both conventions' practices show positive correlations between their emergence and the governance principles. The emergence of the Alpine Convention was found to be a rather top-down driven process, with a low level of multi-stakeholder initiatives. On the other hand, the negotiation of the AC was a very complicated, conflicted and a long-lasting process. On contrary, the emergence and negotiation of the Carpathian Convention involved more diverse stakeholders and the non-state actors have an important role in the process and working groups. The negotiation of the CC proceeded rather "untroubled". It was negotiated through an active proceeding of meetings which took place about 3 years to agree on the final convention.

Recognising that there are numerous factors influencing the policy changes (such as the local socio-economic and political conditions, inclination for policy reform, etc.) this correlation can be further challenged (see Chapter 7.2).

2. **The critical role and need of "governance entrepreneurs" to create the level of generative political participation and governance capacities**

The interviews posed the question of "appropriate level" of actor involvement in a policy process (convention), in order the initiative to be understood as "participative" vs. "non-participative" or "top-down vs. bottom-up". The inconsistency in perceptions certainly reflects the need for further research in the issue (see Chapter 7.2). However, the discussion about the "appropriate or critical level of governance principles" applied in specific structure of actors and their involvement in the AC and the CC, stresses the issue of "governance entrepreneurs" (Shannon, M. 2006). "Governance entrepreneurs" as a concept implying the different level actors involved in a political participation, which participation allows stakeholders to act in accordance with governance principles, and in turn to result in generating of new policies (Shannon, M. 2001; 2003 and 2006).

3. **The AC slightly positive changing trends in respect to governance principles support the expectations or assumptions about the way in which governance emerges.**

The governance emerges through a mixture of unstructured, formal and informal actor interactions, largely promoted by the recent scientific and political discussion. The AC changing trends in the last 15 years, in terms of governance and SD principles, support this general assumption.

4. **International actors have strengthened the governance initiatives in the Carpathian Convention.**

The CC in particular shows the beneficial role of the international actors in encouraging governance initiatives. This does not imply that all international actors have positive inputs to strengthening governance structures and effective policy changes. But here, the accent is on international actors deeply involved in the SD and the governance debate.

7.2 Governance puzzles and further research

Addressing the governance issues in the Conventions involved many puzzles or even "paradoxes". The puzzling questions are largely related to *"measuring governance"* or "critical amount" of actor involvement and participation. The most puzzling issues were related to:

- The "critical or appropriate amount" to which the actors should be involved in a particular process, in order that process to be considered: formal vs. informal; top-down vs. bottom-up; participative vs. non-participative.

Even though, it should be by now clear that there is nothing like a "great formula" or recipe about the actor "critical amount" of participation and involvement, and every particular case is unique. Nevertheless, the survey has found that this is a generally misinterpreted issue. The above mentioned notion of "governance entrepreneurs" further implies that there is a need for a "beneficial diverse actor involvement" that is unique for each particular case. However, the concept of "governance entrepreneurs", their roles, mutual interactions and strategic behaviour need further research.

- The interrelations between the bottom-up and multi-stakeholder initiatives (participation) and the dynamics of policy changes.

Referring to the first governance related conclusion the positive correlations between governance principles and the emergence of a convention (policy changes) (Chapter 7.2., conclusion number 1). While the conclusion holds for the case of this study, there is a generally accepted assumption that the participation of more stakeholders can delay and challenge the consensus building. It came to be a puzzle in this research too. Precisely, the "lack of governance" was used, in the interviews, to advocate two opposite trends: the hardened negotiation in the AC ("passive policy change"), and the smooth negotiation of the CC ("active policy changes"). Concerning the Carpathian case, one of the interviewed subjects argues that the *"prompt negotiation of the CC is related to the weak involvement of the local actors"*.

The usefulness of this study is to open these questions to critique and scrutiny by utilizing the foundational principles of "good governance" as the lens for examination. In the case of the Alpine Convention, it is in the implementation process where the slow effect of these principles is evidenced through practice and addressing practical problems. Whereas in the Carpathian Convention, there was a greater degree of pre-policy design in which these principles were explicitly used to design the process as well as the substance of the agreement. What will happen with the SEE mountain process remains opaque, while the policy actors engage in self-identification and generation of a new mode of generative politics.

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Annex 1. Interview on the Alpine Convention

Leading Questions:

1. Describe the governance initiatives in the Alpine region prior the AC was signed, and what was the AC impact on these initiatives?

2. How the AC facilitates governance processes, in particular the principles of public participation, policy integration and partnership building?

3. Who are the involved actors/sectors in the Alpine process and what are their roles?

4. Does, how and why the AC is changing over time?

5. Alpine vs. Carpathian Conventions – what are the strategies, approaches and governance issues in the two conventions?

6. What are the most relevant strengths, weaknesses, results and limitations of the AC?

Here are presented the interviews conducted for the AC. There are in total six issues discussed with the interviewed subjects. All the answers about specific issues are analysed and presented together. The questions address the issues appearing to be of critical importance. The questions are based on the previously conducted literature review and questionnaires.

Research Subjects

The research subjects are stakeholders involved in the Alpine process. They are coming from five different sectors. All of them are directly involved in Alpine projects, working groups or as external experts.

Therefore, in order to hear different voices from different perspectives, the interviewed Carpathian stakeholders come from the following sectors:

*   Convention's official body

*   Politics – National Ministries

*   NGO Sector

*   Academic sector (University)

*   AC external expertise (a long-year researcher in the AC processes)

Results:

The summary and analysis of the interviews per each question is done separately. There have been different opinions given about some of the questions. The different opinions are presented as summaries for each particular question. These summaries are thereafter supported by few originally given statements (in the quotation marks). In addition, it is acknowledged by which sector the statement was given.

The question number 5 "Alpine vs. Carpathian Conventions" is presented separately and it includes the answers received by both, Alpine and Carpathian interviewed subjects.

1. **Describe the governance initiatives in the Alpine region prior the AC was signed, and what was the AC impact on these initiatives?**

Discussing the question resulted in the three following main conclusions:

*   The AC was very much a top-down process, mainly shaped and developed by the national governments. There was CIPRA pushing for it, but not many other actors and stakeholders were engaged in the process.

