Report

TRANSGREEN Conference "Sustainable Transportation Development in the Carpathians. Latest developments and steps forward"

Hotel Sheraton, Bratislava, Slovakia

5-6 September 2018

Project co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

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2. General outline of the Conference

Date:	5-6 September 2018	**Time:**	5 September - 9:00 – 18:10 6 September - 9:00 – 18:00
Place	Hotel Sheraton, Bratislava, Slovakia		
Conference	Two-days event conceived as a conference including collaborative workshops and a world café session aiming at bringing together cross-sectoral perspectives on the current research and policy recommendations in the field of integrated transport infrastructure development which take nature conservation into account		
Purpose of the event	✓ To learn about recent developments in the Carpathians & to raise awareness on the need for cross-sectoral approaches on sustainable transportation infrastructure development & planning in the Carpathians, ✓ To gain feedback on preliminary findings of the TRANSGREEN Project for better integration of stakeholders' needs in the documents to be developed, ✓ To prepare the basic background for elaborating the Carpathian Convention Strategic Action Plan on Sustainable Transportation in the Carpathians.		
Project code	TRANSGREEN DTP1-187-3.1		
Participants	Around 90 participants from 10 countries in Europe and different fields of experience gathered in Bratislava to connect to the current developments of the TRANSGREEN – Integrated Transport and Green Infrastructure Planning in the Danube-Carpathian Region for the Benefit of People and Nature – Project and to contribute to the fruitful discussions during the workshops and the world café. *Annex 01 List of participants*		
Main topics *Annex 02* *Agenda*	**Day 1 – Setting the scene & workshops on different aspects of transport infrastructure development** ✓ Opening of the Conference by **László Sólymos** (Minister of Environment of the Slovak Republic), **Ladislava Cengelová** (State Secretary at the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic), and **Jiří Hájek** (Investment Director National Motorway Company of the Slovak Republic) ✓ Transport development in the Danube Macro Region crossing the Carpathian Mountains ✓ **IUCN** Transport Working Group of the Connectivity & Conservation Specialist Group ✓ Developments of **EU Green and Blue Infrastructure policies** and opportunities for transport infrastructure ✓ International approach of **IENE** on Sustainable Linear Transportation Infrastructures. The IGELI project & linkages to the Carpathian Convention ✓ **Case studies** on transportation development & wildlife ✓ **TRANSGREEN** status ✓ Workshops: **WS1. Policy / WS2. Planning / WS3. Tools / WS 4. Monitoring** **Day 2 – Towards the Strategic Action Plan for Future Sustainable Transport Development of the Carpathians** ✓ Introduction to the outline of the **Strategic Action Plan** for Future Sustainable Transport Development of the Carpathians & its development ✓ Separate sessions of **Carpathian Convention Working Groups** to elaborate their respective input to the Strategic Action Plan ✓ Moderated discussion on Strategic Action Plan & ways to cooperate between the Working Groups for its implementation ✓ Field trip to **green bridge Moravský Svätý Ján** on D2 motorway		

3. Day 1 – Setting the scene

3.1 Opening of the Conference

Moderator throughout Day 1: Andreas Beckmann (Managing Director, WWF DCP)

László Sólymos, Minister of Environment of the Slovak Republic
The Minister of Environment emphasized the needs for a responsible approach and for cooperation of different sectors and stakeholders. He highlighted the importance of the TRANSGREEN Project as well as the conference and pointed out the Ministry of Environment to play an important role in transport infrastructure development.

Ladislava Cengelová, State Secretary at the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic
The State Secretary illustrated the divers issues the transport sector is dealing with in relation with nature and biodiversity conservation. Ms. Cengelová emphasized the need for cooperation between different sectors and stakeholders to find compromises and most suitable solutions for both, transport and nature. She mentioned some already realized projects, which are good examples of cooperation between ministries of transport and environment.

Jiří Hájek, Investment Director National Motorway Company
Mr. Hájek welcomed all participants to the Conference in the name of the hosting organization and wished all a fruitful event.

3.2 Setting the scene – presentations

Transport development in the Danube Macro Region crossing the Carpathian Mountains

Franc Žepic, EUSDR PA1b "Road & Rail" Coordinator

Mr. Žepič presented the EU Strategy for the Danube Macro Region (EUSDR) as well as the aims of the macro-regional strategies towards cooperation and better coordination of activities. He emphasized the need for infrastructure development in the Danube region and mentioned that the countries jointly improved transport infrastructure development is one of the priorities. He focused on one of the priority targets – to improve mobility and multimodality – road, rail, air and presented the main challenges derived from the *Transport Study for the Danube Macro-Region*. The Study was compiled by the European Investment Bank and describes the status of transport infrastructure and future projects in the Danube region.

Annex 03 Presentation by Franc Žepic.

The IUCN Transport Working Group of the Connectivity& Conservation Specialist Group

Gary Tabor, IUCN Specialist Group on Connectivity & Conservation via video conference

Mr. Tabor presented activities of the IUCN Transport Working Group of the Connectivity & Conservation Specialist Group, which had been recently established. The Group was formed to provide guidance on strategies that avoid, minimize, mitigate or compensate for the impacts of surface transportation systems on connectivity. It will collaborate with international partners to help make transport systems more permeable and reduce their lethality to species, by integrating the topic in the fields of policy, science, finance, culture, practice and resilience. Mr. Tabor's presentation highlighted that the problem of fragmentation of habitats due to transport infrastructure development is a global problem that urgently needs to be tackled, as there is a lot of infrastructure to be built in the upcoming years especially in less developed countries.

