

EXPLORING EMERGING GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES:
TRACING THE EVOLUTION OF THE ALPINE CONVENTION, THE CARPATHIAN
CONVENTION AND THE SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN MOUNTAIN INITIATIVE

**** Please note that this is a draft of the forthcoming European Forest Institute
(EFI) Technical Report (no 28)

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Master Thesis
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Freiburg, December 2007

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Conducting of this Master thesis was supported by the European Forest Institute (EFI), under the EFI Member Scholarship Programme.

The research was carried out within the Policy Analysis (PI) Research Programme, under direct supervision of the programme manager Dr. Ilpo Tikkanen and an additional support of other PI programme staff.

Thereby I thank EFI, as well as my first supervisor professor Dr. Margaret Shannon and Dr. Georg Winkel for providing support, ideas, critics and encouragement to this study.

In addition I thank the second examiner of this MSc thesis, Professor Dr. Ulrich Schraml.

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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 – Global 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 Master thesis primarily attempts to evaluate and understand governance processes and principles in the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions. The main focus is placed 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 these 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 through three research methods: literature review, questionnaires and interviews. The AC and the CC are studied applying all the three research methods. For the other two study subjects – BMI and the theoretical concept of governance – only the literature review was conducted.

The study findings are presented in nine chapters. Chapter 1. *“Introduction”* 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. *“Theoretical background – concept of governance”* attempts to classify different approaches to define governance. It further introduces some of the related concepts, such as, the concept of environmental governance, good governance and sustainable development. And finally, 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. *“Methods”* briefly describes how the research methods – literature review, questionnaire and interviews – are conducted in the study.

The next three chapters, chapter number 4, 5 and 6, present the results obtained for the AC, the CC and the BMI, in respect to governance. Chapter 4. *“Literature review”* presents the background information of the studied conventions. Chapter 5. *“Questionnaire analysis”* presents quantitative data received from the questionnaires. It focuses on the AC and the CC priority issues and facilitation of specific governance principles. The complete forms of the AC and the CC questionnaires are given in the Annex 1 and Annex 2. Chapter 6. *“Interview analysis”* analyses the interviews conducted for the AC and the CC. It describes each question separately, summarising the main points and giving the related statements as quotations. Chapter 7. *“Interpretation and discussion of the results”* is based mainly on the data received through the interviews. It discusses both conventions concerning. In addition, the many differences that the two mountain regions and conventions involve, as well as the impacts these differences make on the results are given. The Chapter 8 *“Sharing the Alpine and the Carpathian experiences”* discusses the transferability of the AC and the CC practices and experiences, presenting the main opportunities and limitations for that. It also identifies the main aspects that can be beneficial and relevant for the SEE (Balkan) Mountain process. Finally, the last Chapter 9 *“Conclusions”* gives the concluding remarks of the study. Some conclusions are further discussed as governance puzzles and topics that require further research.

1. INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of multilateral environmental agreements has become a buzzword and concern of environmental governance and related issues. The Ecolex project sponsored by UNEP, FAO and IUCN recognises in total 519 Environmental Treaties (*Ecolex*).

A gradual increase of multilateral agreements focusing on mountain issues is also evident. The Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and *the Chapter 13 of the Agenda 21 (Managing Fragile Ecosystems – Sustainable Mountain Development)*, the International Year of Mountains (IYM) 2002 have all provided a significant input in the international mountain development and cooperation. Observed from a research perspectives, it is the evolution and changes in the international mountain development that particularly matter.

This study observes the two multilateral mountain agreements – the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention. It examines the evolution of these two conventions in terms of governance principles, on one hand, and their development processes in terms of “best practices identification”, on the other. Concerning governance principles, the main accent is put on the principles of *participation, policy integration, and partnerships*. Concerning the conventions’ best practice and experience sharing, the main focus is on the identification of relevant practices for the currently ongoing South-East European (SEE) or Balkan Mountain Initiative (BMI, hereafter).

It can be reasonably argued that the international mountain agreements (IMAs) are “governance initiatives” in their very essence. However, there are various perspectives about it, as well as about the emergence and evolution of “governance” principles in the IMAs. Some of the main reasons for the different perspectives are the various understandings of the concept of governance, and the lack of related research. From there, the need for studying governance principles in the two selected IMAs – the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions – are more than obvious.

1.1 Research Question

This MSc thesis studies the evolution and development processes of the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions – their emergence, negotiation, practices and implementation. The goal is to understand how governance emerges in these Conventions; how it is facilitated by the Convention and how it is practically applied.

Hence, the main research question is phrased as follows:

What are the development processes of the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions in terms of principles of governance?

However, an important part of this study is to highlight the relevant points from the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions, as guideline and background information for the SEE (Balkan) Mountain Process.

1.2 Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives are proposed in accordance with the research question. In order to address the research question, the following goals and objectives are defined:

- To provide a theoretical and analytical framework of governance,
- To trace the evolution and development processes of the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions,
- To evaluate the governance concepts and specific governance principles in the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions and processes, and
- To identify the appropriate Alpine and Carpathian practices that can adequately inform the SEE (Balkan) Mountain Process.

1.3 Study Subjects

This MSc thesis studies four different subjects:

- The concept of Governance,
- Alpine Convention (AC),
- Carpathian Convention (CC),
- Balkan mountain initiative (BMI) and appropriate Alpine and Carpathian experience.

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, an attempt to give a frame and structure of governance discussion is made.

2. *Convention on the Protection of the Alps* – the Alpine Convention was signed in November 1991 and came into force in March 1995. It has a long history in negotiation, protocol development, and implementation. Alpine Convention (AC hereafter) is widely cited as the first international convention for protection and sustainable development of mountains; as a successful model for other mountain regions; and a model for environmental governance. Being a product of long discussion and negotiation, the AC offers a good possibility to study the governance principles properties and application, as well as the Alpine long history.

3. *Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians* – the Carpathian Convention was signed in May 2003 and entered into force in January 2006. Despite its relatively recent emergence, the convention so far makes a dynamic progress. 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, education and public participation, are stated in the original framework convention and other strategic documents.

4. *The SEE (Balkan) Mountain Initiative (BMI hereafter)* is at present an initiative for the SEE (Balkan) Convention for protection and sustainable development of mountains. The BMI selection among similar mountain initiatives is based on geographical reasons and slightly comparable socio-economic and political transitions and challenges in the Carpathians and in the Balkans. The aim is to provide background information and relevant Alpine and Carpathian experience for the BMI and future, possible, SEE (Balkan) Mountain Convention.

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. The reasons for bringing the governance issue to the AC, the CC and the BMI, however, require further explanations. The Alpine Convention at the international mountain fora is presented as an international treaty in step with current mountain and societal challenges. On the other hand, the convention's challenges in negotiation, participation and implementation give the motivation to take the AC as a case study. Here are given some related quotations:

- “Alpine Convention can serve as a model of earth system governance” (*Balsiger, J. 2007*),
- “Alpine convention and the practices of its implementation can serve as an inspiration and guidelines for arranging cooperation in other mountain regions” (*Timoshenko, A. 2002*).

Involving the Carpathian Convention in the research is related to both, the AC and the BMI. Concerning the first, there is a close cooperation between the AC and the CC. Nevertheless, the CC shows some different trends, not only in terms of the content, but also in terms of the implementation strategies and general approaches. This provides a great possibility to explore the interrelations between the governance principles and the different conventions' strategies. On the other side, this also provides an additional source of practices informing the BMI.

Finally, regarding the “transferability” of the Alpine and the Carpathian practices, or “experiences” to the expectable SEE (Balkan) Convention; it should be pointed out that the research does not assume a simplistic transfer of experiences and practices. The aim is to identify useful learned lessons from the two Conventions, but these “lessons” would need further elaboration and translation in accordance to the local and regional conditions, needs and challenges.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND – CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE

The complexity of the governance concept, its intensive and ever-increasing political, academic and public relevance, and the consequent proliferation in interpretation and uses, makes the analysis on governance and the related issues an important challenge.

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 on 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*”¹. Later, Shakespeare uses the term, relating it explicitly to the “immense weight of authority”, and implicitly to the *ethical dimension of the actions of those in power*². By the end of the 17th century, the term ‘governance’ came to mean a “method of management”³. Finally today, as its meaning is largely broadened, it is often stated that “governance means different things to different people” (Hyden, G. and Court, J. 2002, p.7; UN, 2004, p. 89).

The term involves a significant amount of ambiguity, followed by a proliferation in definitions⁴. The many definitions of governance, arguably are a result of its strong ‘intuitive’ appeal, which impose no need for precise definitions (Heinrich, C. and Lynn, L. 2000 in Lee, M. 2003). 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, G. 1998), in Lee, M. 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*.

¹ "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 Context (London: Routledge, 1990), 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>> (assessed 25.06.2007)

² “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> (assessed 15.06.2007)

³ Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, Vol 1, 1973, p 874.

⁴ Definitions of governance abound”. (Graham, J. et al, 2003-a, p.2).

“It is sometimes difficult to find areas where governance does not take place” (Jachtenfuchs, M. and Beate Kohler-Koch, 2003).

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 an understanding of governance in this research project.

2.1.1 Classification according to definition broadness

A relatively stimulating approach to classify governance definitions in accordance to their *broadness or inclusiveness* is offered in the work of Myungsuk Lee (*Lee, M. 2003*), who classifies governance definitions into three categories.

- Broad approach in defining governance - *Governance as a mechanism for resolving common problems*;
- More selective, but still very wide approach in defining governance - *Governance as a mechanism for resolving common public problems*; and
- Narrow approach in defining governance - *Governance as the 'New Governance'*.

However, for the purpose of this project, and in order to avoid possible overlapping between the first two categories, 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 two broad issues - 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.

It is not an intention of this work to design an all-encompassing description of the definitions; rather the intention is to point out the various approaches used to define governance.

The following table summarises some of the definitions that define governance as a mechanism for resolving common public problems in a broad sense (*see Lee, M. 2003*).

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, R. (1997) and Rhodes, R. (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, J. 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)	Governance is a political and economic process that coordinates activity among	

(“Mechanisms of governance”)	economic actors. Six ideal mechanisms of governance: markets, obligational networks, hierarchy, monitoring, promotional networks, and association.
Stoker, G.(1998) in Gijbers, G. (2001)	Propositions in Governance: 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, J. et al. (2003-a)	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 “ <i>ways or types of using powers</i> ” in the process of management of national economic/social resources.
Rosenau, J. (2004)	Governance consists of <i>rule systems</i> that perform or implement social functions or processes in a <i>variety of ways</i> at different times and places (or even at the same time) by a wide variety of organizations.
Dodson, M. and Smith D.E. (2003), p.1.	Governance can broadly be defined as: <i>the processes, structures and institutions</i> (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.

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

** Kooiman, J. (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. Here 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, M. 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, P. 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, 2006 - a).

The following table presents more narrow definitions, pursuing the above-mentioned study of Myungsuk Lee, who argues that governance defined in a narrow sense refers to a “more specific pattern of resolving common public problem” (Lee, M. 2003, p.7), including the perceptions on ‘new’ (modes of) governance.

Table 2 “Definitions on Governance as ‘New Governance’ and New modes of governance

Governance as ‘New Governance’	
Lappe, M. and Du Bois, P.M. (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, G. (1998), in Lee, M. (2003)	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, R. (1997) in Kooiman, J. (1999)	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 A. and Hausner, J. (1997), Jessop, B. (1997) and Rhodes, R. (2000)	Governance refers to a new type of coordination mechanism, which is an alternative to ‘market anarchy’ and ‘organisational hierarchy’.
New Modes of Governance	
<u>Separating the ‘new’ from ‘old’ governance</u>	<u>Linking the ‘new’ and ‘old’ governance</u>
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, in Glück, P. et al. p.5)	“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 (2006-a), p.1

2.1.2 Governance vs. Government definitions

Governance as a concept is often defined through a contrast with 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, N. 2001; Westbury, N.D. 2002 in Dodson, M. and Smith, D.E. 2003, p.35).

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, J.H. 1999; Sterritt, N. 2001, in Dodson, M. and Smith, D.E. 2003, p.2).

James N. 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,

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 an “optimal level” of peoples’ 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, which addresses the issue of principles, 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” (adopted from UNDP, 1997)

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.

The World Bank distinguishes six main dimensions of good governance (*Kaufmann, D. et al. 1999*):

- Voice and accountability, which includes civil liberties and political stability;
- Government effectiveness, which includes the quality of policy making and public service delivery;
- The lack of regulatory burden;
- The rule of law, which includes protection of property rights; and

- Independence of the judiciary; and control of corruption

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 by the international community.

Governance and environmental issues are closely related, and as John Graham notes, when describing governance:

“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, J. et al. 2003-a).

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 an global level. Thus, very often environmental governance is correlated and named as ‘global environmental governance’.

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), defines global environmental governance “as the sum of organisations, policy instruments, financing mechanisms, rules, procedures and norms that regulate the processes of global environmental protection” (Najam, A. 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.

Most of the challenges of the existing environmental governance system result from the proliferation and lack of coherence among the international organisations and their priorities, activities and investments. Among the many challenges of the current environmental governance system, the main ones are given here:

- 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, see Ivanova, M. and Roy, J. 2007; Najam, A. 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, J. sustainable development is “the way of living” (Robinson J. 2004 in Annemarie van Zeijl-Rozema, et al. 2007; Davidson, J. 2000).

“The way of living” meaning the manner in which humans live and develop. Seen from this perspective, two key aspects of SD come to the fore – the aspect of *needs* and *limits*. (IISD, 2007).

Therefore the key dimensions and aspects on SD are: the economic, social and environmental aspects; the *temporal* and *spatial* scales; the SD *future orientation*, and the aspects of *needs and limits*. Different authors refer to SD concept from different perspectives.

Julie 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, J. 2000).

Other authors emphasise the political implications of the concept of SD, perceiving it as a “political or normative act, rather than a scientific concept (see Annemarie van Zeijl-Rozema, et al. 2007). Stephen 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, S. 2003). Consequently, the ‘institutional challenges’ and ‘policy learning’, in this sense gain in importance.

2.3 Governance in this research project

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.

Firstly, the GRP is placed in the above-given classifications of governance definitions. Secondly the main aspects of the GRP are pointed out and thirdly theoretical frames of the principles of participation, policy integration and partnerships are given.

