

The Move4Nature ESD Teacher Training Initiative

(Under the Carpathian Convention)



The Move4Nature Teacher Training Initiative on *Education for Sustainable Development* is a training initiative oriented towards the schools in the rural mountainous areas, developed in order to acknowledge the importance of education for sustainable development, based on its relevance to the Carpathian Convention, to introduce the concept of the Carpathian Ecoregion to the rural mountainous schools of the Carpathian countries, and to encourage critical thinking about the natural and cultural heritage of the Carpathians.

The Initiative is being developed by the *Carpathian Sustainable Education Network (CASALEN)*, with guidance from UNEP – ISCC, and support by the international corporate social responsibility initiative OMV Move & Help.

The first phase of the training initiative was aimed at:

- Mainstreaming protection and sustainable development of the Carpathian Mountains into the teaching practices and into the curriculum of the Carpathian schools;
- Distributing teaching materials based on the Carpathian Mountain sustainable development in connection to the Carpathian Convention, to schools in rural mountainous areas;
- Training a number of teachers from the rural mountainous areas to apply education for sustainable development as an interactive approach in the classroom and in the protected areas.

The Move4Nature, initiated in *Romania* in 2008, for the first time brought together *a number of partners*: teachers from various disciplines, school inspectorates, the Ministry of Education Research and Innovation of Romania, protected area administrations and NGOs.

The initiative resulted in the following developments:

- ***A network of project partners and professionals interested in ESD in the mountains***

The goal of the network is to allow continuous communication and experience exchange between the interested partners: through their feedback, comments and inputs into the Move4Nature project.

The Network consists of all the project partners and supporters and other interested parties, willing to be involved. The network will be connected through the project web-site (under construction), and an internet group at the beginning stages, to allow discussion and comment.

- ***A Carpathian ESD Teacher Training Tool Kit***

Resources and information provided by the Carpathian Mountain ESD Tool Kit (Tool Kit) to the teachers will guide and encourage them to work with the students to find unique natural and cultural components, positive and negative features in their surroundings, and to reflect these on a map on the local, county, and regional level. The students will be encouraged to discover the resources offered by the local area and challenges for sustainable development, to think of what they can do to improve their community and how to profit from the resources it offers in a sustainable way.

The Tool Kit chapters are now under review and editing in both English and Romanian versions, to incorporate the comments and feedback from the training participants and other partners.

- ***An informative and interactive Teacher Training Tour in several areas of Romania***

In order collect feedback about and local inputs for the draft Tool Kit, as well as introduce, with its help, the concepts and techniques of interactive ESD teaching methods to the educators in the rural mountainous areas, a Teacher Training Tour in Romania has been organized. The Teacher Training was planned with advice and guidance from the Ministry of Education Research and Innovation of Romania, representatives of school inspectorates, protected areas, and NGOs, and took place in *six locations in Romania* throughout May 2009.

About the Toolkit

The development of the Carpathian Mountain ESD Training Tool Kit (Tool Kit) has been conceived as, and continues to be, a participative process on two levels: international and local. On the international level, a number of experts from all Carpathian countries were involved in elaboration of the Tool Kit structure and content. On the local level, the production of the Tool Kit is a continuous process, with multiple comments and inputs from Romanian educators.

A wealth of educational resources on ESD already exists or is under development by various partners in the Carpathians. Thus, the main aim of the Move4Nature project was not to produce any new materials, but rather to provide a guide to the existing materials in various thematic areas of mountain protection and sustainable development, also in connection to the Carpathian Convention, and to establish their links to the school curriculum, in a way to help teachers encourage critical thinking and reflection on sustainability issues in the local and regional context with their students. An important component of the Tool Kit is the inputs and reflections of the local users engaged in education, which on one hand complete the Tool Kit with locally – specific examples and on the other hand give a valuable and inevitable input to the development of the next edition of the Tool Kit.

The main aims of the Tool Kit are:

- To encourage the teachers to look for connections and resources: such as natural parks and protected areas;
- To encourage the teachers to use the existing resources with the view of the Carpathian Sustainable Mountain Development;
- To encourage critical thinking and active participation of the communities;
- To facilitate interaction and experience exchange between the mountain communities within each country, as well as on a regional level;
- To collect local information on existing natural and cultural resources and sustainable development challenges, in order to provide local input into the natural and cultural resource inventories, and to form recommendations for national governments and international developmental efforts.