Annex 04 Presentation by Gary Tabor.

Developments of EU Green and Blue Infrastructure policies and opportunities for transport infrastructure

Julie Raynal, DG ENVI Unit 2 Biodiversity, European Union via video conference

Ms. Raynal gave an overview of the policy framework related to Green and Blue Infrastructure (GI) at the EU level. Among recent developments and new initiatives there are the review of implementation of the EU GI strategy, the elaboration of guidance documents on EU-level green and blue infrastructure projects and on integrating ecosystems and their services in decision making, and the EU pollinators initiative. The review revealed that with two exceptions, the EU Member States (MS) have not adopted specific national GI strategies. 12 MS have national ecological networks, two MS and one region have restoration prioritization frameworks (DE, NL, Flanders). There are many GI initiatives in EU cities and at regional level and progress has been made on GI-related knowledge base (ex MAES).

The *Guidance on a strategic framework for further supporting the deployment of EU-level green and blue infrastructure* includes TRANSGREEN as a case study for multi-national, multi-sectoral approach. The Guidance will be up for discussion in Brussels on 10th of October 2018, a conference is planned early 2019.

In conclusion, there is competition with other policy objectives of different scales and with different priorities, and lack of a strategic vision at the EU level. Only a few transnational GI initiatives exist and opportunities offered by current funding sources are not fully exploited. Taking into account the upcoming guidance documents and EU Pollinators initiative in transport infrastructure projects can help minimizing their possible negative impacts and enhance their positive contribution to biodiversity and ecological connectivity.

Annex 05 Presentation by Julie Raynal.

International approach of IENE on Sustainable Linear Transportation Infrastructures. The IGELI project & linkages to the Carpathian Convention.

Lazaros Georgiadis, IENE Steering Committee member

Mr. Lazaros introduced IENE (Infra Eco Network Europe), which is a formalized network of experts active in the field of ecology and linear transportation infrastructure providing an independent arena for exchange of knowledge and experience, and fostering collaboration for a safer and sustainable transport infrastructure worldwide.

He presented the 10 Principles of IENE that should be taken into account when planning linear infrastructure.

1. Strong legal framework
2. Sustainable strategic planning
3. Ecosystem approach (values of Grey and Green Infrastructure, Natural Capital, ecosystem services) in combination with the "Precautionary" principle
4. Any case, a unique case (no blind copy paste)
5. Multi-disciplinary cooperation (engineers + environmentalists +…)
6. Involvement of civil society
7. Polluter pays principle by clarifying:
    a. the ethical and transparency concerns
    b. including concrete mitigation measures from the planning phase until the operating phases
8. Long life effective maintenance (=including maintenance of mitigation measures in the long life budget under operation)
9. Environmental supervision and monitoring in all phases of the projects from design to full operation and maintenance
10. Culture of learning sharing knowledge and practices (no secretes between us)

IENE analyzed the 5 most important Conventions in the field of environment**, among them Bern, CBD, CBD Acihi Targets** and found only a reference to the problem of fragmentation and transport infrastructure, thus there is a need for awareness raising on the topic at the political level. Mr. Lazaros **revealed** common principles of IENE and the **Carpathian Convention.** The Carpathian Convention was mentioned as an example of implementing sustainable transportation solutions locally. Furthermore, Mr. Lazaros presented the initiative by IENE, namely the IGELI project, which stands for **International Guidelines for Environmentally friendly Linear Transportation Infrastructure** in developing countries and it is based on a **multilevel approach. Interlinkages** with the project TRANSGREEN were mentioned too. He announced the IENE 2018 Conference, which would be held in the following week (www.iene2018.info). Oral and poster presentations on the TRANSGREEN project are part of the conference**.**

Annex 06 Presentation by Lazaros Georgiadis.

3.3 Case studies on transportation development & wildlife

The Austrian Defragmentation Programme

Elke Hahn, Austrian Ministry of Transportation, Innovation and Technology

Ms. Hahn presented the Austrian history of fragmentation caused by linear infrastructure. Since 1986 the problem of wildlife corridors has been tackled starting with fencing and the construction of the first green bridge in 1996. In 1997, Guidelines for wildlife protection RVS 3.01 including technical measures and traffic safety issues were elaborated, followed by a study on fragmentation caused by motorways, where 400 critical areas were identified. The "Habitat Connectivity" Directive entered into force in 2006 including the installation of 20 wildlife over-passes above existing motorways to connect internationally important eco-corridors (Defragmentation Programme). The need for cooperation of different stakeholders, from the technical as well as the environmental side was emphasized. Moreover, comprehensive and binding strategic and spatial plans should be in place. One of the lessons learned was to understand that mitigation measures taken after the construction of the motorways was much harder and much more expensive than to plan them from the beginning.

Annex 07 Presentation by Elke Hahn.

A Slovakian case study – BROAD case study and analysis of transport development and wildlife in the Slovak Republic (2013-2017)

Stanislav Trčík, Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic

Mr. Trčík introduced the *BROAD study*, which was based on the need for minimizing conflicts of linear infrastructure and wildlife. Different departments and stakeholders working in relevant fields (biologists, district offices, police stations, hunters etc.) participated in the study and gathered data with the aim to identifying critical areas and developing safety and mitigation measures. The data were compiled in one database. Based on collected data, critical points on Green Infrastructure and migration routes were identified. The data collected are further used for supporting activities in other projects, including TRANSGREEN.