"The big issue of governance in the Alpine process is that the AC was very much a top-down process and it was developed by the national governments. This has resulted in difficulty in the latter protocol negotiations and implementation. One example are the cantons in Switzerland that were not properly involved at the beginning of the process, and this is one reasons it took a lot of time for Switzerland to support the whole process (Academic sector).

"…and even more at the local level there was not an involvement of local communities or NGOs. That's why the CIPRA's initiative for the Alliance in the Alps. The Alliance in the Alps is a try to find a counter balance to the top-down way of the AC negotiation and protocol development. (Academic sector).

"The initiative for the AC comes form CIPRA and it was from the beginning an important stakeholder in the AC. It is true that not many others NGOs or other actors were involved. Even these involved there were not NGOs, but other governmental organisations such as Arge Alp and COTRAO" (NGO sector).

- There were some small (ad-hoc) governance initiatives (e.g. networking) in the Alpine region, mainly driven by the ongoing EU integration process. However, a general "governance deficit" at that time is evident**.**

"There were some cross-order cooperation and governance processes in the Alpine region before the AC, and we can consider them "governance processes". However, these initiatives were mainly at very small scales. For instance some ad-hoc groups on particular issues, such as water pollution, rivers, national parks, transportation issues, etc. So while there were some governance issues before, the very long time that took CIPRA to get the countries to agree on the convention shows that there was also a general 'deficit of governance', and that not many other actors were involved" (AC independent expertise).

- Considering the AC impact on the early governance and cooperative initiatives, the AC has initially contributed for a "more formal and procedural way of working", though not necessarily for weakening of these initial networking and cooperation activities.

"The initiatives that were taking place before the AC signing and ratifying haven't been disturbed by the AC, but only perhaps working in a bit another – more official level. So the results of the formal procedures could be higher let's say, but they are not directly disturbing other initiatives (AC official body).

 "It can be said that the AC has contributed for a more formal and official way of working, especially at the beginning. The AC is a framework convention with many processes. And in the first 10 years the convention was focused on elaborating the protocols. The representative of the states had the idea that first the protocols need to be signed before the implementation starts. So during this period the main work was related to procedures and in general it was a time of little action" (NGO sector).

2. **How the AC facilitates governance processes, in particular the principles of public participation, policy integration and partnership building?**

► Considering the AC and governance in general, it was pointed out that:

- The AC was not until recently focusing much on good governance aspects.

"The AC is a framework convention, and it does not provide any details about governance related or any other specific issues. But taking into consideration the actors involved in the negotiation of the AC, I think that it was all mainly done at a government level, even though CIPRA was more involved in the protocol level" (Academic sector).

"For sure, regarding the Public relations and communication the AC could have done and should do more. But, it also can be a next phase of the convention. The governance in the AC as such, is related to the different phases of the convention. Firstly we had the phase of shifting the whole administrative apparatus every second year. Then, second phase was installation of the Permanent Secretariat of AC (PSAC) that is going for three years now. Finally, when the PASC is established and the procedures

and relations between PSAC and presidency are defined – the activities could go more in the relation of public relations and communication of the convention" (AC official body).

> ➢ Considering the three selected principles of Public Participation, Policy integration and Partnerships:

The most positive answers were related to the partnerships and networking. Slightly different opinions were given about the policy integration. And a general opinion about a "relatively weak" participation in the Alpine process, was found.

- **Considering the Partnership building and Networking (PN)**, the successful examples of more "continual" partnerships, such as ALPARC and Alliance of the Alps were pointed out. The role of INTERREG supporting partnership and networking initiatives was also recognised as "very important". In addition, it was pointed out that the PN were established in relation, but not because of the convention.

"On the partnerships, I think there we have some interesting processes that emerge. One is the Alliance in the Alps that has emerged as a bottom up process, initiated by CIPRA, and it is continued. Second is a Network on Protected Areas, again facilitated by governments but much more inclusive. Then especially in the research area, there have been lots of partnerships developed, such as the ISCAR and the Alpine Forum. Then as about SOIA, if you look at the whole idea of SOIA, that has been a really top-down process, and that has been one of the reasons that it didn't take of very well" (Academic sector).

"Partnership building and networking have definitely increased since the signature of AC. It is always a bit difficult to say what is to be attributed to the AC. The EU has an important role, the INTEREG Alpine Space programme is a specific programme of the EU for the Alpine region. And these programmes widely support partnerships and networking initiatives" (AC external expertise).

- **Considering the Policy integration (PI),** it is to conclude that the AC addresses a wide variety of different issues; however there is no integration among these protocols. PI is largely arranged on the national level in each particular country. In some countries the AC issues are coordinated by one agency, but specific issues and protocols are further "delegated to the respective sector for that issue". The necessary consultations among different working groups within PSAC are also taking place.

"I think integration and intersectoral working happens at several levels. First, at a national level, the focal points in each country look how to organise the intersectoral work in the respective country. The focal points as such, are still integrated in the Environmental ministries. So the question is how they manage other administrations and agencies in terms of becoming "cros-sectoral". Then at the level of the AC and PSAC, we have the working groups that are sectoral, but at the meetings of the PSAC all these topics and issues come every time together, so these meetings are a possibility to observe the links among different issues and are also a possibility for common initiatives" (AC official body).

- There is "sectoral integration" at national level in some countries.

"In Switzerland one agency has the lead for relation with the AC. It used to be the Environmental agency now it is an Agency for Spatial development. This agency is simply the coordinating one, while the specific protocol negotiation and operation are delegated to the respective sector/agency. So agriculture does the mountain agriculture, the Ministry of nature does the forestry etc. Therefore, the Ministry of Environment coordinate but other agencies are involved; as that they are involved they have to talk to each other. So from the perspective of PI it is an additional mechanism for inter-sectoral coordination that perhaps did not exist before the AC was created. I don't know how it is in other countries, but at least in Switzerland in my opinion PI has increased with the AC" (AC external expertise).