The Study Trail

The main activity of the Tool Kit is designing a local nature trail (the study trail): the teachers are guided to work with the students to make a “trail” representative of their local part in the Carpathians, taking into consideration resources and information provided by every chapter.

The chapters of the Tool Kit, most accompanied by regional maps, guide the teachers to finding possible “key points” in the school surroundings, such as the unique natural and cultural sites or areas of concern; the chapters also suggest a variety of educational activities which can be performed with the students in connection with the “key points”. Connecting these key points together would complete the local study trail.

The electronic version of the Tool Kit will be available online in Romanian and English for comments and further inputs.

Chapters of the Tool Kit:

1. **Biodiversity In The Carpathians**
2. **Spatial Planning**
3. **Transportation and Waste**
4. **Water Management**
5. **Sustainable Tourism**
6. **Energy**
7. **Cultural Heritage and Traditional Knowledge**
8. **Public Participation**
9. **ESD Methodology**

The Teacher Training Tour

The Training Tour consisted of a series of teacher trainings in *six locations in Romania*, involving overall more than 40 schools and more than a 100 teachers of a variety of disciplines from the rural mountainous areas. It resulted not only in introduction of the Carpathian ESD concepts and tools, but most importantly - brought together an enthusiastic group of educators from various disciplines and inspired their cooperation and joint work on ESD in the local mountainous areas.

To finalize the training details and decide on the follow-up of the project, the **Training of the Trainers (ToT)** was organized by the Healthy Environment Regional Organization (HERO), with assistance from the School Inspectorate of the Cluj County. The ToT took place in Cluj – Napoca, Romania, in April 24-26, 2009

The ToT brought together the county training teams: NGOs, teachers and Inspectorates. An important component was the introduction and revision of the Carpathian Mountain ESD Tool Kit: the trainees/county organizers were asked for local inputs, feedback on and suggestions about the draft Tool Kit, and advised on the use and review of the Tool Kit during the training in each location. The Training was designed as a show-case of how the county teacher trainings should to be held -in order to establish a common training structure, and to enrich it with inputs from each training team.

The main objectives of the Training of the Trainers were:

- To introduce a common training structure and enrich it with inputs from each training team;
- To receive feedback on and suggestions of local inputs into the draft Carpathian ESD Tool Kit from the participants;
- To incorporate the use of the tool kit into the training programme in each location;
- To present a format for reports of the Teacher Trainings, to be used in a project publication.