Placing the GRP in the above-given classifications on governance definitions, would be rather split around the boundaries of these classifications. This is expected, as every classification is an ideal and theoretical model that is difficult to apply in practice. However, here is a try:

- In the classification: *broad vs. narrow definitions*, the GRP would fit into the combination of these two ideal models. Namely, it would fit into the category that defines governance in a more narrow way – focussing on the changing trends in governing – while being a *mechanism for resolving common public problems*.
- In the *old vs. new governance*, the GRP would fit somewhat more in the last category the ‘new governance’ (as defined above). However, when further placing the GRP in the definitions that draw clear line between old and new governance vs. these that link the new to old governance, the GRP fit into the last category.
- Finally, in terms of the category of definitions that define *governance in contrast to government*, the GRP does not really focus on the contrasts and separations between these two; rather on the merging of governmental and non-governmental actors, stressing in particular the changing roles of these actors.

Following this discussion, it is already appearing that the GRP focuses on two main aspects: *changing trends in governing modes*, and *normative dimension of governance – the principles of governance*. It further has two priority aspects: the *non-hierarchical governing and involving of different stakeholders* (private, public and social entities). Both aspects refer to decision-making processes. Additionally a particular stress is put on the ‘process’ - *how the things are done*; and the *institutional capacities* for more efficient and effective resolving of collective action problems and increasing of problem-solving capacities. 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 a base of the very notion of governance. It is one of the core elements of governance contemporary understandings and definitions. In addition, both (the AC and the CC) conventions by influencing the mountain regions directly influence a wide variety of entities and stakeholders, at all levels and scales.

Policy integration is another basic precondition of governance and effective and efficient policies. A process towards sustainable development of transboundary mountain regions is hardened if the integration and cooperation among various sectors and policy fields is weak or lacking. Policy and sectoral disintegration result in overlapping of efforts and investments and consequently in inefficient and ineffective policies.

The principle of Partnerships in this work is correlated to the networking as well. 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 - such as Convention on biodiversity, Aarhus convention, Convention on climate change, Millennium development goals, and others - should be also ensured.

2.3.1. Principle of participation – theoretical background

Parallel with an increasing discussion on governance, the concept of participation was getting in importance. This doesn't imply that the origin of the concept dates two decades back. 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, A, 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. However, the social and political approaches in participation are given more 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, S. 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, J.M. and Uphoff, N.T. 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 is defined as a “*Process of empowerment of the deprived and the excluded*” (Ghai, D. 1990, in Nazmul Alam, S.M. and Begum, A. 2005).

More recent studies indicate a “shift in participation” (see Gaventa, J. and Valderrama, C. 1999, p. 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 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, in Clayton, A., et al. 1998).

Recently there is a trend of linking these 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 J. and Balckburn, J. 1998, in Gaventa, J and Valderrama, C. 1999, p.3). 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 John Gaventa and Valderrama, C. 1999, p. 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, J. and Valderrama, C. 1999, p.5), ‘*democratic local governance*’ (Blair, H. 2000), or “*governance at the level of local communities*” (Osmani, S.R. 2001).

These relatively similar concepts, involves concerns about decentralisation, people’s empowerment, involvement of community organisations. There are various reasons for, and promises of democratic local governance (DLG). The main arguments in favour of participatory approaches are that: participation can improve effectiveness and efficiency of public services; improve efficiency as well as 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-making, aiming for greater participation of people in politics; strengthen people representation and empowerment, etc. (see Blair, H. (2000) and Osmani, S.R. 2001). However the USAID case studies in six countries conclude: “*DLG initiatives have encouraged participation and have increased representation, but they have provided little in the way of empowerment, and even less in making the distribution of benefits more equitable or reducing poverty (at least in a short run)*”. (Blair, H. 2000).

There is an apparent gap between the promises of participation and its performances in reality. This gap raises the question of the problems and challenges of participation in local governance, as well as the participatory methods, as a mean to overcome these challenges. In terms of challenges, there are two sets of challenges: one related to establishing a truly participation, and another to the challenges that participation inherently involves. In terms of the first issue, perhaps the following two sets of problems are the most important: devolution of power from ‘the top’ and the genuine involvement from the people from ‘the bottom’ (Osmani, S.R. 2001). In addition Gaventa, J. and Valderrama, C. – based on a review of seven different studies about the nature, dynamics and methods of participation – identify the following main barriers to citizen participation: power relations, citizen organisation, participatory skills, political will, the level of participation, insufficient financial resources at the local level. Apart from the difficulties to set up a participative approach, there are the challenges of legitimacy and efficiency to be overcome.

A valid argument related to the participation in general, and especially to the challenges, is that these issues are insufficiently understood yet, and need further research. It is generally accepted that participative approaches bring for equitable problem defining and solving, as well as for inclusion of affected actors into the public decision-making, which in turn brings for wide acceptance and effective implementation. However, there are questions that should be carefully analysed for a clearer discourse on participation. Perhaps the most important are: 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, E. and Stead, D. 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 would be: policy-coherence (OECD, 2002), policy co-ordination (Challis, L. et al, 1988), holistic government, joined-up policy (Wilkinson, D. and Appelbee, E. 1999), joined-up government (Ling, 2002). These concepts – as including the terms such as coordination, collaboration, cooperation, coherence and governance, evidently differ. However, it is not of an interest to go deeper in explaining these related concepts. A rough difference between the concepts of cooperation, coordination and integrated policy making in terms of policy integration is given. The goals and output of cooperation is “more efficient sectoral policies”, the 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” (Meijers, E. and Stead, D. 2004).

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

Policy integration involves benefits and good reasons, but also various practical limitations. There is a lot of literature covering the PI influencing factors, facilitative and inhibitive conditions and costs and benefits of PI. Below are given two tables that summarise the possible costs and benefits related to the PI:

Table 4. “Policy integration – opportunities and risks” (adapted from Alter, C. and Hage, J. 1993 in Meijers, E. and Stead, D. 2004).

Opportunities	Risks
Opportunities to learn and to adapt, develop competencies, or jointly develop new products Gain 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 Gain of influence over domain; ability to penetrate new markets; competitive positioning and access to foreign markets; need for global products	Loss of technological superiority; risk of losing competitive position Loss of resources – time, money, information, raw material, legitimacy, status Being linked with failure; sharing the costs of failing such as loss of reputation, status, and financial position 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 Gain of mutual support, group synergy, and harmonious working relationships Rapid responses to changing market demands less delay in use of new technologies Gaining acceptance from foreign governments for participation in country	Loss of stability, certainty, and known timetested technology; feelings of dislocation Conflict over domain, goals, methods Delays in solution due to problems in coordination Government intrusion, regulation and so on
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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, strengths 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 theoretically differ but are in practice relatively 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 has sharply grown 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, J. 2007). According to the UN, Partnerships Team, over 200 partnerships were launched at the WSSD in Johannesburg and more then 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 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. However, 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, F. 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, K. and Quarless, D. 2002).

Current UN definition on partnerships is: “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. *Biermann, F. et al. (2007)* argue that “the broad definitions and terminology lead to, on the one hand, the unconsolidated nature of the current partnership research; on the other hand it puts strict limits on cumulative empirical research and theory building, while encouraging the case study based research”.

Here are given some general “opportunities and limitations” related to the concept of wider public-private partnerships.

The table bellow is based on the following studies: *Martens, J. 2007; Hemmati, M. and Whitfield, R. 2003; International Forum on partnership for SD.*

Table 5. “Partnerships – opportunities and risks”

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

3. METHODS

The four study subjects are studied through three different research methods for data collection and analysis: *Literature review*, *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, the three subjects (for the AC, the CC and the BMI) are studied in terms of their history, negotiation processes, thematic focuses, ratification and implementation, in due relation to their current development phases. The Questionnaire and Interview phase (survey) are 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.

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, etc. 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. Questionnaire phase

Questionnaires phase focuses on two main issues: conventions' priority issues and the conventions' facilitation of specific governance principles. The AC and the CC issues were addressed through separated questionnaires. The questionnaire phase aimed to receive a large feedback about various aspects, by a large variety of different actors, from different backgrounds and levels at which they operate. For this purpose comprehensive questionnaires focusing on different conventions' and governance dimensions were produced for both, AC and CC. (see Annexes 1 and 2).

In total 380 questionnaires have been successfully distributed among the Alpine stakeholders, which means 380 individual actors have received the questionnaire on the Alpine Convention. On the other hand, in total 200 individual Carpathian stakeholders have received the questionnaire on the Carpathian Convention. The convention specific questionnaires included questions on both, the AC and the CC. The questionnaire return rate in a first run was extremely low, ranging from about 2% for the AC and about 3% for the CC. After this first run, two separate meetings with both conventions' secretariats took place. These meetings have provided much input into the survey, and have resulted in some changes in the questionnaires, as well as a better communication of the survey. Consequently, following these meetings a shorter version of questionnaire on both conventions was spread out. In addition, an online version of the questionnaire about the CC was posted on the European Mountain Forum website: <http://www.mtnforum.org/europe/rs/surveys.cfm?sq=3> (assessed 20. 11. 2007).

This contributed for a final return of 15 questionnaires on the AC and 20 on the CC. These short

questionnaires focused on two main issues: governance principles and conventions' priority issues (see Annexes 1 and 2). The data received by the questionnaires provides the first insight into the conventions and governance principles, and it is used as a reference point for the interviews. However, considering that the questionnaire-received feedback is still small, the data is not considered in the interpretation of results, or in the conclusion sections.

3.3 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.

Similarly to the questionnaire phase, interviews are conducted separately for the AC and the CC. In total 10 interviews, five per convention, are conducted. The interviews are semi-structured. The structure with the main topics was prepared and sent to the research subjects prior the interviews took place. There is a slight difference in the content between the interviews on the two conventions, due to their different histories and contexts. The interviews were rather flexible, there was an open discussion and the interviewed subjects were adding other relevant points in addition to the initially given. This flexibility 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.

Alpine convention is widely quoted as the first sub-regional instrument for mountain protection, existing at an international level. In addition it is also regarded as a convention for protection and sustainable development of mountains - "*Alpine Convention is currently the most advanced example of a regional mountain sustainable development initiative*" (Egerer, H. 2002). Parting from the name of the Convention – "Convention on the Protection of the Alps", and from the convention's documents and functioning, one could reasonably question the importance the AC place to the SD and governance principles. When elaborating on sustainable development and governance in the AC, the convention's early establishment (signed in 1991) should be pointed out.

► *The Alps:*

The Alps cover an area of approximately 191 000 km², 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 km², settled by 13,6 million people in eight countries, 83 regions and about 6,200 communities.

The following Map (Map 1) of 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 bi-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 as signed in 1991 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, in a general way. On the other hand, the AC does not refer to the principle of *public participation, stakeholder involvement, ecosystem approach, education and awareness raising.*

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 has been 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, A.; Balsiger, J. 2007; and Götz, A., 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, A., 2002). Following these less successful "declaration of intents" (Götz, A. 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, M. 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, A. 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, G. 2001, in Balsiger, J. 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 (see table no. 5).

The reasons for the difficulty in protocol negotiation should be searched in the way the protocols have been negotiated, 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, J. 2007*) and *Price, M. 2000*);
- inconsistency in the content of different protocols; inconsistency among the protocols within both, the national and European Union legal system (*Price, M. 2000*).

Table 6. “Ratification of the Alpine Convention and protocols”

[illegible]

Ratified									
Energy									
Signed									
Ratified									
Soil protection									
Signed									
Ratified									
Transport									
Signed									
Ratified									
Dispute Settlement									
Signed	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2002	
Ratified	2002		2002	2002	2002		2003	2004	
Monaco Membership									
Signed									
Ratified									

Adopted from Alpine Convention official web site http://www.convenzionedellealpi.org/page3_en.htm (accessed 23.07.2007)

Legend: A-Austria, CH-Switzerland, G-Germany, F-France, FL-Liechtenstein, I-Italy, MC-Monaco, SL-Slovenia, EU-European Union).

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	
<i>Key Issues</i>	<i>Implementation Priorities</i>
Mobility, accessibility, transit traffic	Public relations
Society, culture, identity	Exchange of experience and co-operation
Tourism, leisure, sports	Trend monitoring and interpretation;
Nature, agriculture and forestry, cultural landscape	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 INTERREG 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 (Palazzo, L. 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. and 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, G.) 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, M. R. 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 one can argue that the convention is at an early stage of setting the governance institutional. This seems to be in harmony with the discussion on governance in mountain development in general. A 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, B. 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, there are other critical views related to the AC, that it makes no relation 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 of the AC, 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’)
<p>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</p>	<p>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</p> <p>The conflicts overcame, still two countries, have not ratified the protocols Focus on joint action (in MAP)</p> <p>Shift towards implementation, after the ratification of the protocols (since 2002)</p>

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 truly difficult to find project, programme, document or a report 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, answered by the permanent secretariat of the Alpine Convention: “*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 by an 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 is one of the reasons for not such a large 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, A., 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, T. 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, O. 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 transboundary 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, J. 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 experiences 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 strengths, 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, M. 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