- A lack of policy integration approach within the AC was also pointed out:

"The AC is focusing on so many fields, and at the beginning the PI was not a priority for the AC. Latter we have developed the protocols on SD. All in all, I think the PI could be applied in a better way. But from the beginning a very sectoral approach was applied, an exp. is the transport issue. Transportation was priority and not much interference with other sectors were even mentioning" (Politics).

- **Considering the public participation (PP),** rather unenthusiastic and short answers were given. It was pointed out that the PP is addressed by other international conventions, such as the Aarhus Convention. The comments about the PP varied from the *"PP hasn't changed a lot because of the AC"*, to *"not a huge amount of participation is there"*. However, the participation is expected to be addressed in a better way in the AC next phase.

"The problem of participation in the Alpine process and difficulty the AC to promote it is related to the heterogeneity in approaches, strategies and interests in different countries. But, said in an open way, the PP hasn't changed a lot because of the AC and its protocols. PP procedure is laid down in other lows at EU and international level, such as Aarhus convention. So, the AC is from that point of view is not new one that foster and focuses on the PP" (Politics).

"Considering the negotiation of the AC, the top-down approaches and the little focus on the local level initiatives, one can say that there is not a "huge amount" of participation there" (Academic sector).

"Regarding the public participation, public relation and communication, the AC could have and should do more. But it is also can be a next phase of the Convention" (AC official body).

"The PP is at a low level up to now. It is related to the initiation phase of establishing the structures and finishing the protocols for about ten years. In addition there was no PSAC, so there was not really very much contribution of the AC to strengthen the PP. We still hope this can be improved in the future with the PSAC and the established structures. In addition, recently some of the AC parties gave some money for Public activities, but it is called "public relations" (NGO sector).

- A possible reasons for the AC weak promotion of public participation, in the case of Switzerland, but perhaps relevant in general, was mentioned:

"Concerning the PP, one of the biggest problems is that the real stakeholders are subnational political actors: Länder in Germany, Provinces in Italy, Cantons in Switzerland. But development of protocols and AC is within the Environmental ministries (EMs). EMs generally do not have good relations with general population, as the population (especially in the Alpine region) feel EMs or agencies only want to create national parks and take away there right to hunt, etc. So, as the EMs mainly do not have good relations to the local stakeholders, they are not in good position to bring for better PP (AC external expertise)".

3. Who are the involved actors/sectors in the Alpine process and what are their roles?

In this question different actors and their roles and involvement are discussed. The main discussion is about the role of the NGO sector, businesses, intergovernmental organisations, and sub-national level actors. The role of the Alpine states is not discussed here, as it is already thoroughly discussed in the part on the emergence of governance principles.

Non-Governmental Sector:

Considering the role of the NGOs in the Alpine process, the following conclusions can be made:

- There is a strong and well established NGO sector in the Alpine countries and the NGOs have an important role in the AC:

"In comparison to other international agreements, in the AC NGOs have a very strong and influential role. We know that if there was no CIPRA there will not be an AC. Of course that is not to say that they are the only one, because if the countries don't want to ratify the protocols, they won't, whether CIPRA or anyone else push for it. So, CIPRA through an international office and at national levels,

acting as a network with some other organisation (WWF, Pronatura etc.), they are very strong and very active in the Alpine Process" (AC external expertise).

- Smaller local level organisations do not use the convention in a significant extent.

"At the ground level, I think the NGOs do not use the AC enough. This practice until now is not well developed" (AC official body).

- Using the AC by the NGOs is significantly promoted by the INTERREG Alpine Space Programme.

"If the NGOs do not use the AC as a background for their projects; that means that there are no incentives for them to do that. An exception is the EU INTERREG Alpine Space Programme, which support projects focused on the AC and SD in the Alpine region. (Academic sector).

Private Sector (PS) or Businesses

As about the involvement of business sector in the AC, the following points were emphasised:

- The AC official bodies do not clearly see the way how to involve the business sector from their side.

"A better involvement of private sector is an objective for sure. The question is a bit how to do it. From our side as a Convention, I don't see a way to involve them. It is clear the AC is signed only by the parties – the Alpine states, and it has to be implemented in each country through the administration. So, I think it is up to the administration in each country to see how they can involve the NGOs and businesses. A lack of private sector involvement is perhaps also related to the AC history, as it came more from a NGO and conversationalist ground" (AC official body).

- In some countries private sector have important role to decide on the Alpine issues, but this is arranged on the individual state level, and therefore depends from country to country

"Although in my research I haven't found a lot about the private sector role in the Alpine process, I am not sure if it means that there are no businesses involved in the process. I know that private sector plays a role in the Alpine issues, at a national level. For instance there is no way that Switzerland would develop the position about tourism related to the AC without having consulted the Tourism association. But that doesn't mean that this Tourism association go to the meetings and workshops and provide an input there" (AC independent expertise).

- There are initiatives for private sector (businesses) direct involvement, especially in tourism sector.

"There are initiatives for business sector involvement; there is FIANET in Tourism issue, which is an official observer to the AC. There is the NENA network, where CIPRA is the only NGO, the other members are private companies. But also the INTERREG (3B at least) have supported many initiatives and projects where many partners are private companies" (NGO sector).

- The possible reasons for an insufficient involvement of businesses in the Alpine process are: the history of the AC, the private sector structures in the countries, the lack of businesses' genuine interest to get involved, and the AC low impact on the business sector.

"The critical question about the private sector in the AC and process is whether it has an interest to get involved. Although there are some sectors, such as tourism that are more involved, but would it be beneficial for other businesses to work with the AC? And an additional reason is the AC protocols influence of the businesses operation. As long as the AC protocols are less powerful compared to the EU and national legislation – as they are – the AC makes no influence on their business operation and so they do not have an interest to get involved" (Academic sector).

Intergovernmental organisations:

Concerning the role of Intergovernmental organisations' in the Alpine process, the following feedback is received.

- Apart from the EU which is an AC party, according to the interviewed subjects, there is no much space other intergovernmental organisations or agreements to get more involved.

"The role of the EU in the AC is very important; it is one of the AC parties. As about other intergovernmental organisations, such as UN for instance, I cannot really imagine how they could be important in the AC processes. At the moment, I would say it is more important to get to the ground – better networking with the NGOs and enterprises" (AC official body).