Annex 08 Presentation by Stanislav Trčík.

Migration study of large mammals at highways and chosen 1st class roads in Slovakia 5/2014-5/2017

Michal Králik, HBH Project

Mr. Králik represented the HBH construction company that also has an environment department. The Company participated in many projects related to highways and 1st class roads. One of those was the migration study of large mammals along highways and first-class roads, which was elaborated for the National Motorway Company (NDS). The aim of the study was to increase transport safety, to reduce the number of vehicle-animal collisions on the road

network, and to provide the basic documentation for the construction of ecoducts or other migration structures **for animals crossing roads**. Core areas of occurrence of the target species (bear, wolf, lynx, wildcat, elk, deer, roe deer, wild boar, mouflon and fallow deer) and main migration corridors connecting the core areas were identified. Concrete measures to minimize conflicts between wildlife and infrastructure were suggested. NDS started the implementation of suggested measures.

Annex 09 Presentation by Michal Králik.

Mitigation measures to increase permeability and to decrease mortality of bears on highways in Croatia

Slaven Reljić, University of Zagreb

Mr. Reljić presented a case study located in Croatia, where 14 green bridges and other wildlife passages (underpasses, culverts etc.) were constructed along the new highway sections built between 2000-2004. To prove whether these constructions were effective, a methodology for the evaluation of highway permeability was elaborated. All wildlife-passing constructions (44 objectives) were subsequently evaluated according to this methodology. Mr. Reljić highlighted the need for a legal protection of the crossing structures from human actitities. Additionally, he presented the LIFE DINALSP Bear Project (2014-2019), focusing on bears in relation to transport infrastructure. During this project, permeability of motorways for bears has been improved by, for example, installing one-way doors in plots along highways and jump out ramps.

Annex 10 Presentation by Slaven Reljić.

3.4 The TRANSGREEN Project – Status

Hildegard Meyer, WWF-DCP Project manager

Ms. Meyer presented specific objectives (fostering cooperation across sectors, enhancing scientific knowledge, minimization of conflicts of linear infrastructure and wildlife at local level) and activities of the TRANSGREEN project. Expected outputs and preliminary results of the project (e.g. In-depth analysis, State of the art report and Guidelines on integrated transport infrastructure development, Strategic Action Plan for the Carpathian Convention) were presented, as well as their importance for stakeholders, especially in the context of the Carpathian Convention. It was highlighted that a lot of stakeholders and institutions were already involved in the project and there is a good cooperation between stakeholders from different sectors and countries. All participants were invited to contribute to the finalization of the project outputs by taking part in the following workshops and discussions offered during the Conference.

Annex 11 Presentation of TRANSGREEN by Hildegard Meyer, for the film click on Animated film

3.5 Parallel Workshops

There were four parallel workshops offered, held twice. This way, each participant could choose to attend in two workshops.

Workshop 1 – POLICY

Development of Transport Master Plans and financing & developing recommendations for EUSDR

Led by **Irene Lucius** (WWF DCP) supported by **Gabriella Nagy, Csaba Mezei** (CEEweb, Hungary) with contributions by **Marco Onida** (EU DG Regio, online participation) and workshop participants (interviews, verbal interventions)

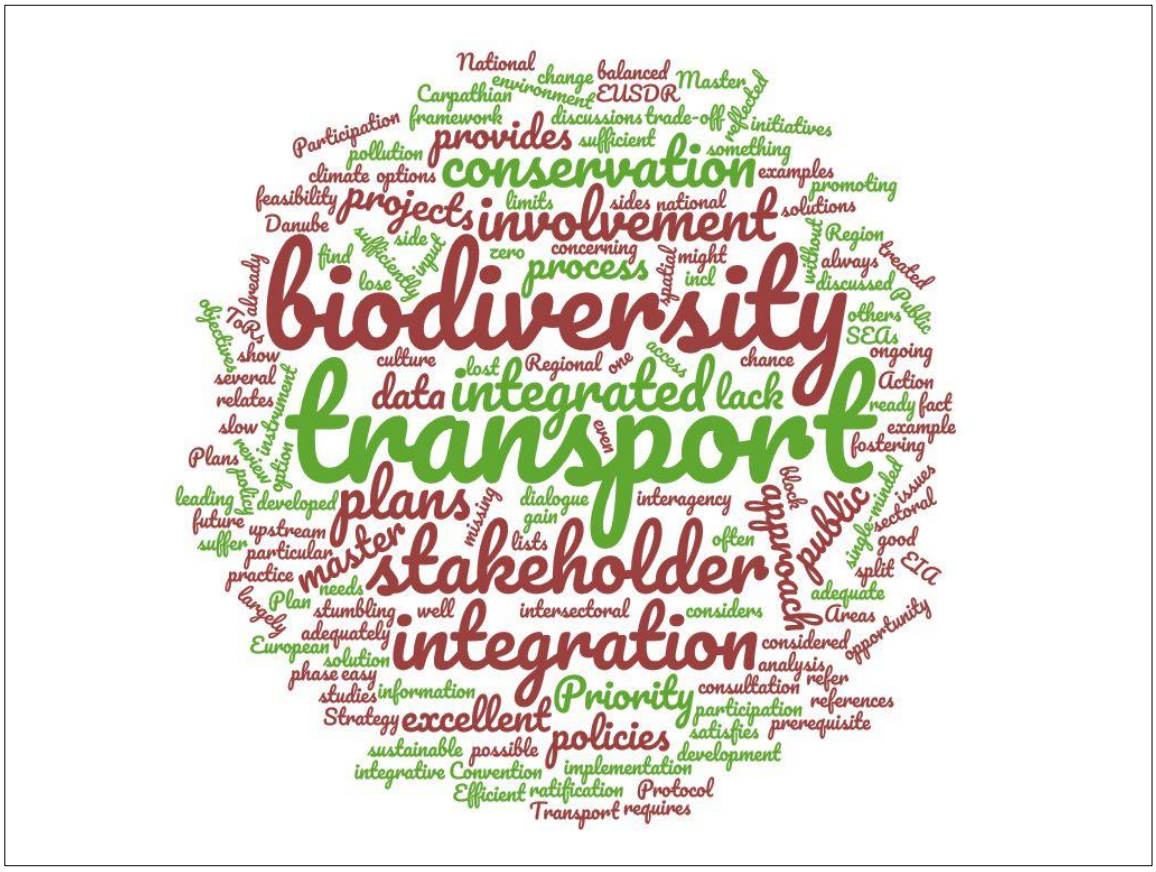
Description: EU transport policies and national transport master plans rarely refer to biodiversity conservation, although EU policies such as the EU Biodiversity Strategy require integrated planning. This often leads to infrastructure programs that consider wildlife habitats and corridors at the end – during the EIA phase of individual projects – rather than upstream, e.g. when deciding on the route of a road. It can also mean that insufficient funding is allocated for the integration process, e.g. for collecting necessary ecological data or involving nature conservation stakeholders adequately. The workshop analyzed one national Transport Master Plan, invited other participants to share their experiences with developing or working with Transport Master Plans, and extracted lessons learnt for similar documents in the future. This will feed into recommendations towards e.g. Ministries of Transport, the EUSDR, and the European Commission.