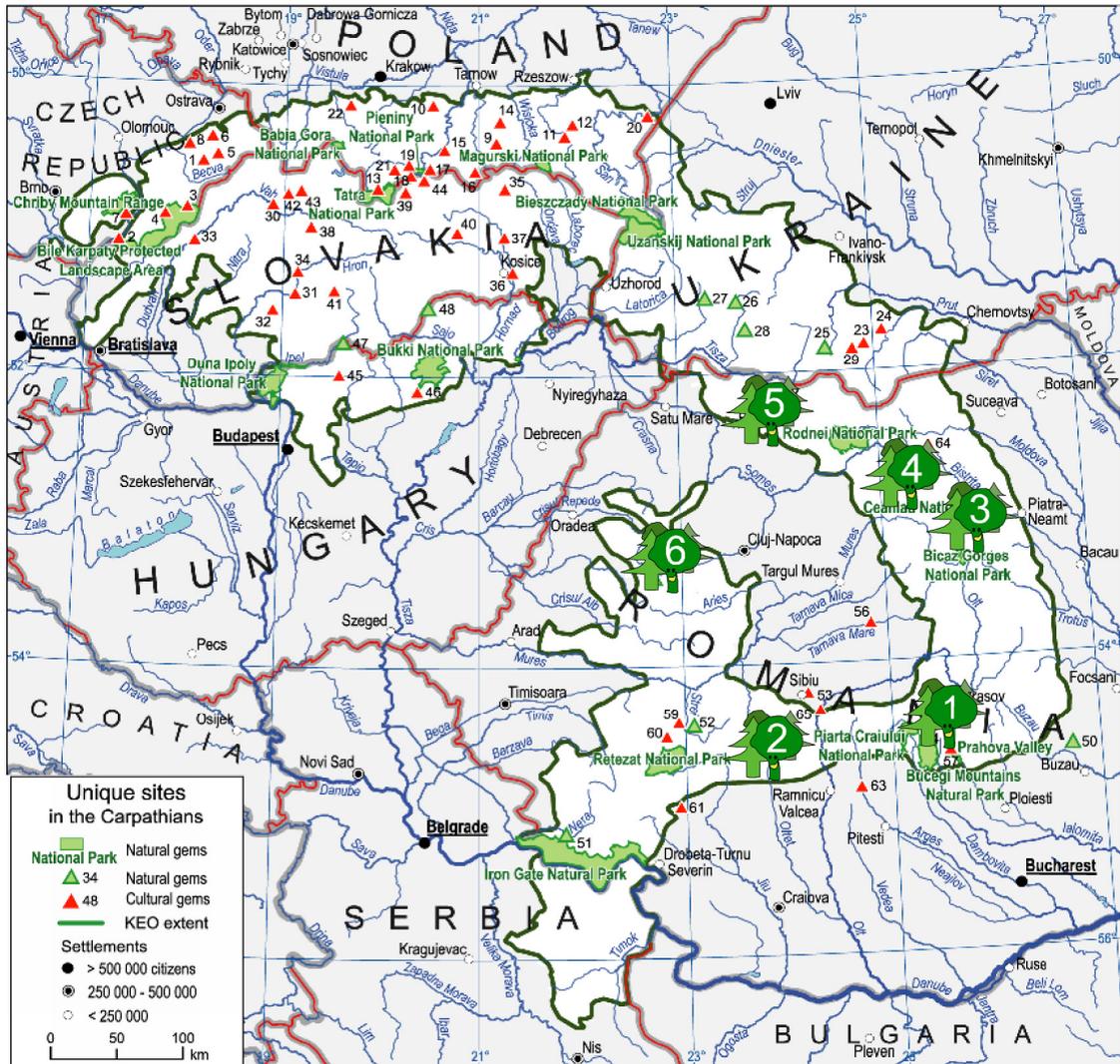
The Teacher Training in each location was structured in a similar way.

At the beginning of training the Carpathian Convention and the Move4Nature project were presented. Next, links between the Carpathian Mountain ESD Tool Kit and the National Curriculum were discussed, and the participants provided feedback on the connection between the Tool Kit and the curriculum.

The main concepts and the content of the Tool Kit were presented in an interactive and participatory way, involving discussion and group work based on suitable activities from the Tool Kit.

The Study Trail Concept, as the main component of the Tool Kit, and the process of designing the trail were presented to the trainees, who had the opportunity to test the concept by developing their own Trails and coming up with key points and related activities – either in their own locality or during a visit to a nearby National Park. The training and field trip were concluded with discussion of the follow-up, and collecting feedback from the participants about both the training and the Tool Kit.

The Map of the Training Locations



The Training Schedule:

- (1) Brasov May 9-10
- (2) Valcea May 16-17
- (3) Harghita May 23-24
- (4) Suceava May 23-24
- (5) Maramures May 23-24
- (6) Cluj-Bijor May 30-31

The Training Locations and Participation

1) Brasov May 9-10

Zărnești, Piatra Craiului National Park

The Training Team

- Marcela Sîrbu, Biology teacher, „George Moroianu” High-School, Săcele
- Viorel Cotleanu, Biology inspector, School Inspectorate of the Brașov County
- Gruîță Ienășoiu, Piatra Craiului National Park
- Agnes Szasz, President of the Carpathian Ardeleană Society (NGO)

Participants: 21 educators from 7 schools in Brașov county

Subjects: Biology, Geography Physics, Chemistry, Religion, Marketing, Technology, Sports