"About the role of intergovernmental organisations; well it depends how we consider the EU. The EU has a key role and input to the AC. But the UN for instance I don't see they are important, the AC is also a member to the Mountain Partnership, but that is a fairly new institution so I don't know how important that all is" (AC independent expertise).

<u>Sub-national actors:</u>

The role of the sub-national actors was pointed out by one of the interviewed subjects:

- The sub-national actors, such as the regions and the city regions haven't been properly involved from the very start, and the consequences of the lack of involvement are still present.

"One big sector where I don't see much involvement and activities related to the AC, are the city regions. The reason why in Switzerland so many protocols have not been ratified, is a general misunderstandings from both sides – the central government and the cantons. Similarly in Italy, there is a formally decentralised system, but there is no much involvement from the Italian provinces. In Germany, they were lucky that Bavaria at that time had a strong political will when the AC was discussed. But all in all, I generally don't see much involvement of the Alpine countries' regions in the Alpine process as I would expect" (AC independent expertise).

4. Does, how and why the AC is changing over time?

The changes of the AC are evident in two different ways. One refers to the convention's content, and to the AC different development phases from the beginning until today.

- Considering the content of the convention, the shift from the convention\s "environmental to a more developmental image" is particularly conspicuous. The general trend of integration of the environmental with SD issue, on one hand and the advocacy for socio-economic issues, are recognised as two main factors.

"In terms of the content, initially one of the main concerns of the AC was the environmental protection. Especially the Switzerland cantons have seen the AC as an environmental and against economic development convention. I think this is one of the key factors for emergence and involvement of the sustainability issues latter" (Academic sector).

"There is a difference on how it is changing and how the changes are being perceived. If you talk to people who were close to the AC, they will tell you that they have very broad SD outlook from the very start. But that's different from how it is perceived, especially by the sub-national and local actors who did perceive the AC as a green treaty from the start. And these perceptions have slowly changed; not necessarily as a result by the activities of AC itself but by the general global change in perceptions about the environmental issue" (AC external expertise).

- The AC has been going through different stages in these 16 years. The first phase was the "Be-annual shifting of the AC presidency". Second "Installation of the PSAC". And the next phase is expected to be a "Phase of new emerging challenges and implementation".

"There were different phases in the Convention. At the beginning there was no the PSAC. It meant that every 2 years the whole administrative and supportive apparatus of the AC, together with the presidency, was changing. Afterwards, there was a phase of installation of the PSAC, that is going on for 3 years now. With the new situations when PSAC is established, the procedures and relations between the PSAC and presidency defined; the next phase of AC can be "How the AC to become more effective in terms of networking, cooperation and communication" (AC official body).

- The AC changing trends in terms of the governance principles was also pointed out.

"I think there are some changing trends. One is the role of the Civil Society. It is more appreciated, we are considered as real partners in implementation. There is a general tendency towards more participation in the AC. The PSAC increasingly emphasise the importance to ask other actors: local people, Alpine towns etc. But on the other side they have no tools. The AC doesn't provide tools, as it is very general. It seems there is interest and tendency, but hitherto the tools are missing (NGO sector).

5. **Alpine vs. Carpathian Conventions – what are the strategies, approaches and governance issues in the two conventions?**

This question is presented separately, combining the answers given from the Alpine and Carpathian stakeholders/subjects. See page 81-84.

6. **What are the most relevant strengths, weaknesses, results and limitations of the AC?**

Most important strengthens, achievements, results or successes are:

- Recognising the Alps as one region and creating (or at least) strengthening the Alpine identity,
- The EU INTERREG Alpine Space Programme that provides incentives for different actors and people to work together in a clearly defined region,
- Well established structure and strong capacities of the local actors, such as NGOs and local communities,
- High level of democracy, good economic and social conditions in the Alpine region, and relatively strong institutions,
- *"The strengths of AC is its inter-sectoral approach, in whatever way it might work or not. The AC has created a strong signal and intensive process towards the integration" (AC independent expertise).*
- The framework convention protocol approach. "*I am not aware of any other international agreement that has created so many protocols in such a short time*" (AC independent expertise).
- The created partnerships that largely do the implementation work, especially the Alliance in the Alps – the main "bottom-up counter balance in the AC".
- Openness to civil society.

Most important limitations or weaknesses:

- Little focus and impact on communication, information and public participation, until present,
- *"AC has been fairly weak in implementation and enforcement mechanism, this is probably by consensus a weakness of the AC" (AC independent expertise).*
- Top-down approach of the AC,
- Secretariat and the consequent discontinuity in the Alpine process,
- Not using the AC as a platform for discussion and implementation on a bilateral level,
- Limited funding of the AC to support activities and projects, and promote a more participative approach,
- The top-down approach of the AC and the perception of being a "green treaty" are still acting as a significant obstacle,
- The very general approach of the framework convention and not providing the tools for implementation,
- The large focus of the AC and vague and unclear objectives.

Annex 2. Interview on the Carpathian Convention

Leading Questions:

1. Describe the governance initiatives in the Carpathian region prior the AC was signed, and what was the Convention's impact on these initiatives_

2. How the CC facilitates governance processes, in particular the principles of public participation, policy integration and partnership building?

3. Who are the involved actors/sectors in the Carpathian process and what are their roles?

4. What are the CC main results to date, and the CC long perspectives?

5. Alpine vs. Carpathian Conventions – what are the strategies, approaches and governance issues in the two conventions?

6. What are the most relevant strengths, weaknesses, results and limitations of the CC?

Here are presented the interviews conducted for the CC. Similarly as in the Alpine convention, there are in total six issues discussed with the interviewed subjects. The interviews on the AC and the CC differ in one question. The AC stakeholders/subjects are asked to reflect on the AC changing trends over time; while in the CC, the subjects are asked to reflect on the CC long term perspectives. All the answers about a specific issue are analysed and presented together.

The questions address the most critical points. These points are based on the results obtained from the previously conducted literature review and the questionnaires.

Research Subjects

The five research subjects are stakeholders of the Carpathian process and are coming from three different sectors:

- Convention's official body,

- NGO Sector,

- Academic institution (University).