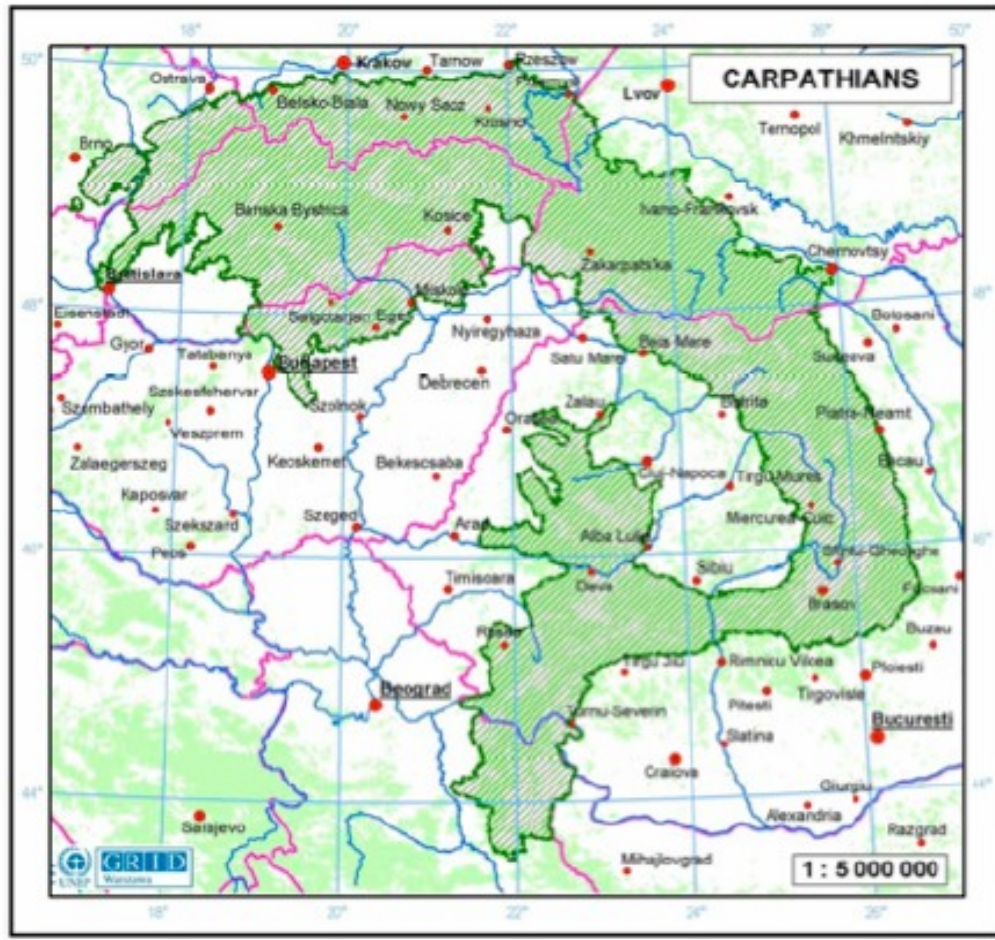
The Carpathian region (Carpathians) spread widely over seven countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Carpathians cover an area of about 209, 000 km² with a population of 17 million (ANPA, 2004). The Carpathian Mountain range extends from the Austrian borders with Czech Republic and Slovakia to Serbia, 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 wildlife” (UNEP-ISCC-b and UNEP-ISCC-c, 2007); Knapik, 2006; Starunchak, L. 2005; Omelyan, S. 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. Here is given a Map 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 (COPI, 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, J. 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 transboundary protected areas”*. (Fall, J. 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, F. et al. 2006), Fall, J. and Egerer, H. 2004; Egerer, H. 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 Visegrad 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 Montenegro³, 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, H. 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, J. 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, J. 2005).

The table below 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	05.2003	05.2003	05.2003	05.2003	05.2003	05.2003	05.2003
Ratified	06.2005	05.2004	02.2006	10.2006	/	05.2004	05.2004
Instrum. of Ratification	07.2005	10.2005	03.2006	12.2006	/	05.2004	05.2004
Entry into Force	01.2006	01.2006	06.2006	03.2007	/	01.2006	01.2006

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

Alike 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, J. 2005 argues in favour of the convention's adequate initial approach to implementation, concluding that:

"Focusing 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, J. 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 with 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, K. 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 to 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 made various crucial decisions. It 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 (COPI, 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). Since then, a number of events have taken place (workshops and meetings of KEO National Focal Points, Steering Group etc.). 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 necessarily 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, both 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. According to this document *Almaty Guideline, 2006*:

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"*.

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 to be 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 Biodiversity 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 and 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/Cooperation and official partnerships hitherto are promoted:

- *MoUs with the Alpine Convention and Alpine-Carpathian Cooperation in the field of conservation of biological and landscape diversity.*

The Alpine states support the development of the CC. In particular, Austria, by hosting and co-financing the UNEP-ISCC. Italy, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Germany, by facilitating the negotiation meetings. The cooperation between the two conventions culminated by Memorandum of Understanding prepared at the 9th Alpine Conference in November 2006. Further, the cooperation with the ALPARC in assisting the creation of the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas is of particular importance.

- *Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention and UNEP ISCC and Carpathian Wetland Initiative (CWI).*

The MoC was signed on December 13th, 2006 in Kyiv, Ukraine. The CWI was established latter to facilitate the conservation and wise use of wetlands in the Carpathian region and beyond. CWI builds on the outcomes of the project *"Network of Carpathian Protected Areas and Ramsar Sites"*.

- *MoU between the Executive Secretariat of the Central European Initiative (CEI) and UNEP Vienna ISCC.*

One of CEI's main objectives is to bring the countries of Central and Eastern Europe closer together and assist them in their preparation process for EU membership. All the CC parties are members of the CEI. CEI is also an observer and co-financer of the Carpathian Project. It co-finances the work of UNEP-ISCC to support the development of mountain regions in South East Europe (*MoU between CEI and UNEP ISCC, 2006*).

- *MoC between the Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative (CERI) and UNEP ISCC.*

The base of this MoC is the conservation and sustainable use of biological and landscape diversity. CERI expertise in specialised areas of biodiversity assessment and research in the Carpathians is recognised by the UNEP-ISCC. The MoC more specifically focuses on the following areas: Protocol on biological and landscape diversity; preparation of programmatic documents for developing the Carpathian ecological network and support of the CNPA activities.

- *Cooperative agreement with the EURAC, Bolzano*

The European Academy in Bolzano is providing the scientific support from the beginning of the negotiation process.

4.3 South East European (SEE) or Balkan Mountain Initiative

This part is differently structured than these for the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions, since the Balkan mountain process is an initiative for convention, and not an legal instrument in place, yet.

This part focuses on two main aspects: 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 – 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, V. 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 transboundary 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 - BFSDD), with the aim to support the activities related to the SEE Convention Process was formed in Macedonia. The BFSDD 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, C. 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: transboundary 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 No1*). 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, B. 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, BFSO, 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 geo-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 generally weak. 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, is considered as essential to the BMI.

5. QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

Questionnaire main focus:

The aim of the short version questionnaires, was to obtain data about:

- The Alpine Convention main priorities in its initial phase (1991-1995) and today, which in turn reflected on the AC changing trends,
- The Carpathian Convention main (actual) priorities,
- The Alpine and the Carpathian Convention facilitation of specific governance principles, and
- The Alpine and the Carpathian influence on the three selected governance principles: participation, partnerships and policy integration.

This chapter focuses on the conventions' priorities and facilitation of governance. Data about these two issues is a quantitative data and is presented in excel graphs.

5.1. Conventions' priority issues

5.1.1 Alpine Convention priority issues

Question Number 1: Please rank the Alpine Convention's main priorities in the initial phase (1991-1995) and now (2007). Please rank them on a scale of 1-4, with *1* being most important and *4* least important.

Alpine Convention's priorities in the initial stage (1991-1995) and today (2007)

The Alpine convention priorities are presented in three separated figures. The figure 1 shows the "AC Priorities in the initial phase (1991-1995). The figure 2 shows the "The AC priorities today", and the figure 3 *compares* the AC priorities in a time dimension, clearly showing the AC changing trends.

There are in total 15 questionnaires received on the AC and 20 on the CC. Despite the small research population, the population is presented in percentages in order to make the comparison between the *conventions* clearer. More precisely, as the research population differs in the two conventions, the percentage of the people is more representative when comparing the two conventions on the same graph.

On the figure 1, the Y-axis shows the percentage of participants in the survey, while the X-axis shows the convention's *priorities*. The rank of importance of the convention's priorities is presented by different colours: dark green – most important; light green –important, orange – slightly important and red – least important. Therefore the figure presents the percentage of participants ranking various conventions priorities, on a scale of most important to least important.

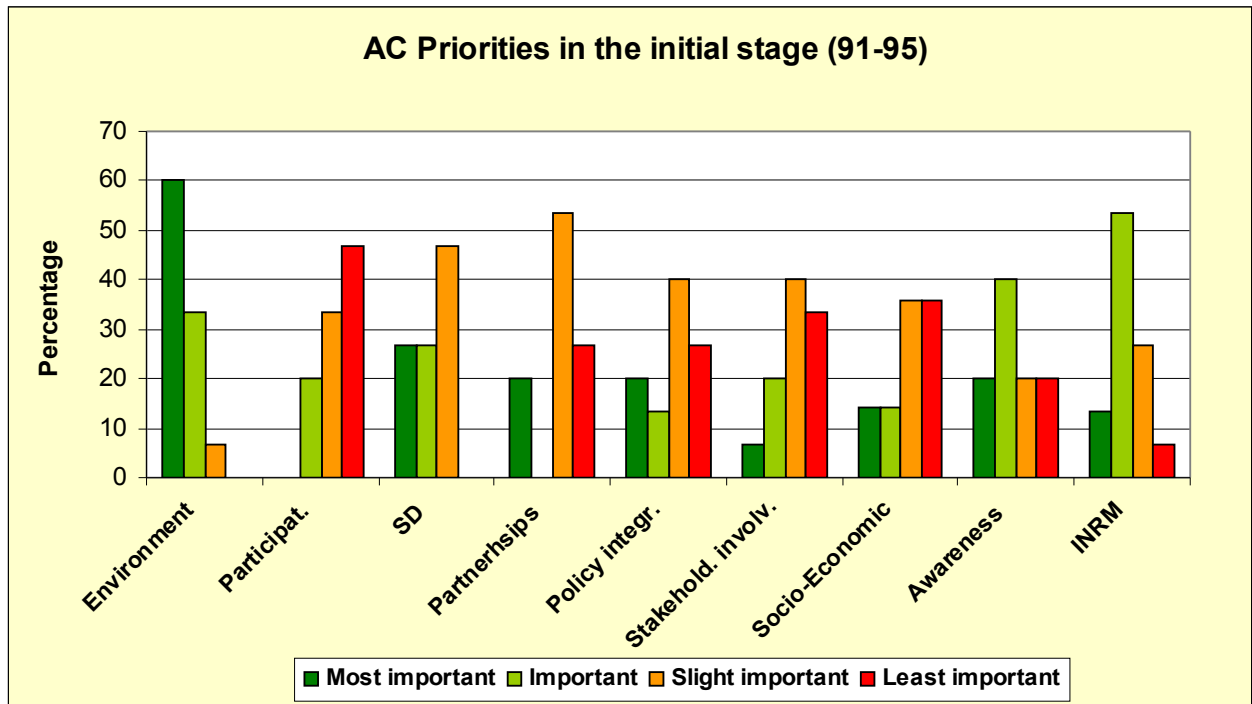


Figure 1. "Alpine convention's priority issues in the initial stage" (Research population N=15)

The full names of the addressed priorities, valid for the figures 1, 2 and 3 are: environmental protection, participation, sustainable development (SD), policy integration, stakeholder involvement, socio-economic development, awareness raising and integrated natural resource management (INRM).

The figure 2 presents the AC priorities today. It uses the same indicators in a same way as the figure 1.

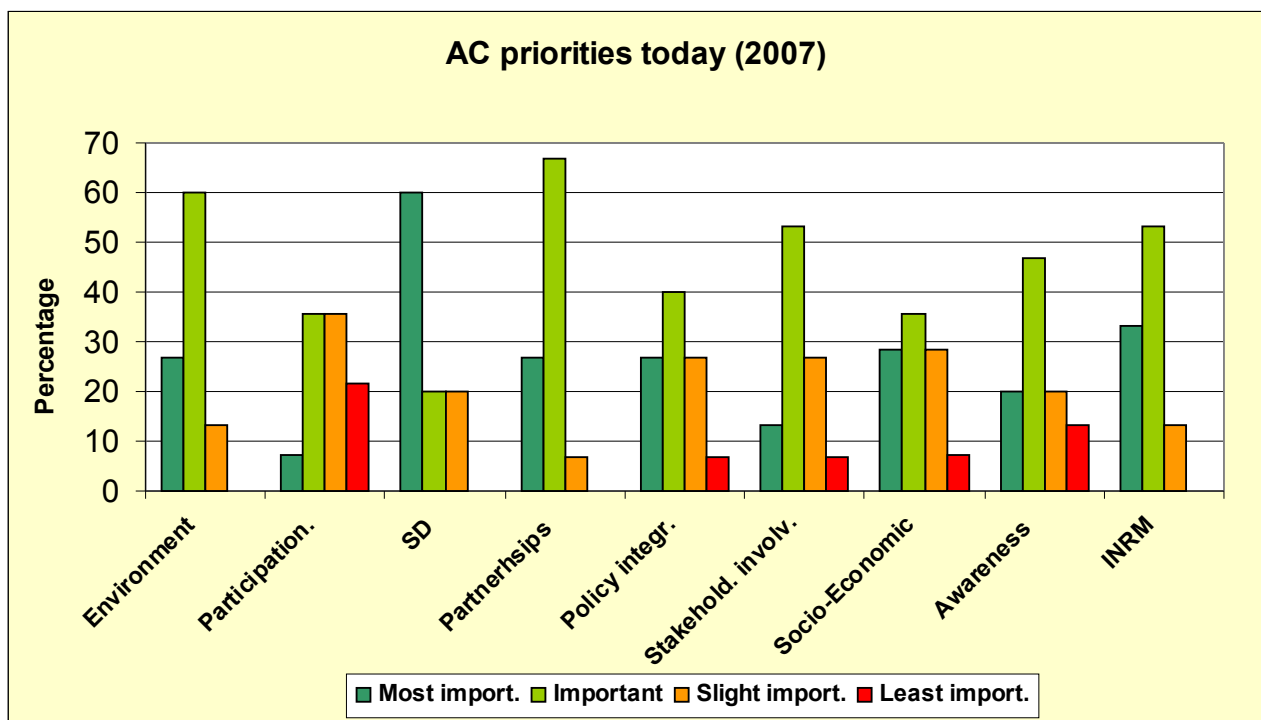


Figure 2. "Alpine convention's priority issues today" (Research population N=15)

As the figures 1 and 2 show, the AC is achieving an overall positive changing trend for all of the given priorities, apart from the environmental protection. The *environmental protection* along

with the integrated *natural* resource management (INRM) is perceived to be the AC main priority in its initial phase, with a decreasing importance in the last 10 to 15 years. The results therefore support the literature review finding that the AC was initially more focused (or perceived to be so) on the environmental aspects, and that it is becoming more inclusive with time.

The greatest positive changes are particularly evident concerning the *sustainable development, partnerships and stakeholder involvement*. In addition the participation, policy integration and socio-economic aspects mark also very positive changing trends. The awareness raising and the integrated natural resource management (INRM) change positively as well, but not in much extensive way.

The figure 3 combines the AC priorities in the initial stage (figure 1) and these of today (figure 2). It therefore shows the AC changing trends. As in the previous two figures, in the figure 3, the convention's priorities are placed on the X-axis, and the percentage of participants on the Y-axis. The colours show the rank of importance as in the figures 1 and 2. There are two columns for each variable (convention's priority), one for the 1991 and another for 2007 placed on the X-axis. Each column shows the rank of importance for the respective convention development phase, as indicated in the figure.