Main messages collected during the discussion

- European and national biodiversity conservation and transport policies largely lack integration. If transport policies refer to environment, this usually relates to pollution and climate issues, not biodiversity.
- The Carpathian Convention Protocol for sustainable transport is a good practice example for integrated policy development with stakeholder involvement. However, the ratification process is slow.
- The EU Strategy for the Danube Region has a sectoral approach (split into Priority Areas) but provides a framework for integration, as several examples show. The ongoing process of EUSDR Action Plan review provides an excellent opportunity for promoting integrative initiatives in future.
- National Transport Master Plans suffer from a lack of references to biodiversity conservation objectives, leading to the fact that such aspects are usually only treated during the EIA phase of projects. The integrated approach has to be reflected already in the ToRs of feasibility studies of the transport master plans if this is to change.

- Efficient Public Participation and stakeholder involvement are prerequisite for balanced solutions. This requires easy public access to sufficient data and information, both concerning the biodiversity and the transport aspects and plans.
- Priority transport projects lists are usually developed without stakeholder consultation, which limits the chance for biodiversity conservation aspects to be adequately considered.
- A stumbling block for integration is a missing culture of interagency / intersectoral dialogue.
- Regional, spatial and transport master plans are often not sufficiently integrated, so even if one of them considers biodiversity aspects, this gain might be lost through single-minded implementation of others.
- It´s not always possible to find a solution that satisfies all sides. Each side needs to be ready to lose something in trade-off discussions.
- Strategic Environmental Assessments are an excellent instrument for fostering integration upstream, in particular if data input as well as stakeholder involvement / public participation are adequate and the analysis of options (incl. the zero option) are discussed sufficiently.

Figure 1. Word cloud based on Workshop 1 - Policy



Annex 12 Image of the flowchart used for the discussions.