(2) Valcea May 16-17

Buila-Vânturarița National Park

The Training Team

- Florin Stoican – president, Kogayon Association, responsible for community relations, ecological education and tourism in the Administration of the Buila-Vânturarița National Park
- Monica Huidu – project coordinator, Kogayon Association, biologist in Administration of the Buila-Vânturarița National Park
- Emil Pârvulescu – Inspector, Vâlcea County School Inspectorate
- Iulian Popescu – IT Specialist, Cozia National Park
- Narcis Olteanu – Ranger, Cozia National Park

Participants 17 educators from 9 schools in Vâlcea county

Subjects: Biology, Geography Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Sports

(3) Harghita May 23-24

Lacu Roșu, Bicz Gorges National Park - Hașmașul Mare Mountain

The Training Team

- Ildikó Bajkó – Amoeba Eco Center, Colegiul Tehnic Batthyány Ignác – Gheorgheni
- Enikő Fuccaro – Amoeba Eco Center
- Bedő Irén - Inspector, Harghita County School Inspectorate
- Hegyi Barna, Representative of The National Park Cheile Bicazului-Hasmas

Participants 21 educators from 9 schools in Harghita and Bacau counties

Subjects: Biology, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Technical Education, Agriculture, Computer Science, Sports, English.

(4) Suceava May 23-24

Training and Innovation Center for Development in the Carpathians – CEFIDEC, Vatra Dornei, National Park Calimani – thematic trail ”12 Apostles”

The Training Team

- Leonte Valeria – School Inspector/Teacher, Suceava County School Inspectorate
- Porof Marcel – School Inspector/Teacher, Falticeni - National College ”Nicu Gane”, Suceava County School Inspectorate

- Rey Adrian Radu – Executive Director, National Association For Mountain Rural Development "Romontana"

Participants: 16 educators from 6 schools in Suceava county

Subjects: Biology, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, History, Civic Culture, Romanian Language, French, Mathematics

(5) Maramureş May 23-24

Suciu De Jos Commune

The Training Team

Timocea Lucreția – Maramureş County School Inspectorate

Popa Horațiu - Asociația Ecouri Verzi, Cluj-Napoca

Iancu Ioana - WWF Danube Carpathian Programme România

Participants: 22 educators from 8 schools in Maramureş county

Subjects: Biology, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Romanian, Environmental Engineering, Theology, Mathematics, Psychology, Sports

(6) Cluj-Bijor May 30-31

Sâncraiu, National Park Apuseni

The Training Team

- Maria Toth – Teacher, Project Coordinator, Health Environment Regional Organization (HERO)
- Luminita Chicinas – Inspector of Physics, Cluj County School Inspectorate
- Elisaveta Roșu – Inspector of History and Geography, Bijor County School Inspectorate

Participants: 20 educators from 7 schools in Bijor and Cluj counties

Subjects: Biology, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, History, Religion, Literature, English Language, Mathematics

Outcomes and Follow-up

The Move4Nature Teacher Training concluded with a number of enthusiastic “trainees”, who did not only participate willingly and actively in the training sessions, but were inspired and eager to actively incorporate the newly learned concepts and techniques into practice: not only by using the Tool Kit and organizing activities with students in their own classrooms, but also by “spreading the training” to other teachers in their respective schools.

To see the results of the Teacher Training and the use of the Tool Kit, a Media-tour will visit 2-3 schools participating in the Move4Nature Initiative in the fall 2009, with participation from OMV and Romanian authorities.

At the same time, the Move4Nature Initiative is just the beginning of the Carpathian Mountain ESD initiatives. The Romanian project partners are looking forward to following up the Teacher Training with a conference of the project participants (both the teachers and their students), in order to solidify the training results and to support exchange of ideas and experience. Moreover, they are hoping to be able to organize additional trainings in other areas of Romania.

The trainees in every location were likewise eager to participate in follow-up activities and to continue cooperating and exchanging ideas with their counterparts from other schools in Romania and in other Carpathian Countries. Many ideas were voiced during the trainings; some teachers are already planning to incorporate the Tool Kit and Training exercises in the summer-camp activities with the students.

Inspired by the regional scope of the Initiative, the partners and participants are envisaging joint follow-up projects with neighboring countries, such as Ukraine, in order to facilitate regional exchange on ESD issues in the context of the Carpathian Mountains sustainable development, with facilitation by UNEP – Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, ENSI and CASALEN.