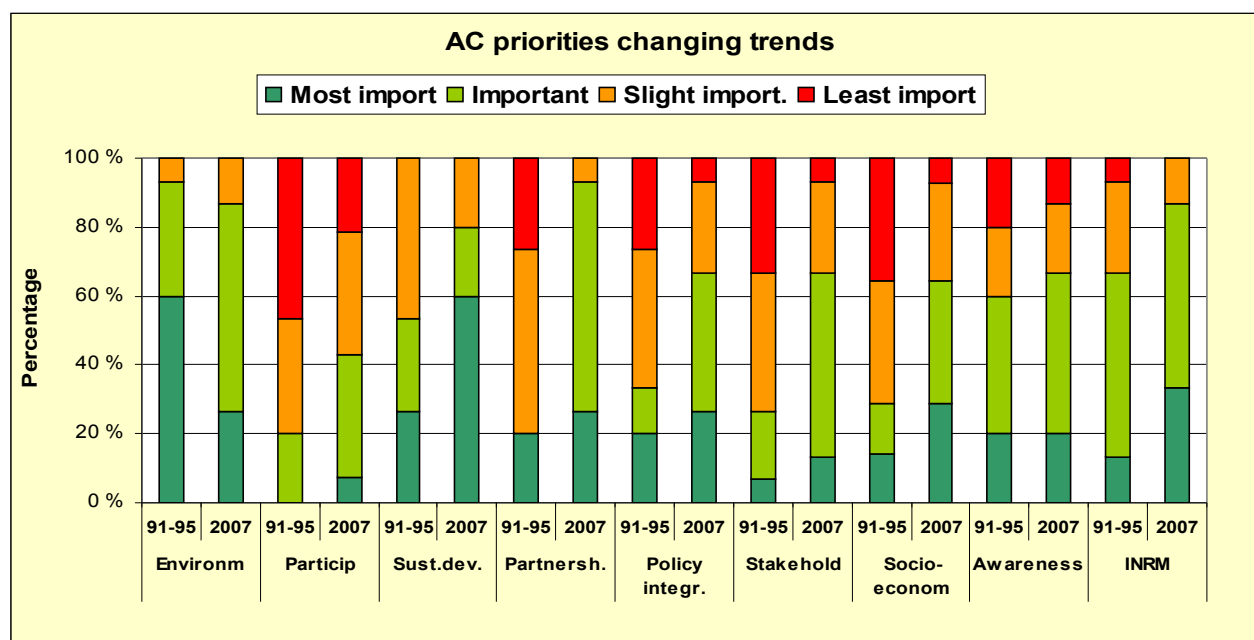


Figure 3. "Alpine Convention changing trends" (Research population N=15)

5.1.2 Carpathian Convention priority issues

As the Carpathian convention has a much shorter history compared to the Alpine, the CC *actual* priorities are addressed.

Question number 1: Please rank the Carpathian Convention's main priorities. Please rank them on a scale of 1-4, with 1 being most important and 4 least important.

The following figure (figure 4) presents the CC priorities. As in the previous figures, the Y-axis presents the percentage of participants in the survey; the X-axis presents the convention's

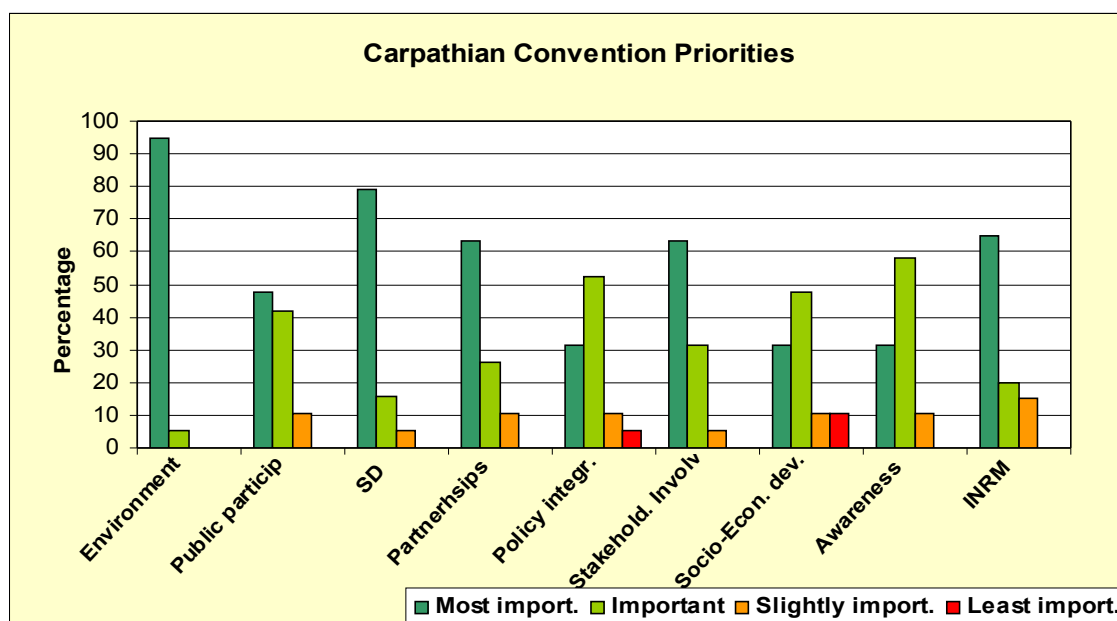


Figure 4. “Carpathian Convention (actual) priority issues (Research population priorities, while the different colours show the different importance, as indicated in the table.

As obvious from the figure 4, the CC is ranked very high in terms of most of the given priorities. In particular the following points are worth highlighting: 94% of the participants ranked the *environmental protection* as “the most important”. Sustainable development (SD) is ranked as “most important” by 79%, while about 62% have ranked partnerships, stakeholder involvement and INRM as the “most important”. The “least important” and “slightly important” ranks are used in a very small extent (see figure 4).

5.1.3 Alpine Convention vs. Carpathian Convention priority issues

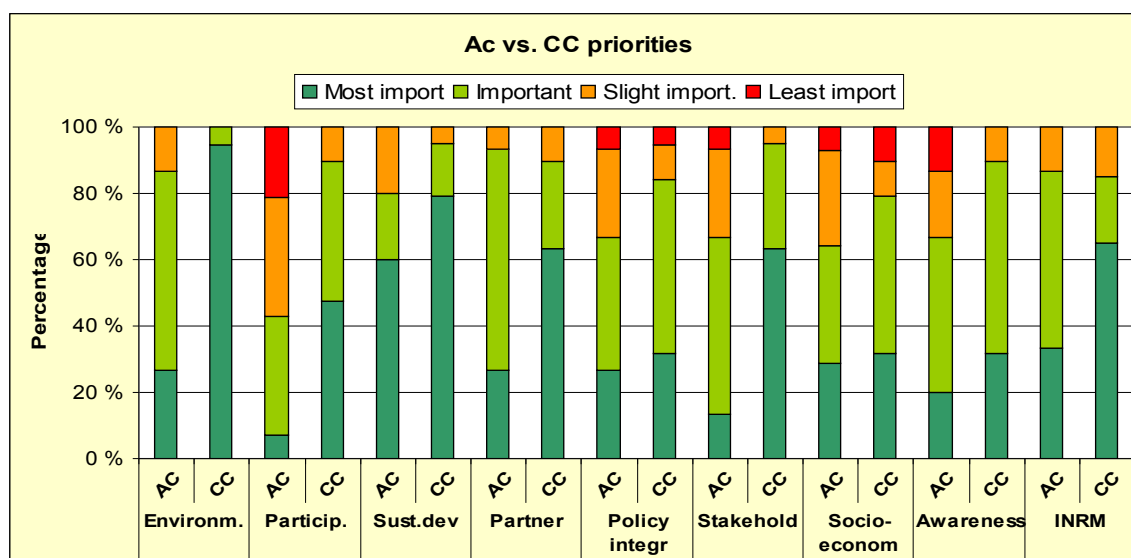


Figure 5. The priority issues of Alpine versus Carpathian Convention (Research population for the AC N=15. Research population for the CC N=20)

Combining the data from the 2 and the figure 4 (the AC today priorities and the CC priorities) provides an opportunity to “compare” the AC and the CC in terms of their priority issues.

The X-axis shows the conventions' priorities for the AC and the CC. The Y-axis shows the percentage of participants. There are two columns for each variable (priority), one for the AC (as of 2007) and another for the CC.

As the figure 4 indicates, most of the priorities are ranked higher in the case of the CC compared to the AC. There are some particularly important points to be observed:

The *environmental protection* as a priority is ranked far higher in the CC than in the AC. This especially gets interesting, considering that the AC was considered to be a “green treaty”. In addition, even though the results present the CC to be more focused on the environmental issue, the CC however is not perceived as a “green treaty”. This indicates the changing of perceptions about the environmental issue over time. Namely, the results show that still in the 1990s, the Environmental protection was seen as a “pure ecological conservation concept”, while today it is perceived as an integrative part of sustainable development, along the economic and social ones.

Particularly large differences in ranking are observable concerning the principles of *participation and stakeholder involvement*. The *awareness rising, policy integration and socio-economic development* while still ranked as higher in the CC, do not mark some larger differences.

5.2 Facilitation of Governance

5.2.1 Alpine Convention facilitating governance

Question number 2: To what extent the Alpine Convention facilitates the governance principles, specified below? Please rank the facilitation on a scale of 1-4, with 1 being “strongly facilitated” to 4 weakly facilitated.

The next figure (figure 6) presents the AC facilitation of particular governance principles. It should be pointed out that the effectiveness and efficiency were given separately; however, as the two principles are almost equally ranked they are presented together.

The figure presents the AC facilitation of particular governance principles, by ranking them from strongly to weakly facilitated. The X-axis shows the variables (governance principles); the

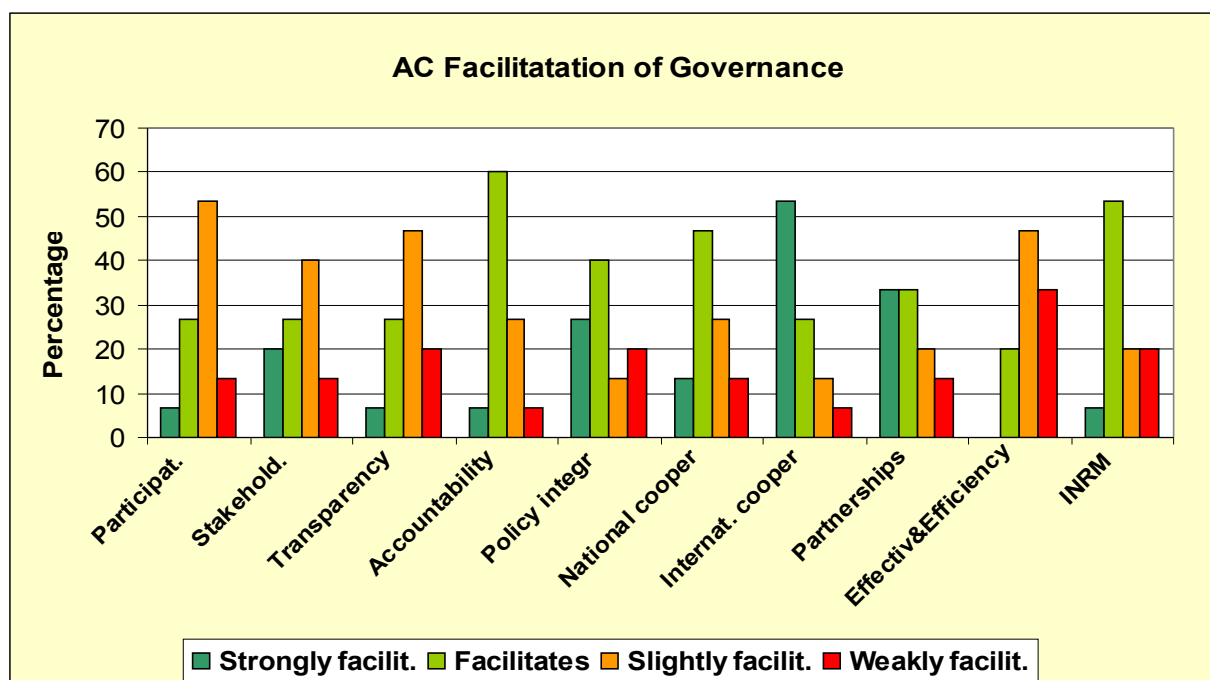


Figure 6. “Alpine convention facilitation of particular governance principles” (Research population N=15)

Y-axis the percentage of participants, and the colours shows the different level of facilitation.

The full names of the addressed governance principles, valid for the figures 6, 7 and 8 are: participation, stakeholder involvement, transparency, accountability, policy integration, national cooperation, international cooperation, partnerships, effectiveness and efficiency and integrated natural resource management (INRM).

It is interesting to note, that 60% of the research subjects answered that the AC contribute for a better accountability in the Alpine process, which is the highest peak. However, as the accountability was not further addressed in the research it is difficult to elaborate on the possible reasons in the AC particular case. Another point is the international cooperation that is ranked as strongly facilitated by about 54% of the involved subjects.

Concerning the three selected principles of *participation, policy integration and partnerships* it is to observe that: the policy integration and partnerships are considered as strongly facilitated or facilitated by around 30-40 % of subjects. However the participation is ranked very lower.

5.2.2 Carpathian Convention facilitation of governance

Question number 2: To what extent the Carpathian Convention facilitates the governance principles, specified below? Please rank the facilitation on a scale of 1-4, with 1 being “strongly facilitated” to 4 weakly facilitated.

The CC facilitation of governance principles is analysed and presented, by using the same indicators as the AC facilitation of governance.