All of them are directly involved – in projects and CC working groups. However, in the case of the CC, the diversity of interviewed subjects is smaller than in the AC. There is an important sector missing – the politics. The main reason was the planning and scheduling problems. Therefore, there are two interviewed subjects coming from the NGO and academic sector, and one from the convention official body.

Results

The summary and analysis of the interviews is done per each question separately. The different opinions are presented as conclusions for each particular question. These conclusions are thereafter supported by the original statements given from the interviewed subjects. And the sector by which the particular statement was received is also given next to it.

The question number 5 is presented separately and it includes the answers received by both, Alpine and Carpathian interviewed subjects.

1. Describe the governance initiatives in the Carpathian region prior the CC was signed, and what was the Convention's impact on these initiatives?

Concerning the initiatives of CC the following opinions were given:

- There were earlier NGO networking in the Carpathian region, as well as good relations and transboundary initiatives for cooperation among some of the Carpathian countries.

"There was a project for "Networking of Carpathian NGOs", from early 1994-95. It was an initiative for cooperation among Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine, and not "the Carpathians" as it means today.

Then again latter, in 1998-99, the same three countries cooperated in a project on the Carpathian region, mostly focused on biodiversity and regional development" (NGO sector).

- There was a multi-stakeholder enthusiasm and positive attitude to the convention, as well as a smooth negotiation process. The crucial role of UNEP, Ukraine and some organisations, such as WWF was particularly emphasised.

"I think that at the beginning the NGOs started pushing, but then the governments also got involved. The driving force was also the WWF International with the Danube Carpathian Programme, which launched the Carpathian Eco Region Initiative (CERI). In addition, the crucial role of Ukraine that really wanted this convention shouldn't be forgotten. So in my opinion, there were these loose contexts before the Carpathian Danube Summit. Finally, UNEP run the process of CC since the beginning. So it was really a mixture of different actors towards a common goal for Carpathian Convention" (NGO sector).

"UNEP has been very active to stimulate the definition of the CC, thanks to the experience of the Alpine Convention. And I found everybody both public institutions and Civil Society (CS) open and positively minded to the idea of CC. So the process went quite smoothly. It is also due to the framework approach of the convention that does not involve precise and clear commitments" (Academic sector).

- Compared to the AC which was largely a top-down initiative, the CC is combination of both top-down and bottom-up initiatives.

"Compared to the AC, we have a different situation, as the CC was not a top down approach; it was a combined top-down and bottom-up approach. So there was a request from the CS on one hand, and willingness of the governments, on the other. While the AC was a more governmental issue, initially ran by Austria and Switzerland. Yes, there was involvement of CIPRA that is a NGO, but it was the only actor pushing for the AC, while CC was an initiative made by several stakeholders from different countries" (CC official body).

- Governments have also had an important role in negotiating the CC; not only the Carpathian, but also the Alpine states. The crucial role of the state is observed in the AC process, as well as in the BMI.

"I think that the CC was an initiative promoted by UNEP, some international NGOs and some states. Not only Ukraine and other Carpathian States, but also other European states such as Italy. Yes, it is more a top-down approach, and it is nothing surprising. Of course in a lot of cases, there is an increasing interest in the region from local people to promote the policy initiatives and government actions. But the real actors were in my opinion UNEP, Alpine Secretariat, and Alpine and Carpathian countries" (Academic sector).

Concerning the CC impact on the initial activities, there is a very positive impression about the convention, acting as platform for cooperation and initiatives between the actors.

However, as it is rather early to elaborate on precise and evident ground impacts, the discussion turned into the convention's long-term possible impacts. The main positions are:

- There is a risk that the CC can become an inflexible and official system, and as such more distant from the NGOs, every next stage

"I would say, the convention is becoming more bureaucratic each stage. Before the Convention was signed, the process driven by the NGOs was very proactive, always thinking and acting ahead. When the convention was signed, there was a lot of enthusiasm and expectations, from NGOs especially. So probably because there were so many expectations, there is some dissatisfaction now. It is a bit because the governments got involved, and UNEP got involved. UNEP drives the process, and it has a lot of credit for everything that happen, but still it is a UN agency and there are procedures for everything, everything takes a long way scale" (NGO sector).

"After the last meeting I attended, I got an impression that NGOs are getting a bit tensed regarding all the preparatory work. Until now the CC has no practical effect in terms of new regulations, funding, initiatives, and so on. Until now we have had a lot of meetings, documents circulating, but no practical results. And I think we will need to wait again some years to see some protocols approved, such as the one for forestry. This is what the NGO sector does not agree with" (Academic sector).

- The pushes or "tensions" from the NGOs is a normal and favourable pre-condition for going ahead.

"Yes, there are pushes from the NGOs, but this is correct, that's the game of different parties. The NGOs should always push for something more and the countries need to be urged by the NGOs. I think it's definitely normal. There are great expectations about the convention, because all the parties and partners are acting very well and they want something concrete on the ground" (CC official body).

2. **How the CC facilitates governance processes, in particular the principles of public participation, policy integration and partnership building?**

Discussing the CC facilitating governance in the Carpathian process led to a general agreement that the CC positively impacts the governance processes.

- ➢ **Public Participation:** All the interviewed subjects have expressed a positive position about the participation issue. The following three points were particularly emphasised:

- Deep involvement of the NGO sector in the working groups and negotiation of the protocols:

"Being involved in a working group from a NGO side, I can say that CC, promoted by UNEP ISCC, is very open and it is involving NGOs directly in the work. So for example in the work of Biodiversity Protocol, the WWF and CERI experts were especially involved and have made direct suggestions. FAO as well have been active in shaping the biodiversity protocol, by including forestry. The CEEWEB is actively involved in the WG on Sustainable Tourism. In general at the meetings I've attended there are always very good discussions and all actors participate and contribute. So, I would say there is participation in the Carpathian process" (NGO sector).

- There are many non-Carpathian actors involved in the CC and process.

"Regarding the impact on participation, I have to say that a lot of things are already in place. You should consider the Conference of the Parties 1 (CoP1). There were 200 participants – not 200 ministers – but participants from the NGOs, actors outside the Carpathians, research institutions, academics, etc. So it was really a participatory process. It is not a small club of minister, not even the CoP. So, in this sense we can say that CFC is very participatory and well advanced example of PP" (CC official body).

