

PROJECT INFORMATION

As at: March 2012

World Heritage Beech Forests – Sustainable Management of the Surroundings of the World Heritage Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians in Slovakia and Ukraine



Deadwood in the primeval beech forest of Uholka, Ukraine.
Photo: V. Pokynchereda (Carpathian Biosphere Reserve)

Background

The approval of the primeval beech forests in the Slovakian and Ukrainian Carpathians as natural heritage on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2007 shows the outstanding global importance of these ecosystems.

The natural distribution of beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) is globally limited to Europe, so there is a high responsibility of the European countries for the protection and conservation of this habitat type.

Thus the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) applied for an extension of the Carpathian heritage sites. In 2011 the extension by five German beech forest sites was approved by UNESCO. The Federal Environment Agency (UBA) and the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation started an initiative for enhancing transnational cooperation between Germany, Slovakia and Ukraine.

Project

This project was realized to initiate a trilateral information exchange between the different protected areas which are involved in this serial World Heritage and to improve the management especially of buffer zones of the heritage sites.

Experts from the involved protected areas of these three countries participated in four meetings in Slovakia and Ukraine. A SWOT-Analysis was elaborated and the actual state of protection of the protected areas and their surrounding was evaluated.

The initial evaluation of the situation showed concrete need for action in the fields of public relations and in the integration of local residents into the development process.

Jointly the benefits of protected areas for the region should be increasingly emphasized and demonstrated. A strategy for the development of education facilities in beech forests of the Carpathians was developed during a workshop at the International Academy for Nature Conservation on the Isle of Vilm. Three workgroups dedicated to the issues „management“, „public relations and education“ and „research and monitoring“ were established in order to maintain further collaboration.

- Target country/region: Slovakia, Ukraine
- Duration: 11/10 – 03/12
- Beneficiary: Protected area managers from the involved sites
- Implementing organisation: Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development
- Project identification: FKZ 380 01 237