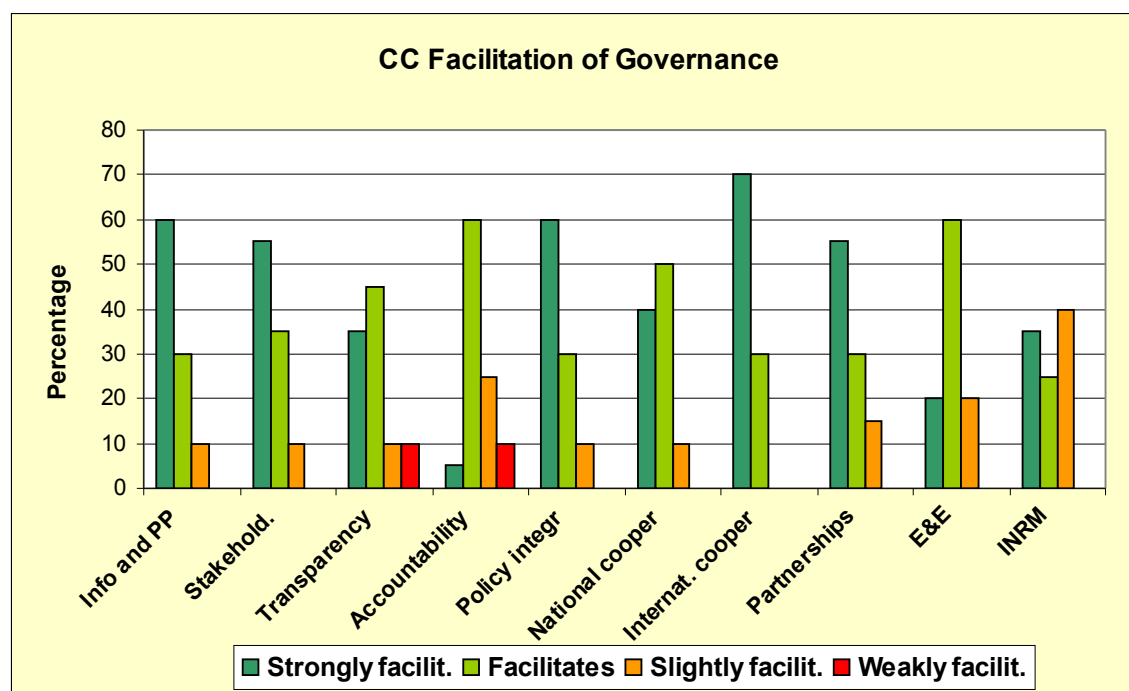


Figure 7. Carpathian Convention facilitation of particular governance principles (Research population N=20)

Most of the addressed principles are ranked as “strongly facilitated” or “facilitated” by the CC. However the *INRM* is ranked as “weakly facilitated” by 40% of the participants, while other 60% have ranked it as “strongly facilitated” or “facilitated”. In addition the transparency and accountability are the only principles considered as “weakly facilitated” by 10% of the subjects.

5.2.3 Alpine Convention vs. Carpathian Convention facilitation of governance

Finally the last figure (figure 8) combines the results given in the figures 6 and 7. It therefore compares the AC and the CC in terms of facilitation of specific governance principles. However, as discussed in the next chapters “Interview analysis” and “Discussion of the results”,

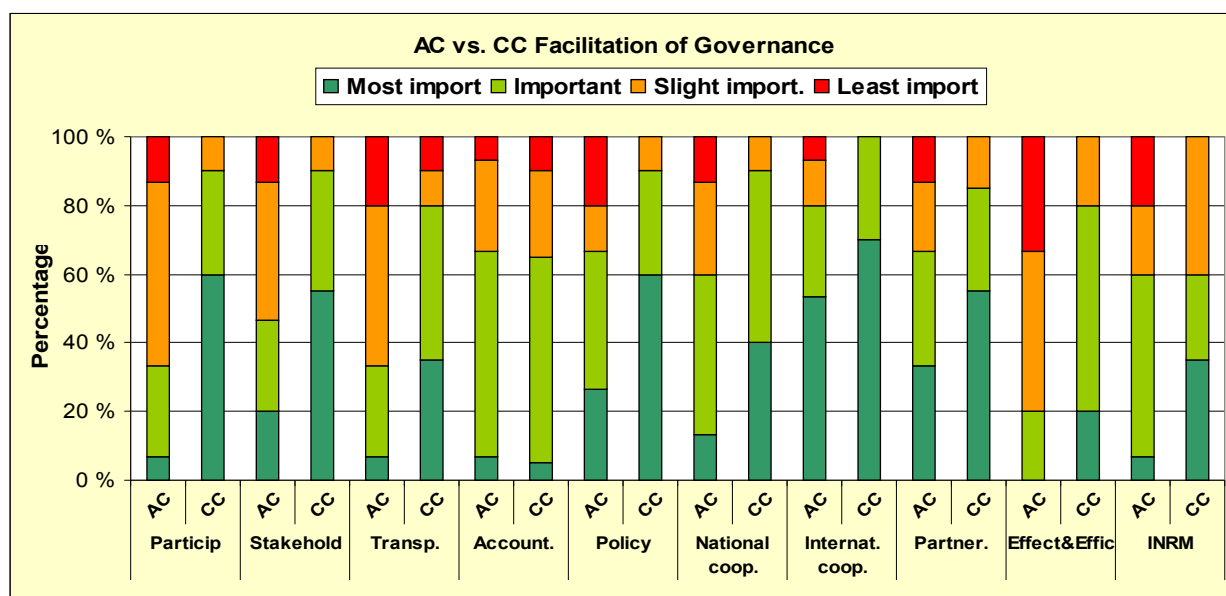


Figure 8. "Facilitation of specific governance principles – Alpine vs. Carpathian Convention. (Research population for the AC N=15. Research population for the CC N=20)

the direct comparison of the two conventions would not be appropriate, due to the different organisation, structures and conditions in the two conventions and regions.

As the figure 8 indicates almost all governance principles are perceived to be better facilitated by the CC than by the AC. The principles of *participation*, *transparency*, *policy integration*, *effectiveness* and *efficiency*, are highly better ranked in the CC, then in the AC. Therefore two of the three selected principles – *participation* and *policy integration* – are ranked as much better facilitated by the CC compared to the AC. Considering the third – *partnerships* – also shows a more positive feedback in the CC, but the difference is not that drastic.

It is very interesting however to note the almost equal rank of only one governance principle in the AC and the CC – the principle of *accountability*. Considering the lack of criteria, standards and practices to evaluate the conventions' compliance mechanism, the elaboration on the accountability is rather fuzzy. This lack of accountability mechanisms in the conventions, in turn might explain the unpredictable data related to accountability.

6. INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

In this part the ten interviews conducted for the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions are analysed. The interviews are analysed and presented in a narrative way. The results of interviews for each convention are presented separately. The results from the AC and the CC are presented in two separated chapters, 6.1 and 6.2. However, the chapter 6.3 combines and interpret the data for both conventions together. This offers a good possibility for a comparative observation of the issues in both conventions.

6.1 Alpine Convention

This chapter presents the five interviews conducted for the AC, with the Alpine stakeholders. There are in total six issues discussed with the interviewed subjects. All the answers about a specific issue are analysed and presented together. The questions address the issues appearing to be of critical importance. The questions are based on the results obtained from the literature review and the questionnaires. The complete interviews for both conventions are given in the Annexes 3 and 4.

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

Results

Here comes the summary and analysis of the interviews per each question 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). It is, in addition, acknowledged by which sector the statement was given.

Please note that 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. In many countries there was the feeling of regional governments’ inappropriate involvement in the AC negotiation. 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. The CIPRA is involved from the beginning and that is very important. However, the political imperative lead by the Bavarian political people played the crucial role in the AC negotiation. They have kind of pushed the things too quickly when everything was finally moving, and that’s way there were these difficulties at the beginning” (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).

“In general about governance in Alpine region, prior or after the Alpine convention, we should consider the role of the EU integration. Obviously the process of the EU integration has been going on for a long time. So I think most of the governance processes between the Alpine Countries were in the context of the EU integration. Of course, in addition to that many took place in the frame of the AC” (AC ndependent 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. The AC has even offered additional opportunities to for instance cooperation between the communities. So the AC is not in a contradiction to the local initiatives and activities, but it is only that the formal processes and procedures are not always very enthusiastic. 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, or until now, focusing much on good governance aspects. And this is related to the different developing phases of the AC.

“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 is a real partnership. It 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 off 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 INTERREG Alpine Space programme is a specific programme of the EU for the Alpine region. And these programmes widely support partnerships and networking initiatives. I think also, as a result of AC there was more cooperation and network between the municipalities” (AC independent expertise).

“As about the partnerships, the initiatives at the beginning didn’t come from the AC, but a lot of partnerships came up as bottom-up processes. Examples are: Alliance in the Alps, ISCAR, Alpine Towns, etc. So there was a lot of partnership raising, but not coming from the AC official bodies directly, but with the AC as a background. However latter on, the PSAC started making agreements and MoUs with those networks in order to support them, as good as it can” (NGO sector).

Considering the Policy integration (PI), it is to conclude that the AC addresses a wide variety of different issues and have developed protocols on these 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 “cross-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 independent expertise).

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

“The most of the protocols address specific sectors, and I don’t think they have been so much integrated. But there is a protocol on special planning and that one should be more integrated”, otherwise there is not much interlinkages among the protocols” (Academic sector).

“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 no much interference with other sectors were even mentioning” (Politics).

- Unlike these points, the existing variety of the protocols is considered as “a direct indicator for an inter-sectoral approach”.

“One of strengthens of the AC is the diversity of issues, from natural conservation to economic and social issues. So, all the things are discussed in the protocols at different levels. Finally, it would not have been possible to create so many protocols in all the different areas, if there was not a multi-sectoral approach” (AC independent expertise).

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 laws 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 their 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 independent 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 independent expertise).

“Within the AC, it is rather easy for a NGO to influence the convention. As it is a small convention, with only 8 states, and 11 observers, so it is easier for a NGO to be heard than it is in the other larger international conventions” (NGO sector).

- 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. I raised this question as an answer that the AC should do more to support the activities of the small NGOs. Because we cannot support them directly much, but they should also use the AC as background for their activities and projects. 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 supports projects focused on the AC and SD in the Alpine region. This Programme has largely contributed for a larger NGOs focus on the Alpine issues. However, there should be more initiatives for better involvement of smaller NGOs from both sides – NGOs and the AC (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, and instead think assume that it can be more effectively arranged at the national level.

“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 whether it would be beneficial for other businesses to work with the AC, I am not sure about it. 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. I don't know about any real examples, except for tourism, where there have been some initiatives and cooperation between public and private actors" (Academic sector).

"An important thing is how the private sector is structured. In Switzerland for exp. the private sector is in Zurich, and it is not much interested in the Alpine region, apart perhaps of Nestle. So the private sector in general is really small structured and they have problem to cooperate between each other. In Italy is even more difficult and the structure is even smaller. I am not sure how it is Austria and France, but I think the involvement of businesses is a challenge related to their organisation and structure" (AC independent expertise).

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. Perhaps the other intergovernmental organisations could be important in terms of the international questions such as the AC Climate Change Action" (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).

Sub-national actors:

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. In fact if you didn't have that the countries would never sign the convention. 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, primarily as it was pretty much created by CIPRA and IUCN. 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. The environmental protection is becoming increasingly associated with the SD. The local economic actors have realised that the economic development is more sustainable if environment is considered, and therefore opted for issues such sustainable tourism is, for instance. These trends have had the primal role for the AC to consider the larger picture and wide the perceptions" (AC independent 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. But in a way this was also a useful stage, as the countries were getting closer to the AC. 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". We really have to think what the AC can do more then the negotiation and discussion of protocols. The protocols are established now, and the question is can the Convention also go in the direction of supporting the projects, seminars with the population, creating networks and supporting networks at a higher level than it does so far" (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).

"It is also remarkable that the observers are part of the compliance committee, so they can be there at the negotiation of the reports about implementation of the AC from the countries. The observers get the report and they can make a note to it. So this is good sign of good governance, as well" (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.

6.2 Carpathian Convention

This chapter presents the five interviews conducted about 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 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

Here come the summary and analysis of the interviews 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.

Please note that 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).

"In terms of the initiatives prior the CC, I know that many countries have had good relations at both the level of public institutions and NGOs. These are some transboundary initiatives for cooperation that go far beyond and before the Carpathian convention" (Academic 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, as without governments a convention can't be agreed. 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.

“The CC was decided by the countries because there was a need from the local level actors. There was a long ongoing discussion about Carpathian Eco-regions, much before the CC. 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 do not believe that the CC was promoted by the local stakeholders and NGOs. I think that it 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. It is the same for the AC. CIPRA had a role, but it has become more important after the convention was signed. Further, there will be in one month a Balkan Convention launched, but it is not that local people from the Balkans have pushed for it. It is again UNEP and some states, such as Italy and Macedonia. It is a more realistic way of seeing the things – recognising the states’ role in initiating the CC”.

Concerning the CC impacts, 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. This is on one hand a good thing, as it gives legitimacy to the CC, but for NGOs and for the projects on the ground that’s very slow. Honestly talking there are many NGOs that get more and more remote from the CC, as they feel that the CC become quite official, they don’t feel so connected to it, as it is slow. They don’t understand all the procedures, lots of reports, and what is happening it isn’t very tangible to them” (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. On the other hand, regarding the CC becoming more official with time, I can say that the convention's structure and bodies are already built. There are focal points, there is an implementation committee that is similar to the permanent committee of the AC and we have the thematic working groups. In the near future the CC is oriented to the work on biodiversity and forestry, and not much on administrative decisions" (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 I (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).

- The access to information is provided, but access to decision making is still to be improved.

There is a general positive approach to involve the NGOs, to inform the people, it is an open convention. Many NGOs are involved in the working groups and are active. But, finally the convention is between the parties – the states. So technically the procedures and rules have to be approved by governments, and NGOs and some parties are excluded from that. I see it in this way: the access to information is probably provided, but access to decision making is something much, much more difficult" (NGO sector).

- 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 transboundary 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. The reporting system is a basic way, and a minimum requirement to monitor the

convention's implementation, without it and without a compliance mechanism, there can not be healthy transparency" (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?

Before starting the discussion on the actors and their roles and interrelation in the CC, an interesting statement concerning the actors in the CC is given:

"A lot of the key actors are not governments, they are organisations like UNEP, UNDP, WWF-CDP, and they are acting in a proactive way, as they know that if the CC was left to the states the convention will be only on paper. For example CEEWEB, it is a quite well established and involved organisation that took a lead in sustainable tourism. If other conventions would look at the CC and that a NGO leads a working group, they would say that's a wonderful thing. Internally we have a lot of reservations, CEEWEB technically do a lot of work on sustainable tourism, but it can't officially lead a work, because it is not a party. There is where we need to see the limits of a NGO, and a party. Especially because the convention is between the parties and the parties further make decisions where the NGOs are hardly, if at all, involved" (NGO sector).