Workshop 2 – PLANNING

Linear infrastructure planning & implications to wildlife

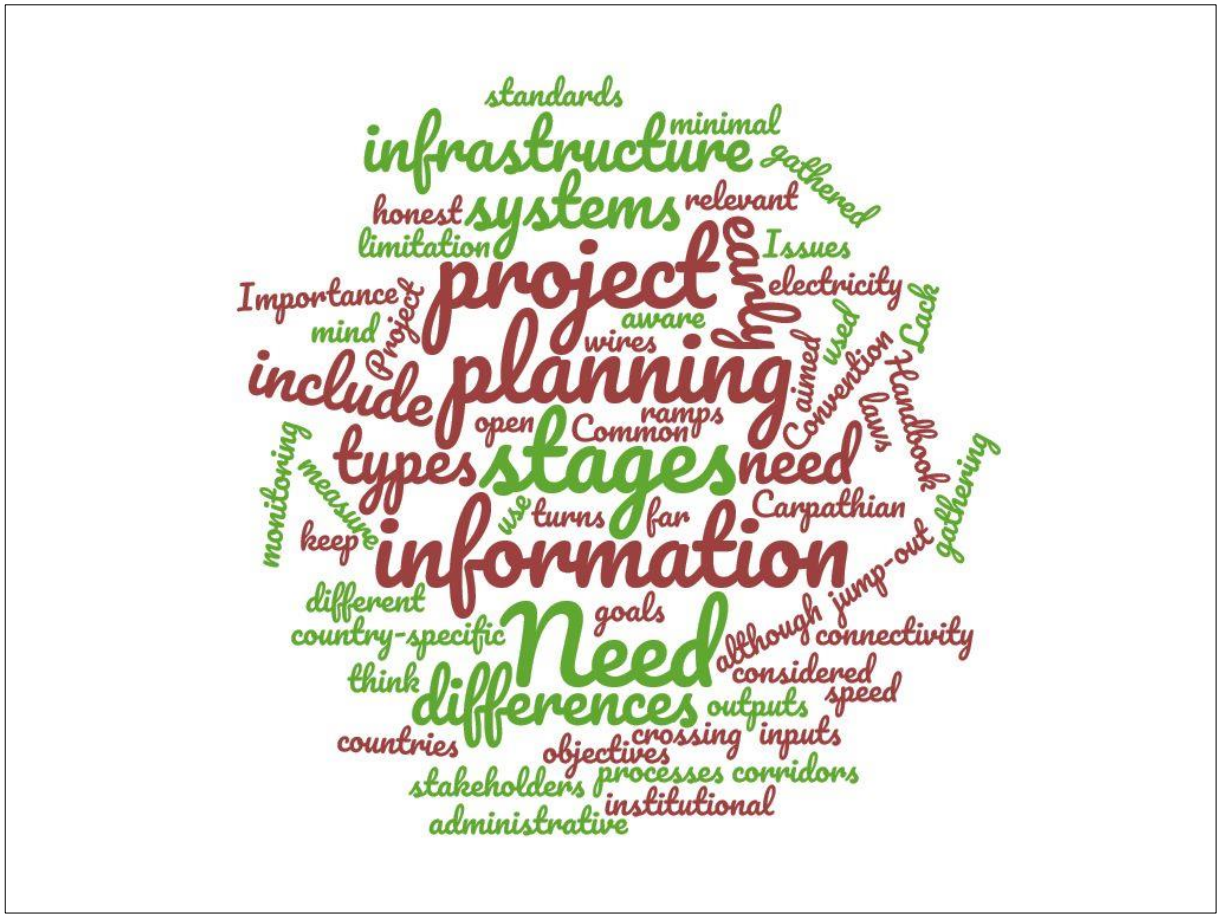
Led by **Maroš Finka, Vladimír Ondrejička -** SPECTRA – Centre of Excellence of EU – Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava with contribution from **Bojan Vivoda**, Autocesta Rijeka-Zagreb d.d.

Description: Planning represents the crucial phase of harmonizing transport infrastructure development and its permeability for wildlife. Each of its particular steps starting with a preplanning phase including strategic environmental assessment via design planning and planning approval processes and ending with construction design, includes specific potential for an integrated approach. The workshop was based on two practical examples, (1) planning the mitigation measures for highways in the region of Vienna-Bratislava known as the metropolitan region with a green heart (Alpine-Carpathian Corridor Project) and (2) planning of motorways in Croatia with a focus on brown bear protection. The workshop engaged participants in critical and creative thinking using the multi-actor decision-making experiment. Reflecting the planning procedures together with the participants, recommendations were generated for the policy level to be fed into the Strategic Action Plan on Sustainable Transportation in the Carpathians.

Main messages collected during the discussion

- Need to include all stakeholders from the early stages of infrastructure project planning and to be 'honest and open'
- Need to think about connectivity from the early stages of planning and keep this is mind when crossing all stages of planning processes
- Importance of monitoring – how information is gathered and used, what are the minimal standards for monitoring measures
- Lack of information about the corridors, need to speed up gathering information and use them as project inputs
- Issues of institutional differences between countries – administrative systems and laws – so far it turns out the systems are not so different, although there are differences which need to be considered
- Common goals for Carpathian Convention vs country-specific objectives is a challenge in implementing comparable robust monitoring systems
- Need to include the measure of jump-out ramps into the Handbook
- How relevant are project outputs for other types of infrastructure such as electricity wires? Project is not aimed at these types, but it is a limitation to be aware of.

Figure 2. Word cloud based on Workshop 2 – Planning.



Annex 13 W2 Planning introduction

Annex 14 W2 Planning Alpine-Carpathian Corridor – AKK – best practice example

Annex 15 W2 Planning wildlife and motorways in Croatia – Bojan Vivoda.

Workshop 3 – TOOLS

The Green Infrastructure Approach. Tools for integrating nature conservation / ecological corridors in linear transportation development: Green infrastructure values as natural capital and ecosystem services provision