- In addition, the CC was contrasted to the AC in terms of observer becoming procedures

"Compared to the AC, one should consider the procedures the AC makes for an organisation to become an observer, such as being a transbondery organisation from 3-4 Alpine countries. So there are not many AC observers, as it is difficult to cope with these requirements. While, in case of CC, there are organisations such as EURAC (definitely outside of the Carpathians), REC (a completely international NGO), ANPED (network of NGOs), etc. and they are all informally, or de facto observers to the CC" (CC official body).

- ➢ **Transparency:** Even though the current situation is favourable, the lack of compliance mechanism and the reporting system is an obstacle to a "healthy transparency" in the CC process.

"My impression about the UNEP ISCC, the countries and the CC in general, concerning governance and transparency, so far is positive. There is a political will and interest in cooperation, discussion, people involvement. But, unfortunately the CC doesn't provide for compliance mechanism and there is no reporting system, yet. In the absence of these two instruments, there is no guarantee and it will always depend on the involved actors and political atmosphere" (Academic sector).

➢ **The policy integration** is one of the most tangible CC results until present.

"The most important result of the Convention, in my view, has been that the states in the region are developing new and integrated mountain policies. This is an experience I am transferring from my last meeting, where the representatives from Romania and Czech Republic stated that there is a rise of awareness about the problem, and that they are developing appropriate comprehensive mountain policies, considering the Carpathians as one region, under the CC" (Academic sector).

➢ **Partnerships and Networking** is in its early phase, however there is a strong tendency to it.

"The most important successes and results so far are that CC operates as an umbrella. It is a framework for cooperation and it allows cooperation and communication" (NGO sector).

"There are many partners working on joint projects. An example is the "Carpathian Project", where there are 18 partners now. In addition the UNEP-ISCC promotes the partnership building and is involved in official MoUs with many institutions and organisations within and outside the Carpathian region" (NGO sector).

"Some more extensive networking, especially on the local levels between the communities for example, yet does not take place. The CC is still in the beginning phase, and these issues require more time" (Academic sector).

"A closer cooperation with the EU would be of particular importance in the Carpathian Process. Until present there is nothing much concrete going on" (Academic sector).

3. Who are the involved actors/sectors in the Carpathian process and what are their roles?

In this question the role of the following main sectors and actors are discussed: *UNEP-ISCC; NGO Sector – local, national, regional and international; Governments and public institutions; Intergovernmental organisations; Private Sector; EU and Local authorities.*

➢ **UNEP – Interim secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (ISCC)**:

The role of UNEP-ISCC is perceived as crucially important, especially for the reason that:

- UNEP Vienna is involved from the beginning of the process and its role in defining the CC as such (see question number 1).

- UNEP-ISCC promotes the convention's open and inclusive approach, by encouraging the involvement of civil society and other actors (see questions number 2).

- UNEP-ISCC is focussing on implementation through programmes, and it keeps the convention flexible:

"The CC is a framework convention; there is not much about compliance and obligations. The convention meant to be a platform, promoting activities in the states, and push the things forward. Some of that has taken route through programmes; some through protocols. UNEP concentrates on programmes and it tries to focus on implementation on the ground. Many NGOs are indeed worrying about establishment of a Permanent Secretariat of CC (PSCC) between the parties, as it could bring for a more inflexible convention" (NGO sector).

➢ **Non Governmental Sector**:

The NGO sector acting in the Carpathian region should be observed at different levels – local, national, regional and international. In general the following conclusions are made:

- There are not many local, and even national and regional NGOs. They in general lack capacities and resources, especially compared to the Alpine NGOs,

- On the other hand, there is an agreement that there are large and strong international NGOs actively involved in the process.

"One drawback and limit in the CC and the Carpathian process, unlike in the AC and the Alpine process, is the weak NGO sector. There is no strong organisation of Civil Society, supporting

announcing and stimulating the convention, as it is a case in the AC. If you don't consider the IUCN, WWF and FAO, there are only few NGOs that are playing an important role" (Academic sector).

"I would say there is a mixture. There are few bigger and more influential organisations. Here you would probably list: WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme, REC, CEEWEB, CERI. If you go down from the top level leading NGOs, there are some regional NGOs, though quite few bigger, but there are a lot of NGOs in the region. Yes they are small, they lack the capacities, but they are doing a good work on the local level. The jump from WWF to the local NGOs is not to compare, but even the level in the middle (regional and national organisations) is not very well developed. And I think this is what some of the International NGOs find very hard. They can't find good partners at a regional and national level" (NGO sector).

➢ **<u>Carpathian States and public institutions</u>**:

In terms of the role of the countries supporting the Carpathian Convention, the following points were emphasised:

- The political will of the Carpathian countries to negotiate the CC

As already explained in the question number 1, the countries were very involved and interested to negotiate the CC. The particular role of Ukraine, who officially requested UNEP to support the intergovernmental negotiation, was also pointed out in the question number 1.

- Good cooperation with, and support form the Alpine countries in particular Austria, Italy and Switzerland.

"We have a good cooperation with Alpine Convention, with the PSAC, and also many Alpine countries have supported the negotiation and activities of the CC. Finally the CC was born through an Alpine - Carpathian Cooperation, facilitated by Italy" (CC official body).

- Carpathian countries are not the driving factors in the CC

"In the case of CC, the governments are not those who drive the CC. They agree things, they are asked to approve things, but they are not driving it. They do not come out with ideas, initiatives and suggestion. Partly, because that was never an assumption, it was never meant that the convention would be a burden for the governments" (NGOs sector).

- *There is a big heterogeneity of the Carpathian countries*

"The CC member countries are much more differentiated compared to the Alpine countries. Some countries like Serbia have a very minor role, while others like Romania have very important role, and this is not favouring the process. This is one of the challenges to be addressed, how to create incentives for the countries to get involved in a more or less equal base" (Academic sector).