In this question different actors and their roles and involvement are discussed. As the actors' involvement is tightly related to the functioning and implementation of the convention, the two issues are addressed together. 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. So the institutions are playing the major role, if you don’t consider the IUCN, WWF and FAO, there are only few NGOs that are playing an important role. This is weakening the process, and even if we have fewer conflicts, there is at the same time less pressure on the public authorities, which is not good and desirable” (Academic sector).

“Generally speaking in the Carpathian countries, we do not have the same strong NGO sector as in the Alpine countries. It is completely different, in the Carpathian region the NGOs are starting now, or 10-15 years ago, and they are small organisations with 5, 10 or maybe 50 people. While in the Alpine Region, there are many strong organisations with over 1000 members, who can make a difference and have an influence” (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).

Carpathian States and public institutions:

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 from 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).

Private sector (PS) or Business:

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. The greatest part in the region is under public property including energy and forest sectors. Privatisation of these sectors is still an issue in the region. I am underling that some private sectors are not so developed, like for instance the sustainable tourism. This is also an issue for the EU member countries, but it is even a bigger issue for the Carpathian countries and especially in mountain regions. I think that private sector should have a role, but it is to work on” (Academic sector).

- The business sector is not weak in the Carpathians, but perhaps it 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. The formal way would be that UNEP ISCC invites the certain businesses to participate to the meetings. But in that case it would have to probably identify these interested in SD and environmental issues, and start networking and this take time and money” (NGO sector).

- Lack of environmental and SD competitiveness 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. So, there is still a hard and long way to go. I’ve raised this topic on a workshop on sustainable tourism, but there was not much interest in the discussion, with the main reasons that they do not trust the companies. 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. The EU should play a more important role for promotion and assistance of the convention. And not only in financial terms, but there are some other gaps in the CC, so if EU will offer bigger assistance this will bring for strengthening and addressing these gaps" (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).

- Four years, since the convention is signed, is a considerable period of time for any process. In general the things are moving ahead.

"One could say these are still early days of the convention; but the convention was signed in 2003. Four years of any process is quite long period of time. And it seems that the real opportunities were indeed in the early days of the convention – first 1 to 2 years, when the things were more flexible. However, the CC provides opportunities, and it makes things possible. So, the things and the projects are happening with references to the CC, but not because of the CC" (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-term 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).

- The importance of the EU in the future was emphasised as crucial in the convention’s long term activities (see question number 4).
- 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, and I think it will happen pretty soon, of course with the support of UNEP. A question about the UNEP long term involvement and role rarely comes out at the meetings. So far it seems that UNEP-ISCC does not really push for a PSCC. So as you see it is rather unclear and unpredictable but, indeed it is a crucial question for the future of the convention” (NGO sector).

“I think if there will be a permanent secretariat, it won’t be run by UNEP, they will withdraw. There will be possibly local people involved. 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, though I can not give more details about it now. As about UNEP, I think they will do the hand over of the CC Secretariat, and it will become an independent unit” (NGO sector).

2. 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.

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

This part summarises the relevant strengths 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 strengths 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.
- “An important challenge is how to receive more financial support. The state voluntary contribution is a minimum and insufficient. There is a new EU Programme for Central and South East Europe. The problem is the division, the Carpathian countries belong to both regions. So in the current situation it is difficult to have projects covering all the Carpathian countries. One of the biggest issues in the CC is the creation of Carpathian Space, as a stand alone programme of INTERREG for financial support of projects in the Carpathian region/countries. Carpathian Space would start about 2013, so we got some time to work on it” (CC official body).*
- 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”.
“In the Carpathians, there is a unique natural and cultural heritage, and how to keep it in that way, and to sustainably develop it – that’s a challenge. The EU plans to build motorways and it is already doing it, so to combine that with the nature there it is really difficult” (NGO sector).

Question number 5

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

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

First of all it should be noted that a direct comparison between the AC and the CC is not possible, as there are various conditions and structures in the two regions and conventions. Therefore this question points out the different conditions, as well as the different approaches of the conventions, which provides a better understanding of the conventions’ different approaches and strategies.

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. As a matter of fact, not many similarities between the two are identified.

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 countries 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 than 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 the relations among Carpathian countries are more “delicate”, there have been conflicts and restructuring not long time ago, at least compared to the Alpine states. Furthermore, most of the Alpine countries are EU members, and even if they are not their 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 in the biodiversity indeed” (CC official body).

“Forest resources play a bit different role in the Carpathian region. In the AC forest expansion is not an issue; on the contrary the forest cover is huge and there is an issue of control on natural expansion of forest on abandoned farmlands, since the use of land for agricultural purposes is an important issue in the Alps. The crucial sector in terms of policy making, related to the rural land use in the Carpathians is the forest sector. In the Alpine region the rural development is also involving the agricultural policy” (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).

“The different approach of the protocol development, I think reflects the different, i.e. lower level of coordination in the Carpathians, compared to the Alpine region. In the case of Carpathians the coordination and the national legislations are not at a stage when the protocols to the CC can be agreed yet. So the basic work, such as national assessments of legislation, etc. is needed prior to the protocols development” (AC academics).

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 later, 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 information and reporting system. The AC has the information system (SOIA) and reporting (The State 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. But on the other side, this is our European understanding of the involvement of broader stakeholders which does not exist in the Carpathian countries. So, we can not directly compare it anyway” (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 is. 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 bottom-up driven AC. In addition the CC is open to all the interested actors, including the NGOs, with no official procedures for participation, as in the case of the AC and observers to the AC” (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. It is like other people are telling you what and how to do. Of course they involved the ministries, but no local people, local NGOs and communities were involved, and this is not a bottom-up approach. 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).

Considering the public participation, policy integration:

- There is a different structure of the NGOs and therefore the participation is arranged in a different way:

“In terms of the different procedures for an organisation to become an observer to the convention, firstly, there is a completely different NGO structure in the two regions and conventions involved. Secondly, the organisations observers to the AC have to be organisations working in complete Alpine space. But, most of the NGO Observers are umbrella organisations that have many members, like the CIPRA. So, the smaller NGOs are anyway represented by the observers, therefore it won't make sense that they are again observer organisation. That structure we don't have in the Carpathian case” (AC official body).

- There are also different possibilities for the AC and the CC to make effects on the ground level. An example is the protocols' effect on the national legislation.

“In the AC the challenge was to harmonise the existing national legislation and to see whereas the protocols can fit in, while in the Carpathians the convention is an opportunity to use the protocols more as framework to develop the national legislation. This would be equally true for the Balkan Convention” (AC academic sector).

7. INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Here are summarised the main results and findings. The results are based on the interviews. Questionnaire received data are also reflected here, as they do not contradict with the interview data. 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.

7.1 The emergence of the Alpine and the Carpathian Conventions

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

Alpine Convention	Carpathian Convention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The AC initiative was a more governmental issue (Germany, Switzerland, Austria have mainly run the process) - The diversity of different actors lobbying for the AC was limited - CIPRA was the only NGO pushing for it, along the Alpine states and ARGE ALP, the ARGE Alpen-Adria and COTRAO - CIPRA, an international NGO has the crucial role in the AC, from the time it started lobbying for it, until the present - There were some small scale ad-hoc initiatives in the Alpine region, prior the AC - 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” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of states in negotiating CC was important, not only the Carpathian ones, but also the Alpine states - CC was promoted by a larger variety of actors: international and regional NGOs, intergovernmental organisations, Carpathian and non-Carpathian states - UNEP has a leading role in the CC, from the beginning and it is still facilitating the process, acting as an interim secretariat - Many international NGOs are involved from the start of the Carpathian process - The role and involvement of local actors is not very high. The local governance structure is rather “unstable” to make a more significant influence - There were transboundary activities among some of the Carpathian states, prior the CC. - The CC was negotiated in a record time.

Discussion and conclusions about the emergence of the Alpine and the Carpathian convention in terms of governance

In order to avoid misinterpretation of summarised results and findings, prior making conclusions, the following notes should be taken into consideration:

- *CIPRA was initially founded by four Alpine states* (Austria, Switzerland, Italy and France) and German nature protection and mountaineering. It was in 1975 when the organisation was restructured to include only non-governmental organisations (*Price, M. 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 at stake.
- *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 was yet unstructured. Therefore, even though the process adopted a participatory approach, the lack of the local actors’ involvement could have arguably contributed for an easier negotiation.

Considering this, the following conclusions about the emergence of the Alpine and the Carpathian conventions in terms of governance are made:

It is, for variety of reasons, inappropriate to state that the AC and the CC were promoted by a bottom-up and strong multi-stakeholder driven initiatives. The role and involvement of non-state actors was not crucial for the policy changes (conventions' emergence) in case of the AC and the CC.

The two conventions emerged through different processes. The reasons for not achieving a multi-stakeholder involvement in the AC and the CC are different.

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 groups urging for a convention was not significantly diverse and there were no significant initiatives to involve more stakeholders in the process. One of the reasons can be the early emergence of the AC. Still another can be the large involvement of the individual state interests, and the ignorance of the participative and network approaches as a strategy.

In case of the Carpathian Convention, a more actor mixed or multi-stakeholder approach, was adopted. Along with the Carpathian states, the external actors, such as UNEP, large international and regional NGOs, Alpine countries and some smaller NGOs were involved. However, the role and involvement of other actors – local NGOs, communities, businesses – in lobbying and negotiating the CC was relatively small. The interview results imply that the reasons for a lack of broader involvement of the local actors are weak local governance structures in the Carpathian region; but not a lack of participative and stakeholder involvement initiatives in the Carpathian process.

7.2 Alpine and Carpathian Convention initial impacts on governance

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

Alpine Convention	Carpathian Convention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The AC has strengthened an official and procedural way of working. - The AC has not made much impact on the participation. It has had a positive impact on partnership building and networking and a moderate impact on policies and policy integration (see the next question, number 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a positive impression about the CC impacts on the governance processes. - There is a risk or challenge that the CC could 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 established some partnerships and has improved the networking (see the next question, number 3).

Discussion and conclusions about the impacts that signing of the conventions has had on the governance processes

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' impressions* about the CC, perhaps more than CC real impacts. However, these initial impressions about the CC are highly indicative, and the positive trends expressed by the interviewed subjects are encouraging the entire CC process. In addition they reflect the large expectations from the convention.
- The capacities of Carpathian local NGOs need to be improved for their more effective involvement in the CC process. Regarding the challenge of the CC not becoming an “inflexible and procedural convention”. The interviewed subject pointed out that *“There are many organisations that are increasingly distancing from the CC, as they don't understand all the procedures, lots of reports, and so they perceive it more official each*

stage”. One possible reason for this can be the lack of capacities of the Carpathian local NGOs.

- The success of an initiative/action undertaken in a region largely depends on the existing structures and conditions in that region. Precisely, the effect of an action is more *visible* in “poorer” circumstances, than it is in better ones. Therefore, the different possibilities the conventions have for making an impact and change, are important mentioning.

Considering this, the following conclusions about the AC and the CC initial impacts on governance are made:

- The AC initially has encouraged the official and procedural practices, and have developed more rules. The outcomes of these rules of procedures while not being enthusiastic and efficient; are not in a direct contradiction with the governance principles and initiatives. On the other hand the “rules of procedures” while having delaying effects, they however strengthen the legitimacy of the AC.
- There is a strong positive impression and stakeholders’ feedback about the CC initial impacts on governance. In particular, it was pointed out that the CC is encouraging an open and participative approach. However, this observation should be considered together with the different conditions and the different structures of actors in the two regions.

7.3 Alpine Convention Carpathian Convention and Governance principles

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

Alpine Convention	Carpathian Convention
Public Participation (PP): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CC has had a positive <i>input</i> to the PP in the Carpathian process - CC applies an open approach to civil society with no requirements 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): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. The protocols do not directly refer one to another - 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): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CC diversity of topics provides positive input to the policy integration - No protocols to the CC are developed yet - CC has a positive impact on development of new mountain legislations in the Carpathian countries, who adopt the CC principles - 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.

<p>Partnerships and Networking (PN):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The AC positively impacts the partnership building and networking in the Alpine region - The most important partnerships and networks are built 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. 	<p>Partnerships and Networking (PN):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The CC positively impacts the 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 undertaken in the Carpathian project, which involves 18 partners - There are MoUs established with other institutions, organisations and initiatives
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Discussion and conclusions about the principles of participation, policy integration and partnerships in the two conventions

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), with more resources and capacities. The Carpathian local governance structure is rather young and in a phase of formation. Stronger local actor structures provide for better networking and implementation, which 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 the 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 about it, 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, as well. This structure of large umbrella NGOs is still missing in the Carpathian region. This therefore provides a possible reason for the conventions' different strategies to participation of CS.
- The more favourable political, social, economic and democratic conditions in the Alpine region have an inherent positive impact on the governance principles. In general the Alpine region compared to the Carpathian has longer democratic tradition, decentralised structure and more stable economies. In this sense 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 democratic rules 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 in each particular country, as well. However, observing the two mountain regions, a general conclusion about the legal system characteristics 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 are currently in a phase of restructuring their legal systems, especially urged by the recent EU integration process. Therefore, concerning the translation of the conventions' 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. There is a good chance

that the national existing and the newly developing policies in the Carpathian countries, to be positively influenced by the convention's principles. This provides a logical explanation for the AC and the CC different impacts on the policies as such and consequently on policy integration.

In addition to the different conditions, the following points are relevant mentioning:

- The AC and CC impacts are difficult to compare as there is a whole decade (11 years) difference since the convention's entrance into force (AC in 1995 and CC in 2006). This partly explains why in the CC, there are still not well established governance structures and networks 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 concept of sustainability 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 different approach to the Protocol development strategy. 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.

Considering that, the following conclusions about the AC the CC and the principles of participation, partnerships and policy integration are made:

Alpine Convention:

Recognising that the three selected governance principles are differently undertaken and promoted in different Alpine countries, there are however some general trends identified:

Participation: Despite the established information system and strong local governance structures in the Alpine region, the principle of *public participation* is not properly addressed and facilitated by the AC. This has resulted in low level of public participation in the Alpine process, and lack of awareness and support of the AC at lower sub-national and local levels. However, the existing networks provide an important counter balance to the top-down approaches, through the bottom-up initiatives and implementation programmes.