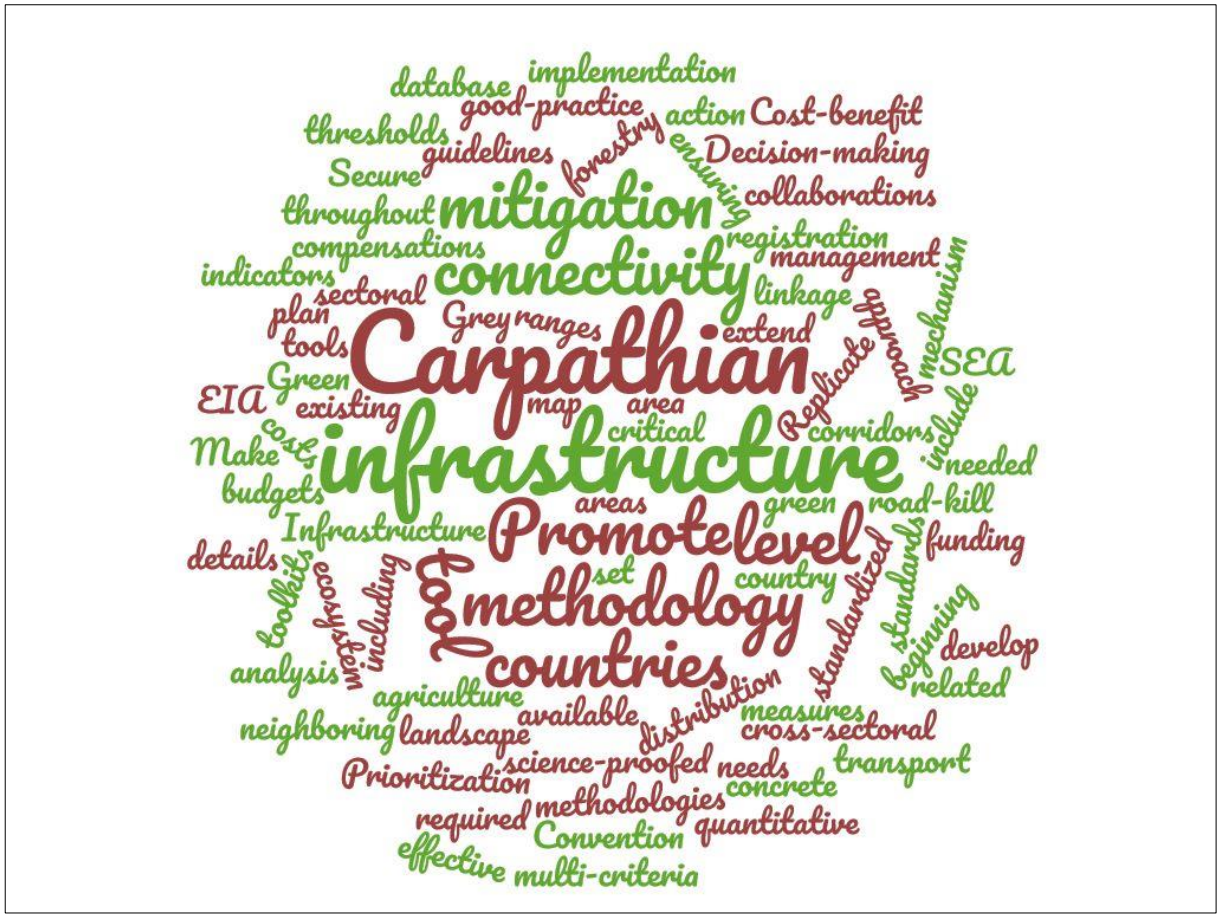
Led by **Lazaros Georgiadis** (IENE, Greece) and **Radu Moț** (Association Zarand, Romania) with contributions by **Marius Nistorescu** (EPC Consulting) and **Jiří Sedoník** (the Czech Transport Research Centre)

Description**:** Developing environmentally sustainable linear transport infrastructure in areas of high ecological connectivity is a challenge. The workshop presented tools for combining ecosystem service data and wildlife status data (population status, habitat use, roadkill registration systems,) with factors and parameters of other sectors (forestry, agriculture, water management, and landscape use and management) towards determining the appropriate actions for securing ecological connectivity and permeability of linear transportation for wildlife. Good practice in data analysis, gap analysis, or EIA were discussed.

Main messages collected during the discussions

- Carpathian Convention – is a tool in itself – mechanism for concrete implementation
- Secure funding required – for the action plan, include mitigation costs into the infrastructure budgets from the beginning
- Need for decision-making toolkits
- Prioritization of connectivity needs at country level / neighboring countries (both transport and green)
- Make SEA/EIA/AA tool more effective – develop multi-criteria methodology, a set of quantitative indicators / thresholds
- Cost-benefit analysis of planned measures – methodology and good-practice are needed
- Carpathian database related with Green & Grey Infrastructure – available, standardized and science-proofed (including map of corridors & linkage area!, distribution ranges, critical areas for mitigation)
- Replicate / extend existing tools (ie. road-kill registration, guidelines, methodologies, standards) throughout all Carpathian countries
- Promote cross-sectoral collaborations
- Promote connectivity measures/management/compensations at sectoral level (agriculture, forestry etc.) for ensuring landscape / ecosystem approach

Figure 3. Word cloud based in Workshop 3 – Tools.



Annex 16 WS 3 Tools - The Green Infrastructure Approach. Tools for solutions on ecological connectivity.

Annex 17 WS 3 Tools – EIA Marius Nistorescu

Annex 18 WS 3 Tools – KDE+ roadkill registration system, Jiri Sedonik, Richard Andrasik

Web pages: roadkill registration system in CZ: www.srazenazver.cz; www.kdeplus.cz, Carpathian Countries Integrated Biodiversity Information System CCIBIS: www.ccibis.org

Workshop 4 – MONITORING

Linear infrastructure monitoring and analysis, interpretation and integration of results in improving the GI elements and the planning of new infrastructure projects & recommendations