➢ **<u>Private sector (PS) or Business:</u>**

There was a consensual agreement about the insufficient involvement of the private sector in the Carpathian processes. All interviewed agreed on the importance to involve the PS, and therefore the discussion turned into identifying the reasons "*Why the PS is not involved in the CC process?*"

As the possible reasons the following issues were mentioned:

- The business sector is relatively small and does not have a significant share in the sectors of interest. They should have a role, but it is something to work on.

"I think as the convention allows for participation of NGOs and all interested parties, if there was an appropriate business organisation it would participate. I don't argue that they don't exist, but only that they are relatively small and not well established" (Academic sector).

- The business sector is not aware about the CC. Involvement of the PS is discussed at the meetings, but so far it is not properly addressed in practice.

"I would say there is a strong private sector in the Carpathians, in mining, energy, forestry. But probably they haven't heard about the Convention. The convention didn't come to them. But I also think that there are some initiatives with the private sector, WWF have some initiatives of PS involvement. The CC knows it should cooperate with business sector, but it is an issue that haven't been properly addressed, though it comes out on the meetings, but so far not much has been done" (NGO sector).

- "Green business" irrelevant in the region.

"Private sector usually involves with this kind of initiatives – environment and sustainable development – in order to ensure and/or keep the good reputation of "green business" and environmental competitiveness. However, in the Carpathians this is not an issue yet, and the companies do not have to prove a commitment to environment or SD in order to operate" (NGO sector).

- There is a general distrust in businesses and a perception that SD does not go hand in hand with the private companies. However, the WWF is working on strategy to involve the private sector in the Carpathian process.

"I think people still don't trust businesses, they say SD can not go hand in hand with businesses. This is particularly true for the local NGOs and people that are involved in the CC process. Within the WWF and Carpathian Programme, however there is an initiative for involving business sector, but it is still in preparatory phase" (NGO sector).

- The CC officials are interested in involving the businesses, but hitherto no strategy for that is developed.

"We have open doors for the private sector and we would definitively like to involve them, especially in forestry and energy – renewable energy issue. But, so far we haven't been very successful. In comparison to the AC, I should point out that it is missing in the AC as well, apart from the FIANET, which is one of the AC observers" (CC official body).

- In addition to the Private sector, weak structure and low involvement of the **local communities**, are found.

  ➤ **European Union:**

The role of the EU and position in the CC, is seen as very important, for the following reasons:

- EU can contribute to the gaps in the CC, including the governance related issues.

"I think that governance issue, such as participation, cooperation, transparency and others, in the future also depend on the role the EU is going to have in the CC. At the moment it is not a party of the convention, and there is no a provision for EU becoming a party. However 5 from 7 parties (countries) are the members of the EU" (Academic sector).

- Building the "Carpathian Space" as a regional programme for support of common activities in the Carpathian region.

"One of the biggest challenges in the CC is related to the EU contribution to the Carpathian projects and creating a Carpathian Space. The Carpathian Space would create incentives for different actors to work together on the Carpathians, as one region" (CC official body).

- The CC has an important place in terms of peace keeping and promoting the cooperation in the Carpathian region. The good relations in this recently EU integrated/integrating region should be of crucial importance to the EU.

Another point is the importance of the Carpathian region, as a strategic EU new region. We have five EU member states, including Ukraine which is very important in the CC. The region is not important only from SD and environmental aspects, but also from the general peace and security keeping. In this region working on ecological, natural and experience sharing issues is important from the peace

maintaining and stability in the whole Europe. And this would be a reason plus that EU should consider and get more involved in the CC process" (Academic sector).

4. What are the CC main results to date, and the CC long perspectives?

Although it is difficult to give some more complete information about the implementation and results of the convention, some main focuses, initial activities and directions are pointed out.

In terms of the main achievements and results, the following conclusions can be made:

- It is relatively early to discuss the achievements and results, as the convention is in preparatory phase.

"It is hard to say about the results of the convention. It is too early. Until now many things are "put on paper", and this is also a result, although we haven't started implementing the convention yet. In that sense, there is no real outcome until now. The protocols are being developed and some should be ready by the CoP2, May, 2008" (NGO sector).

- Biodiversity issue has a particularly important place, and the main work is largely related and/or is referring to the biodiversity.

"CC is very much focusing on the biodiversity aspects. All the topics are somehow related to biodiversity. For example in the transportation issue, the focuses are on the "Transport and accessibility to protected areas", "Effects on transport on biodiversity", etc. While the AC is more general and in this sense weaker, as it talks about the waste management and water management. There is for now, and there will be in the near future a lot of work on biodiversity and forestry" (CC official body).

Long term perspectives: The long-tem perspectives of the CC are discussed considering the following points: the thematic focuses of the CC; the UNEP-ISCC long term role in the CC, and the role of the EU.

- Considering the thematic focuses in the future, as already appearing from the above discussion, the biodiversity and forestry are among the most important issues. In addition the work on sustainable tourism, tradition and culture are also among important.

"The crucial sector in terms of policy making, related to the rural land use in the Carpathians is the forest sector. Considering the forest resources positive impacts, in the CC huge importance is given to the water cycle regulation and erosion protection" (Academic sector).

- Apart from the EU role, the CC long term perspectives depends much on the UNEP-ISCC long-term role in the CC:

"In respect to the convention's long term, we should point out that the UNEP-ISCC lead and run the process, so it depends a lot on "How the UNEP-ISCC sees the future". Eventually, there will be a Permanent Secretariat (PSCC), and I think it will happen pretty soon, of course with the support of UNEP. But, so far it seems that UNEP-ISCC does not really push for a PSCC" (NGO sector).

"I think if there will be a permanent secretariat, it won't be run by UNEP, they will withdraw. As for now, there are 3 suggestions about the location of the PSCC: Ukraine, Romania and possibly Slovakia. Ukraine and Romania have made an offer to host the PSCC. As about UNEP, I think they will do the hand over of the CC Secretariat, and it will become an independent unit" (NGO sector).

5. Alpine vs. Carpathian Conventions – what are the strategies, approaches and governance issues in the two conventions?

This question is presented separately, combining the answers given from the Alpine and Carpathian stakeholders/subjects.