Partnerships and networking: There are important networks in the Alpine process. The networks among the Alpine research institutions, Alpine municipalities and Alpine protected areas have the main role in the implementation of the AC. While establishment of these networks is not an initiative of the AC as such, the networks however refer to the AC in their objectives and activities. In addition, the AC and especially the PSAC has started cooperate and support the activities of these networks, later on which has resulted in official MoUs and other cooperative agreements.

Policy integration: There are well-established national mountain and related policies in the Alpine countries. The AC addresses a wide variety of different issues and sectors, but does not significantly focus on the coherence among them. The principle of policy integration is mainly addressed at the individual state level, and not promoted by the AC directly.

Carpathian Convention:

Even though there are positive impressions about the convention's impacts on governance issues, including the three discussed principles, the convention is still at an early phase and is facing many challenges. The positive impressions about the CC and governance principles are crucial and speak about the convention's progress, appropriate approaches and big stakeholders' expectations.

Participation: While there are relatively small structures of local governance – municipalities and local NGOs – in the Carpathians, the CC contributes and promotes the principle of participation. One good example is the ANPED project, whose results from the stakeholder

consultation in the Carpathian countries were presented at the CoP1, and further taken as a starting point for the protocol on cultural heritage and traditional knowledge. There are no official observers to the CC, and any interested party can participate to the meetings of the CC. The involvement of the NGOs in the work of the CC working groups is another important point. The main weaknesses are related to the small structures of local actors that inherently contribute to little diversity of actors. In addition, the CC should develop reporting and information system that will improve the access to information and transparency.

Partnership and networking: Despite numerous initiatives, and some established partnerships and networks, there are many challenges related to this principle. The positive impacts are until present mostly obvious by the signed MoU, the Carpathian Project and the Carpathian network of protected areas (CNPA). On the other hand, the early stage of the CC and the disadvantage of weak local and regional actors impose important limitations to the CC. Both issues explain the lack of better established networks in the Carpathian region. An additional obstacle for better networking is the challenge of Carpathian Space programme that will promote cooperation among different actors in the region.

Policy integration: There are no protocols to the CC developed yet, but there are some positive CC inputs in development of the new policies in the region. However, inexistence of the CC protocols makes it difficult to elaborate on the CC incorporation in the national legislation. Namely the current CC impacts on the national legislation are mainly related to incorporation of the CC principles, and making reference to Carpathians as one region defined in the CC. Here should be pointed out that at the present many of the Carpathian countries are adjusting or developing new policies. In addition the text of the CC refers to the principle of policy integration and the concept of SD, as well as to other conventions and legal instruments more extensively, compared to the AC.

7.4 Main actors and their roles

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

Alpine Convention	Carpathian Convention
Countries	
The role of the state in the AC is particularly strong compared to the other actors. Many governance related issues are largely arranged at an individual state's national administration levels	The role of the state in the CC is not superior compared to the role of the other actors.
NGOs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a strong NGO sector in the Alpine region - The AC involves Alpine NGOs as official observers 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The NGO sector in the Carpathians is less stable than it is in the Alpine region - CC is open to broader CS within and outside the Carpathians. And there are no official rules for becoming an "observer to the convention" - There is a low level of awareness about the CC in the local NGO sector - Many large international and fewer regional NGOs are highly 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	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The CC activities are from the beginning facilitated by the EURAC scientific support - No network of research institutions referring to the CC is established yet - Establishment of the Carpathian Research initiative is currently being discussed and is in a preparation phase
Local communities	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local communities is well organised and structured in the Alpine region - The Alliance of the Alps, a network of Alpine communities counts more then 200 members and is a valuable asset for the AC implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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.)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The regional governances were not initially well involved in the AC, at least not in all countries - The low level of their involvement has been an obstacle for latter activities and negotiation - Still today the regional level actors could be better involved in the AC processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private sector for a long time was not properly 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 Alpine issues - Recently, there are increasingly business sector working on the Alpine projects, mainly supported by the Alpine Space programme - In addition the involvement of the AC observer FIANET (an international federation of national associations of cable car operators) and NENA (network enterprise Alps) are particularly involved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The business sector is not well involved in the Carpathian process - There is a particular interest to involve the businesses in the renewable energy and forestry - WWF is in phase of preparation of an initiative for better integration of the business sector in the CC.
Intergovernmental Organisations (including the EU)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 terms of climate change can become relevant concerning the AC Climate Action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of intergovernmental organisations in the CC is highly important - UNEP Vienna office act as an Interim Secretariat of the CC as of 2004 - The EU is not a part of the CC. It supports the Carpathian project - To date there is no a particular EU programme referring to the CC, as it is the case of EU INTERREG Alpine Space programme in the AC.

Considering that, the following conclusions about the actors' roles and involvement in the AC and CC are made:

The history of the AC that was perceived as a “green treaty” and considered a “top-down approach”, has until present largely hindered a more inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach.

The Alpine Convention is at a more favourable position, respecting the stronger governance structures at all levels. The Alpine states, NGOs, local and regional actor structure and business sector involve stronger economic, social and political institutions and resources then the Carpathian ones. Despite the stronger actor structure, diversity of involved actors is not very high, especially referring to the early days of the AC.

The AC, urged by the international SD and governance discussion, was slowly changing over time. However changing of the stakeholders' perception about the AC top-down approach is much slower. The positive changes of the AC are evident in the notable bottom-up initiatives from some NGOs and local communities, establishment of PSAC, reporting system and MAP.

The changing trends are more conspicuous only recently, after 2002. It can be therefore observed that since the AC is in place, due to various reasons, not much accent has been placed on the convention communication, stakeholder involvement and broader participation. The reasons are mainly related to the state driven focus on protocol development, AC specific development

phases, discontinuity of AC (due to the biannual changing of the convention apparatus until 2002), and the lack of AC implementation tools.

It is expected that the AC in the next phase will focus on “public relations and communication”. This is directly beneficial for good governance principles in the Alpine Convention and Alpine process

In the Carpathian region the governance structure – states, civil society, municipalities, communities and business sector – cope challenges of transition and EU integration. The mentioned actors also face lack of resources and appropriately stable institutions. The CC therefore faces challenges of small structure of crucial actors, especially on local and regional scales.

The CC is not a state or top-down driven convention. The role and political will of the Carpathian states was important for negotiating the convention. However, thereafter the role of the state in leading the convention is not a crucial one, and it was never assumed to be so.

The role of the external actors – INGOs and IGOs – is much more important in the CC than in the AC. This on one hand is beneficial for the governance issues in the CC, assuming the IGOs and INGOs commitment and promotion of the SD and governance. Nevertheless, the lack of direct involvement of local people, communities and local NGOs, combined with the leading role of international actors in the CC can be criticised. Namely, it leaves a space for criticism that the CC is not “top-down” convention, in terms of state driven actions, but an “externally-driven” convention, emphasising the large role of international-external actors versus the local, national and regional actors.

7.5 Alpine and Carpathian conventions – strengthens and limitations

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	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little focus and impact on communication, information and public participation - Weak implementation and enforcement mechanisms - Top-down approach - 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 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

<p>activities and projects, and promote a more participative approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	<p>to the Carpathians as one region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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
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Considering that, the following general conclusions in relation to the main challenges and limitations of the conventions are made:

First of all, as the table indicates, the issues related to the AC are perceived as “successes and weaknesses”, while these of the CC as “strengthens and challenges”. It is due to the fact that the AC is already 12 years into force; while the CC only less then 2 years.

The Alpine Convention’s main challenges are related to the convention’s history, implementation, weak governance principles and lack of implementation tools.

Considering the history of the AC, the top-down approach and non-inclusive negotiation have significantly impacted further convention’s operation, in a rather negative way. Even though the AC is changing in a positive way, it should ever more promote and focus on: governance principles, as well as on the implementation. Both issues, through participation, stakeholder involvement, local projects, programmes and implementation activities will bring for an AC closer to the people. In addition, to make that happen, the AC actors should work on identifying the implementation tools. The AC, as such provides some legal, cooperative and other tools or instruments that need to be put in place. In addition to these, the Alpine actors need to develop different implementation instruments and learn from the trial process.

The CC main challenges are related to better structured bottom-up initiatives from the local actors, and establishment of the Carpathian regional programme.

The identification of these challenges is based on the analysis of the AC practices on one hand, and the conditions in the Carpathians, on the other. The Alpine experience indicates the necessity of *actor involvement* as one of the preconditions to avoid latter inconsistency in negotiation and implementation. It further indicates the importance of having a *regional programme*, supporting the cooperation and implementation of the CC objectives (the Alpine Space Programme). And finally the Alpine experience indicates the importance of having the *bottom-up initiatives from the local actors*, such as the networks among the local communities, research organisations, NGOs, etc. The issue of actor involvement and building networks in the region is directly related to the local and regional governance structures – actors. Therefore the CC should particularly focus on strengthening the actors and promote their involvement in the Carpathian Process. Having said that, the crucial importance of the regional programme promoting the involvement and cooperation in the Carpathians, is more than clearer.

8. SHARING ALPINE AND CARPATHIAN EXPERIENCE

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 acts as 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 both, questionnaire and interviews. This chapter is therefore 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 the different mountain regions. The following issues are identified as necessary issues to consider in terms of “sharing the conventions’ experience”

- 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 most relevant and prominent Alpine experiences, the general opportunities and limitations of the Alpine experience to act as a possible “model” are identified:

- 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. All of this implies that the approaches and strategies can not 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 and assessment of a particular region’s specific needs, interests, objectives, challenges is a prerequisite for successful way further.

The first step should be that the countries of a specific region primarily identify their main concerns, needs, challenges and problems. These most probably would be very different from the Alpine ones. Once the region *together* defines and identifies their needs and objectives, appropriate strategies in accordance to the available resources can be shaped. Additionally, a stakeholder consultation and other assessments about the possibilities, structures, limitations and opportunities are crucial for further planning of the activities, actions and strategies.

- Identification of the *common interests* – 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.

8.1 Alpine and Carpathian experience a model for the Balkan Mountain Initiative

The messages presented below are based on the identified strengths 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, strengths 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 over the years. Further the AC being based within the national environmental agencies was associated with the lack of broader participation. The logic is based on the peoples’ perception that the environmental agencies have a bias position. 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 largely related to these organisations and their bottom-up initiatives.
- *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 needs to be assured. Concerning the protocol development, the BMI can possibly better consider the CC strategy, which is based on a focus on both programme implementation and protocol development.
- *Strengthen the local, national and regional level actors and their involvement.* Both, the AC and the CC experience, even though in a different way, imply the importance of multi-actor involvement in the convention implementation. Considering the actors’ structures in the Balkan region, one could assume that the challenge of weak local actor structure in the Carpathian process, might be a challenge in the Balkans, as well. Therefore the BMI should in particular keep in mind the CC, and focus on strengthening the local and regional level 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. 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 structure and interest 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 regional 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*. The "generality" of a convention is almost inherent phenomenon in the conventions dealing with various issues.
- *Focus on communication, information, awareness rising from the very beginning of the process.* Parting from the AC (where there was a lack of multi-stakeholder action and the negotiation took quite long time) and the CC (where there was a broader variety of actors, faster negotiation, but still a challenge of weak local actor involvement). It is to conclude that: *Communication of the convention to a broader public, international and national actors, NGOs, intergovernmental organisations, research institutions and communities, is a prerequisite for policy changes (convention negotiation).*
- *Focus on implementation activities and concrete projects from the beginning.* The projects are also 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 bi-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.

9. CONCLUSIONS

This MSc thesis studies different subjects – the concept of Governance, the Alpine Convention, the Carpathian Convention, and the SEE (Balkan) Mountain Initiative in terms of governance principles and sharing the Alpine and Carpathian experience. Here are given specific conclusions for the AC, the CC and governance principles. No specific conclusions for the BMI and sharing the AC/CC practices are given here, as it has been thoroughly described in the previous section. The conclusions are based on the results received through the three research methods, literature review, questionnaires and interviews. The literature review provides the frame and background information. The interview-based results give the overall picture and are the main base for conclusions. The questionnaire-based results support the main findings, but are not considered in making the conclusion, due to a small sample number.

9.1 Alpine Convention conclusions

The main conclusions about the Alpine convention are related and expressed through the convention's emergence, development path, changing trends and governance issues.

- Emergence of the Alpine Convention:

The AC did not emerge through multi-stakeholder and bottom-up initiatives. 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.

- Development phases of the Alpine Convention

The AC followed a relatively slow, and “phase-separated” development process. This process can be related to the top-down approaches, the official and procedural way of working, the over-focus on protocol development, and the little focus on implementation.

- Changing trends of the Alpine Convention

The AC changes over time in terms of two issues: *the content (focus) and in terms of governance principles*. Considering the first point, the AC was initially more focused (or perceived to be so) on the environmental conservation and it is with time becoming more inclusive (it is including other aspects of SD). On the other hand, considering the governance principles, there are also positive changing trends, especially in terms of partnerships and networking. Questionnaire data also indicate relatively positive trends of the principles of policy integration, stakeholder involvement, awareness rising, and participation.

- AC and governance

AC positive changing trends in governance principles support the common expectations about the governance emergence.

The findings related to the recent positive AC changing trends, urged by the global movements, such as decentralisation, rise of civil society, participation in decision making, and so on, is in accordance with the common understanding about the governance principles emerging processes. Precisely, it is generally understood that they emerge through the formal and informal interactions among different actors, through bottom up initiatives, significantly supported by the recent international discussion and global socio-political changes.

The current level at which the AC facilitate the governance principles, despite the positive changing trends needs further improvement.

Despite the recent governance positive changing trends in the AC, the governance principles are still weak in the AC processes. The questionnaire and interview data indicate an AC weak facilitation of public participation, stakeholder involvement and transparency. The principles of national and international cooperation, partnerships, accountability, policy integration and integrated natural resource management are seen as better addressed.

Considering the three selected governance principles (participation, policy integration and partnerships), which have been re-addressed further in the interviews, it is to conclude:

- The participation to date was not significantly changed or improved due to the AC. The principle of participation in the region is promoted by other relevant international instruments (Aarhus Convention), and is not properly addressed by the AC, as such.
- The AC provides input to the policy integration, as it addresses various policy themes, however it does not directly address the coherence among these issues. The policy integration is largely undertaken at the individual state level, independently from the AC.
- The AC has positively influenced the networking and partnership building in the Alpine region. There are networks that largely implement the AC objectives and that refer to the AC.

Additional conclusions about the AC

- The Alpine issues are mainly addressed at the individual state level, and not at the Alpine region as a whole.