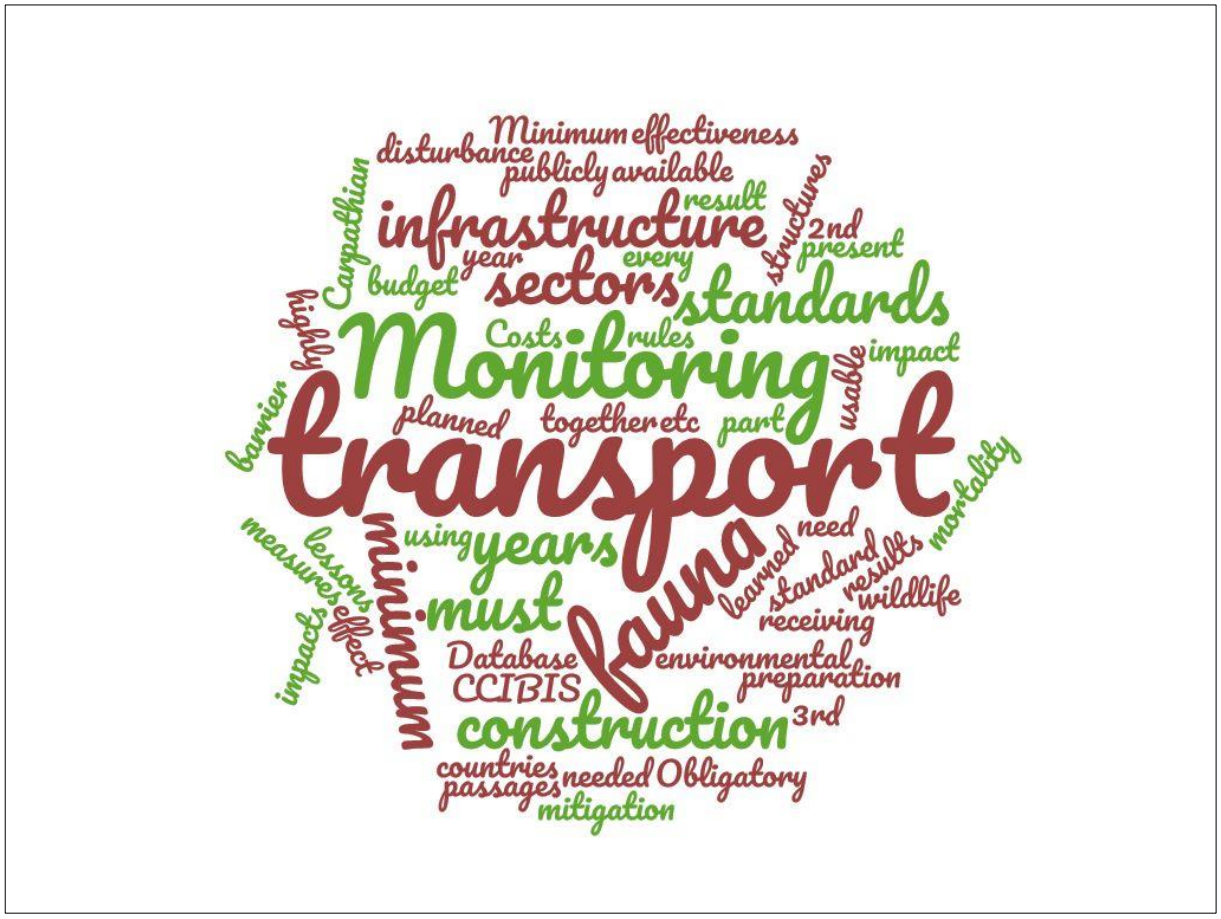
Led by **Václav Hlaváč** (Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic) & **Cristian Papp** (WWF DCP Romania)

Description: Linear infrastructure monitoring ideally comprises (1) monitoring of populations of target species in order to identify migration corridors, (2) monitoring of the impact of transport infrastructure on populations of target species (fauna traffic mortality, disturbance effects, effect of fragmentation on species populations), and (3) monitoring of the effectiveness of fauna passages. In this workshop, an open discussion with experts on methods for each above-mentioned area and the minimum standards to be monitored after construction was offered. Recommendations were elaborated towards a harmonization within the Carpathian countries, which will be used as basis for the Carpathian Convention Strategic Action Plan on Sustainable Transportation

Main messages collected during the discussions

- There is no monitoring of the impact of transport on wildlife in the Carpathian countries at present
- Minimum standards for monitoring are highly needed
- We need rules (minimum standards) for:
- Obligatory monitoring of fauna before (2 years) - during and after construction (5 years and then every 2nd or 3rd year)
- Monitoring of the impacts of the transport infrastructure (fauna mortality, barrier effect, disturbance)
- Monitoring of the effectiveness of the mitigation measures (fauna passages)
- Costs for minimum standard monitoring must be part of each transport infrastructure construction budget
- Monitoring is planned together with the transport and environmental sectors, both sectors are receiving monitoring result
- The results of the monitoring must be publicly available and usable for the preparation of other transport structures, for lessons learned, etc. (using CCIBIS Database?)

Figure 4. Word cloud based on Workshop 4 – Monitoring.



Annex 19 WS4 Monitoring introduction.

4. DAY 2 – Towards the Strategic Action Plan for Future Sustainable Transport Development of the Carpathians

4.1 Introduction

Mr. Egerer opened the second day of the Conference, illustrating the connection between the TRANSGREEN Project and activities of the Carpathian Convention, presenting the Protocol on Sustainable Transport of the Carpathian Convention and introducing the work of the day.

Filippo Favilli and Federico Cavallaro of Eurac Research, in charge of elaborating together with SPECTRA and the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention the draft of the Strategic Action Plan, presented the way the session would be organized in order to reach the aim of collecting inputs on the proposed first version of the draft of the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for sustainable transport in the Carpathians.

Annex 20 Presentation Harald Egerer

4.2 Structure and focus of the Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

The initial assumptions of the transport SAP were illustrated. Its structure is similar to other action plans prepared within the Carpathian Convention (e.g. SAP on sustainable forest management).

The Transport SAP focuses on those aspects of the transport protocol related to the harmonization of new transport infrastructures and the maintenance/enhancement of ecological connectivity, currently main topic of the TRANSGREEN and CONNECTGREEN projects.