6. What are the most relevant strengths, weaknesses, results and limitations of the CC?

This part summarises the relevant strengthens and weaknesses/challenges and opportunities for the CC. It is therefore one of the important sources for drawing CC relevant experiences to be considered in the future Balkan mountain process.

Most important strengthens and success
- Strengthen of having an external facilitating body, such as the UNEP-ISCC,
- Good cooperation of UNEP-ISCC with the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention,
- The cooperation and facilitation provided by other non-Carpathian countries, such as Italy, Austria, Switzerland,
- CC operating as an umbrella for different actors structuring their activities towards a common goal,
- Creating the image of the Carpathians as one region, or "Carpathian identity",
- Creating of national mountain policies in the region, policies that refer to the Carpathian issues and the CC principles,
- Having the AC and its practices as a relevant model and experience to learn from.

Most important challenges and weaknesses:
- Limitation of a relatively weak local actor structures - NGOs and local communities,
- Challenge to promote and empower the local actors in the Carpathian region,
- Challenge of rising the general awareness among the local people,
- Challenge to keep the CC flexible institution, and not an official and bureaucratic,
- Challenge of development of protocols as a necessity for using the tools of the CC.
- Building a Carpathian Space Programme, that will refer to the Carpathians as one region
- Establishing a reporting system and compliance mechanism,
- The weakness of lack of strategies to promote economic and social activities and sustainable funding,
- The countries' different positions, interest and involvement in the process,
- The challenge of preventing and developing the "unique natural and cultural heritage" .

Annex 3. Alpine vs. Carpathian Conventions – differences and similarities in the applied strategies, approaches and governance elements

This annex presents the findings from the question number 5: *Alpine vs. Carpathian Conventions – what are the strategies, approaches and governance issues in the two conventions?*

The question was asked in both, the AC and the CC interviews, and the results are presented together, followed by an additional information about the origin of the original statements.

Considering the AC vs the CC there are three main differences observed:

- different conditions in the regions;

- conventions' different approaches and strategies and

- different approaches to governance related issues.

- ➢ **Considering the different conditions in the two regions, the following relevant differences have been pointed out:**

- The different social, economic, historical and political conditions in the Alpine and the Carpathian countries.

"There is a big difference, as the AC is a convention involving very democratic and developed countries - France, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, etc. In terms of the governance issues, these countries have inherently a high level of democracy, transparency and public participation. The East European courtiers they have to learn to use it and apply it now. It is however good that they can use all the experiences we in the Alpine countries have done centuries ago" (AC official body).

- The multilateral relations among the Carpathian countries are "more delicate", and there is a bigger heterogeneity among the Carpathian countries compared to the Alpine countries.

"Talking about the Alpine and the Carpathian region, we should be honest, in terms of the political and economic issues, the diversity across the Carpathian countries is much greater that in the Alpine Countries. From, Czech Republic, to Romania, Ukraine, there is a huge difference in economic and political sense, whereas if you think about the economic and political situation in the Alpine countries it is a much narrower range of differences. Furthermore, most of the Alpine countries are EU members, and even if they are not there policies are at the EU level. So in the Carpathians, they are starting from firstly, a much diverse situation and secondly, a greater lack of basic knowledge and capacities" (AC academic sector).

> ➢ **Considering the differences among the AC and the CC as such, the following points have been mentioned**:

- The two conventions differ in their main areas of interest.

"It is very interesting to observe the different areas of interest in the two conventions. An example is the traffic, it was and it still is one of the main items in the AC , and it is not an issue at all in the CC" (AC politics).

"The biodiversity is one of the priorities in the CC, and the first protocol is expected int the biodiversity indeed, this is far from the situation in the AC" (CC official body).

"Forest resources and agriculture are of different interests and so are differently undertaken in the two conventions" (CC academics).

- They have embraced different initial approaches to protocol development and arrangements of convention secretariats.

"The CC also has chosen a rather different way, they have made a convention, and now they are going to identify the fields where to act with a particular protocol. So the strategy is to define the fields where such a protocol can be useful. It is a very good and strategic approach, because the AC has started with the Convention and the protocols at the same time" (AC politics).

> ➢ **Considering the governance issue, some critics and observations were emphasised:**

- The relevant principles (such as culture, sustainability issues, participation, etc) are better emphasised in the CC.

"It is true that the relevant principles are more clearly emphasised in the CC, as it was adopted latter, and in that sense CC is a step further than the AC. But, however the statement of these in the text convention is one thing and their implementation is another. The convention is still young to say more about the implementation of these principles, but it is a good starting point" (CC academic sector).

- The AC is a step ahead as it has the information system and reporting system ("The state in the Alps" from 2007).

"If we consider the CC in relation to the AC, we have to also observe that there are some lacks in the CC. CC doesn't provide for compliance mechanisms, there is no an information and reporting system. The AC has the information system (SOIA) and reporting (The Sate of the Alps), but unfortunately there's no a compliance mechanism in the AC neither" (CC academic sector)

- The CC was established too quickly, with little consultation and little stakeholder involvement.

"I think even if the AC is criticised that to be a too much top-down process, the CC is established very quickly, with no enough discussion in the countries and too small amount of stakeholders" (AC official body).

- The CC uses an informal way of working, compared to the AC.

"From what is happening now in the CC, I mean that they include and are much more open to the existing NGOs, I would say that they are involved in a much more informal level, than the AC. So I

think it is really difficult to compare, because the structure of the states is so different" (AC official body).

- "The CC is a mix of top-down and bottom-up approaches, compared to the top-down adopted approach in the AC. In addition the CC is open to all the interested actors, including the NGOs, with no official procedures for participation" (CC official body).

- The AC was a top-down approach but the CC is an "externally-internal" approach.

"The AC was already a top-down convention, but I think the CC is even more a top-down. Not in sense that it is driven by the states, but that everything came from outside. The whole idea came from external actors: UNEP, WWF, Switzerland, other Alpine countries, Austria, Italy, etc. Even the ISCC is not in the Carpathians but in Vienna. Also the process and negotiation of the text convention came very quickly. So I think this is an indicator that everything went so quickly, cause there was no a bottom-up approach, no variety of actors and things are getting approved and arranged faster" (AC NGO sector).