Many of the relevant issues and governance principles, such as policy integration, participation and private sector involvement, are arranged differently and independently from the convention.

- The Alpine convention operates in a generally “official” way based on rules of procedure.

The Alpine convention mainly operates in a well-established procedural way of working. All the issues, including the governance principles, such as participation of civil society, are based on rules and procedures. There are official observers to the AC, with clearly established rules and conditions for the participation. This approach on one hand strengthens the legitimacy of the convention. But, it can be reasonably criticised that it formalises the informal interactions and modes of governance, which are as beneficial as the formal ones.

Altogether considering:

- the positive trends, as well as the limitations in the Alpine convention’s process and region;
- against the variety of ongoing international and global changes that largely impact the Alpine region as well (such as decentralisation, deliberation, governance, EU standards, etc.)

It becomes difficult to decide what of the positive tendencies in the Alpine region is to be attributed to the AC. Nevertheless, it is to conclude that the AC, as an instrument focusing specifically on the Alpine region, has positively contributed to these processes. In addition, being the first multilateral mountain convention, it provides great input and experience in the future transboundary mountain cooperation and development.

In future, the AC should focus on greater public participation, transparency, accountability and stakeholder involvement, on one hand; and on implementation, on the other. This will require that the AC actors identify appropriate implementation tools the convention offers, and more effectively apply the existing ones.

9.2 Carpathian Convention conclusions

The main conclusions about the Carpathian convention are related to the convention’s emergence, ongoing process and governance issues.

- Emergence and on-going process of the CC:

The emergence of the Carpathian Convention was promoted and negotiated between more diverse groups of stakeholders, with strong international lead, and supported but still delicate involvement of local actors.

The international actors, such as UNEP-ISCC and some IENGOS continue to facilitate the Carpathian process. However, the role of local and regional actors, such as local grassroots NGOs, local communities and regions is not sufficiently strong.

- CC and Governance:

The CC largely considers and applies most of the governance principles. Considering the results received by the questionnaire and interview phases, the CC is a very good “facilitator” of all questioned governance principles. This is particularly true concerning the questionnaire received data, whereas the interviews have also exposed some limitations. These limitations are related to the missing information and reporting systems, and delicate local actor structure and involvement in the Carpathian process. The questionnaire results indicate a particularly strong facilitation of: public participation, stakeholder involvement, policy integration, international cooperation and partnerships. The principles of transparency, accountability, national cooperation, integrated resource management, effectiveness and efficiency are also ranked as well facilitated by the CC.

Concerning the three selected principles (PP, PN and PI), which have been re-addressed in the interviews, it is to conclude that:

- The Carpathian convention promotes and encourages public participation in the Carpathian process. The CC applies an open and participative approach to the civil society participation, with no procedures and rules for participation. However, due to the local actor small structures and capacities, their involvement in the processes is still insufficient.
- The principle of policy integration is emphasised in the convention’s objectives. The Carpathian convention has not established a single protocol yet; it is therefore 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.
- Considering partnerships and networking, there is a positive tendency in partnership building, evident through the signed MoUs. The most evident examples are CNPA and the Carpathian project. However more intensive networking among other actors are not occurring yet.

► **Additional conclusions about the CC**

- The International actors, IGOs and IENGOS have positively impacted the governance processes in the CC.

Many of the international actors, involved in the CC, such as UNEP and WWF, are important actors in the international and global discussion on governance and SD. Therefore it can be assumed that the positive governance trends in the CC are related to the involvement of these organisations. However, it should not be misleading that the international actors by no question strengthen the governance principles. The international actors do not involve bias national interests, which favourite the process; but, involvement of all actors in the process, and especially the locals, is in the core of governance concept and should be better promoted and strengthened.

- CC until present practices a flexible and not a bureaucratic way of working.

Even though there are no protocols to the CC developed yet, and it is difficult to predict the CC in a long term. Until date, the convention provides and promotes both, formal and informal processes and cooperation among various actors. The role of the state over other actors is not a superior in the CC. Civil society is directly involved in the working groups and thematic protocols.

- There are big expectations about the Carpathian Convention

As pointed out before, the CC is relatively young and elaborating on its performances, including governance is a very sensitive issue. The highly positive feedback concerning the CC and governance, apart from stakeholders’ positive impressions, particularly reflect the huge stakeholders’ expectations and enthusiasm about the CC.

- The CC faces many challenges and its further functioning depends from numerous factors:

The CC faces many challenges, such as sustainable means of funding, building the Carpathian Space programme, strengthening the structure of the local and regional actors, the countries' heterogeneity and general challenging social, political and economic situation in the region. In addition, the CC general and governance related aspects are rather uncertain and depends on various factors and actors future roles. The most important factors would be the long-term role of UNEP-ISCC and the future role of the EU in the CC.

► **Altogether, considering:**

- the many positive trends and aspects observed in the CC, especially in terms of governance, and
- the CC early phase and therefore difficulty to elaborate on more established data.

The Carpathian Convention is going a dynamic development path, already addressing various issues and performing in a reasonably satisfactory way. It however still has a long way to go, from protocol negotiation to their implementation, and further iterative approach. In addition it faces many challenges, and in that sense it could significantly benefit from the Alpine experience, despite the inherent differences between the two conventions.

9.3 Conclusions related to the concept and principles of governance

The AC and the CC 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 emergence of a convention (policy changes).

Both conventions' practices show a positive correlation between assessed governance principles and emergence of the conventions. The emergence of the AC was found to be a rather top-down approached, with a low level of multi-stakeholder initiatives. In turn, the negotiation of the AC took a very long period of time (from the idea in 1952 to the AC agreement in 1991). On contrary, the emergence and negotiation of the CC involved more diverse stakeholders, even though not many from the local level. The negotiation of the CC took about 3 years.

Recognising that there are numerous factors influencing the policy changes (such as the local socio-economic and political conditions, inclination for policy reform, the applied strategies, etc.) this correlation can be further challenged (see Chapter 9.4). Therefore, the implication is highly suggested as an appropriate point for further research.

2. Positive correlations between governance principles and dynamics of the conventions.

Both conventions' practices show positive correlations between studied governance principles and dynamics of the conventions (negotiation and implementation). The AC works in a more formal and procedural way. Most of the initiatives are run by the states, and are based on rules and procedures. In turn, a lack of implementation and small focus on projects and programmes in the AC is found. On contrary, the CC operates in a more flexible way, involving different actors in formal and informal way of working and cooperation (egg. NGOs' involvement in the convention's working groups and in protocol development). The implementation of the CC is a combined approach of protocol development, programmes and the basic national assessments, and is found to be rather active.

3. 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 actors' involvement in an initiative (convention), in order that initiative to be understood as "formal vs. informal" or "top-down vs. bottom-up". A significant inconsistency about the term of "appropriate level of participation" was found. The inconsistency in perceptions certainly reflects the need for further research in the issue (see Chapter 9.4). However, the discussion about the "appropriate or critical level of a

governance principle” applied in specific structure of actors and their involvement in the AC and the CC, stresses the issue of “governance entrepreneurs”. “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.

4. 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.

5. 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 mean that all international actors have positive impact on governance related issues. But here, the accent is on international actors deeply involved in the SD and the governance debate.

9.4 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 of governance*” or “critical level” of actor involvement and participation. The most puzzling issues were related to:

1. 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. 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 entire concept of “governance entrepreneurs”, their roles and mutual interactions, their strategic behaviour need further research.

2. What is the interrelation 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 9.3, conclusion no.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. Namely, the same argument of “lack of governance” in the interviews was used to advocate two opposite trends: the hardened negotiation of 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 “*fast negotiation of the CC is related to the small involvement of the local actors*” (the AC NGO sector statement).

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Annex 1

Questionnaire on the Alpine Convention

ALPINE CONVENTION AND CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE: Short questionnaire

This questionnaire contains four simple questions about:

- Alpine Convention facilitation of governance principles;
- Alpine Convention development over time;
- Tangible achievements and most important success / limitations of the Alpine Convention.

Please take your time and answer it by expressing your personal views about these issues.

In addition, please note that you are asked to reflect on the real situation in Alpine Convention – how it is, and not on the ideal situation – how it should be.

All responses will be dealt with high confidence and no name of the person or organisation will be identified in the results.

Please send the answered form back to sabaheta.ramcilovic@efi.int , by 26th of September (Monday).

Thank you in advance,
Sabaheta Ramcilovic

<u>Concept of Governance in this study:</u>
Among many understandings of governance, this study mainly focuses on the actor inclusion and non-hierarchical modes of governing. The normative perspectives of governance have a central place in this study, particularly the principles of participation, partnerships and policy integration.

This Document is locked and only the fields in gray for your answers can be used.

To use the fields and answer the questions, **please click on the provided place in grey and mark, select or type your answer.**

Please do not forget to save your answers and send the questionnaire as an attachment to sabaheta.ramcilovic@efi.int , by 26th September (Wednesday) 2007.

Introduction:

Type of your organisation:

Name of your organisation:

Your name:

Your position within the organization:

Questions:

1. How does *the Alpine Convention facilitate the following governance principles?*

Please rank the given importance on a scale of 1-4, with 1 being most important and 4 least important.

Access to information and public participation

Involvement of concerned stakeholders

Transparency

Accountability

Policy and sectoral coordination and integration

National cooperation

International cooperation

Networking and partnership building
 Effectiveness (focus on the relation between the actual and targeted outcomes)
 Efficiency (focus on the relation between output and input)
 Integrated land and water management
 Other (please specify):

2. Please rank the convention's main priorities in the initial phase (1991-1995) and now (2007), as shown in the table below.

Please rank the convention's main priorities on a scale of 1-4, with 1 being most important priority and 4 being least important priority.

Rank in 1991-95	Priorities and/or main concerns of Alpine Convention	Rank in 2007
	Environmental conservation of the Alps	
	Public participation	
	Sustainable development of the Alps	
	Networking and partnership building	
	International perspectives and cooperation	
	Awareness raising	
	Socio-economic development of the Alpine region	
	Industrial development of the Alpine region	
	Transportation	
	Sustainable transport	
	Tourism	
	Sustainable tourism	
	Stakeholder involvement	
	International related conventions and agreements	
	Integrated management of natural resources (water, land)	
	Policy and sectoral integration	
	Other (please specify):	

3. *How the Alpine Convention has influenced the following governance principles in the Alpine Process?* Please describe the influence as indicated in the table below.

Mark the influence:	Governance Principles:	Description of the influence
Positive influence	Public participation	
Negative influence		
No influence		

Positive influence	Policy integration	
Negative influence		
No influence		
Positive influence	Networking and Partnership Building	
Negative influence		
No influence		
Positive Influence	Other (please specify):	
Negative influence		

4. Please list the *Alpine Convention's most important successes and limitations to be considered in the other mountain conventions.*

Convention's most important success	Convention's most important limitations

Thank you for your time and interest

Annex 2

Questionnaire on the Carpathian Convention

CARPATHIAN CONVENTION AND CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE: Short questionnaire

This questionnaire contains three simple questions about:

- Carpathian Convention and specific governance concepts;
- The Carpathian Convention's main priorities and
- Carpathian Convention's impact on public participation, policy integration and partnerships.

Please take your time and answer it by expressing your personal views about these issues.

In addition, please note that you are asked to reflect on the real situation in the Carpathian Convention – how it is, and not to reflect on the ideal situation – how it should be.

All responses will be dealt with high confidence and no name of the person or organisation will be identified in the results.

Please send the answered form back to sabaheta.ramcilovic@efi.int , by 7th of October.

Thank you in advance,
Sabaheta Ramcilovic

<i>Governance concept in this study:</i>
Among many understandings of governance, this study mainly focuses on the actor inclusion and non-hierarchical modes of governing. The normative perspectives of governance have a central place in this study, particularly the principle of participation, partnerships and policy integration.

This Document is locked and only the fields in gray for your answers can be used.

To use the fields and answer the questions, **please click on the provided place in grey and mark, select or type your answer.**

Please do not forget to save your answers and send the questionnaire as an attachment to sabaheta.ramcilovic@efi.int , by 26th September (Wednesday) 2007.

Introduction:

Type of your organisation:

Name of your organisation:

Your name:

Your position within the organization:

Questions:

1. How does *the Carpathian Convention facilitate the following governance concepts in the Carpathian Process?*

Please rank the given importance on a **scale of 1-4, with 1 being most important and 4 least important.**

Access to information and public participation
Involvement of concerned stakeholders
Transparency
Accountability
Policy and sectoral coordination and integration
National cooperation
International cooperation
Networking and partnership building

Effectiveness (focus on the relation between the actual and targeted outcomes)
 Efficiency (focus on the relation between output and input)
 Integrated land and water management
 Other (please specify):

2. Please rank *the Carpathian Convention's main priorities*, as indicated in the table below.

Please rank the convention's main priorities on a scale of 1-4, with 1 being most important priority and 4 being least important priority.

Rank 1-4	Priorities and/or main concerns of Carpathian Convention
	Environmental conservation in the Carpathians
	Public Participation
	Sustainable development of the Carpathians
	Networking and partnership building
	International perspectives and cooperation
	Awareness raising
	Socio-economic development of the Carpathian region
	Industrial development of the Carpathian region
	Transportation
	Sustainable transport
	Tourism
	Sustainable tourism
	Stakeholder involvement
	Other related international conventions and agreements
	Integrated management of natural resources (water, land)
	Policy and sectoral integration
	System approach and thinking
	Other (please specify):

3. *How the Carpathian Convention has influenced the following governance principles in the Carpathian Process?* Please describe the influence as indicated in the table below.

Mark the influence:	Governance Principles:	Description of the influence
Positive influence	Public participation	
Negative influence		
No influence		

Positive influence	Policy integration	
Negative influence		
No influence		
Positive influence	Networking and Partnership Building	
Negative influence		
No influence		
Positive influence	Other (please specify):	
Negative influence		

Thank you for your time and interest

Annex 3.

Interview on the Alpine Convention

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?

Annex 4.

Interview on the Carpathian Convention

4. Describe the governance initiatives in the Carpathian region prior the AC was signed, and what was the Convention's impact on these initiatives_
5. How the CC facilitates governance processes, in particular the principles of public participation, policy integration and partnership building?
6. Who are the involved actors/sectors in the Carpathian process and what are their roles?
7. What are the CC main results to date, and the CC long perspectives?
8. Alpine vs. Carpathian Conventions – what are the strategies, approaches and governance issues in the two conventions?
9. What are the most relevant strengths, weaknesses, results and limitations of the CC?