The structure of the SAP includes a general introduction, six main objectives with reference to the Transport Protocol of the Carpathians' Convention, and the proposed general actions for the entire Carpathian area and for each country. Results and timeline will be elaborated in a second phase, after the agreement on the objectives and the actions.

The first draft of the SAP is based on the opinions of the official representatives of the countries on the issues discussed at the Eight Meeting of the Working Group on Sustainable Transport back to back to the IENE Workshop, sponsored by TRANSGREEN project, held in Budapest on the 16th-17th May 2018. It was sent to the members of the Biodiversity and Transport Working Groups and to the official representatives of the countries few weeks before the meeting, in order to collect their comments beforehand. Czech Republic replied highlighting the need to include in the Transport SAP an explanation of the approach used to definethe specific objectives and their focus, while Hungary proposed few specific actions for its country related to a specific part.

Annex 21 Introduction Strategic Action Plan – Filippo Favilli

4.3 Stakeholders' engagement – the World Café approach

Due to the high number of participants, the short time for the Working Group discussion, and the wish to facilitate the exchange of opinions between the different countries and the governmental and non-governmental agencies, the "World Café" method was chosen. The first proposition of separating the two Carpathian Convention Working Groups, Transport and Biodiversity (with the inclusion of Spatial Development experts), was considered inappropriate (too sectorial) for the current meeting, whose aim was to collect participants' inputs in an interdisciplinary and informal environment, allowing them to express their opinions and ideas freely.

The World Café is a dialogue-facilitation method that foresees the exchange of participants' opinions and ideas, while working together in small groups with a rapporteur on a specific topic/issue, for a dedicated amount of time. A general moderator controls the time for each round and collects the inputs in the following plenary session.

At the end of each round, participants are asked to change groups, in order to discuss another topic with different stakeholders, guided by a different rapporteur. Only the rapporteur remains at the table and provides to the upcoming participants the inputs received by the previous group(s). The number of rounds is the same as the issues that need to be discussed.

The general topic of the meeting can be then discussed separately in each of its parts / objectives in an interdisciplinary manner. This method allows each participant to be directly involved and more focused in each specific topic, compared to a plenary discussion, and to collect opinions and ideas from experts from other disciplines. At the end of the rounds, the rapporteurs are asked to report in the plenary the opinions collected and the proposed modifications/inputs to the discussed objectives. A final general discussion (if spontaneously comes up) allows for further proposals.

4.4 Tables of discussion

Six different tables, each referring to a specific objective of the SAP, chaired by a rapporteur, were prepared. Each round had a 20-minutes duration, considered enough for an informal exchange and collection of new inputs. Each rapporteur provided the main topics highlighted during the four parallel workshops of the previous day, in order to take them into account during the discussion.

The World Café approach allowed each participant to provide his/her point of view, interests and knowledge on each objective and related actions. Moreover, these dialogue facilitation method and exchange approach enabled all participants to learn from the others' experiences and better define common needs and ways of cooperation.

The discussions in the six tables revised the proposed six objectives and the general actions for the Carpathian area indicated in the draft, by collecting ideas, critics and valuable inputs for their improvement. The six objects of the tables were the following:

- Identification of current strategic ecological connections
- Identification of current and future potential critical intersections
- Enhancement of public participation in infrastructural planning
- Realization of green infrastructures, introduction of mitigation measures and monitoring of strategical ecological connections
- Increasing cooperation with other Working Groups, sectors and international processes for data sharing, mediation and resolution of environmental conflicts
- Approval and implementation of policies to support sustainable transport deriving from TRANSGREEN and ConnectGREEN projects' outputs and results

The application of the World Café allowed for a better identification of the common objectives and actions for the whole area and will enable the subsequent definition of the specific actions for each country. The validation/approval of the current/new objectives and of their related general and specific actions will allow the definition of the expected results and the timeframe of the SAP implementation.

At the end of the six rounds (with a 30-minutes break in the middle), rapporteurs were then asked, in a plenary session, to provide an overview about the main inputs received. No more inputs were provided during the final general discussion.

4.5 Next steps for the development of the Strategic Action Plan

The inputs received will be further elaborated by Eurac research and SPECTRA, with the support of the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, in order to provide, by the end of September 2018, a revised version of the draft of the SAP. Meanwhile, each official State representative was asked to provide (via email) modifications and suggestions on the proposed specific national actions related to each objective, in order to have a comprehensive overview of the priorities set at the Carpathian and national levels. The content of the draft Transport SAP will be further discussed with the Carpathian Convention National Focal Points during the Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (CCIC), to be held on 17-18 December 2018 in Vienna (tbc). Other opportunities to further discuss and work on the SAP draft will be during the 9th CC Transport Working Group meeting, to be held in spring 2019, and during Final Conference of the TRANSGREEN Project, to be held in June 2019. In case of successful negotiation process, the Carpathian Countries are expected to adopt the Transport SAP during the 6th Conference of the Parties to the Carpathian Convention in 2020 in Poland.

5. Field trip – Green bridge Moravský Svätý Ján

Katarina Galikova from the National Motorway Company of the Slovak Republic guided around 40 participants to the nearby-located green bridge Moravský Svätý Ján on the D2 motorway which was built in the 1970ies. After a presentation on the construction work and monitoring scheme installed by the HBH Project (Tomáš Libosvár), the group went to the bridge. Being at the bridge many questions arose related to the vegetation chosen, management of the vegetation and the methodology for monitoring, and if of course, the bridge is being used by animals. This is a best practice example for defragmentation.

Annex 22 Presentation about the green bridge by Katarina Galikova