

Joint statement

of the representatives of the Governments of the Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, Montenegro, the Republic of Serbia, and the Republic of Slovenia

As the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Governments of the above listed countries recognize that a joint and coordinated effort is needed in efficient delivery of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas obligations. Transboundary cooperation between the Dinaric Arc countries in the implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas, with the aim to create a well managed, and ecologically representative protected area network, is the key to safeguard the Dinaric Arc ecoregion's exceptional natural and cultural values.

We, the representatives of the Governments:

1. Recognize the specific natural and cultural values of the Dinaric Arc ecoregion and acknowledge the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas to be a valuable framework for conserving biological diversity and generating benefits to local and national economies.

2. Aim to further continue our activities towards implementation of national priorities leading to delivering on the objectives of the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas.
3. Support increased understanding of the relationship between the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas and the EU legislation on nature conservation.
4. Encourage mutual cooperation and exchange of experiences in protected areas management on the regional level.
5. Recognize the importance of regional cooperation to achieve transboundary sustainable management of the South-Eastern European region, including the Adriatic Sea, Dinaric Alps and Sava River Basin.
6. Recognize and support the need for sustainable use of water resources and protection of groundwater-dependent ecosystems by introducing sustainable integrated management principles in the Dinaric karst system.
7. Encourage the preservation of the cultural heritage of the Dinaric Arc through support for traditional activities in protected areas which contribute to biodiversity conservation and local livelihoods.
8. Call upon the Dinaric Arc Initiative partners (WWF, UNESCO BRESCE, IUCN, UNDP, Council of Europe, FAO, SNV, UNEP, Euronatur) and other interested parties to strengthen their cooperation with the Dinaric Arc countries and facilitate necessary support in the delivery of the national priorities.
9. Support evaluation of the contribution of protected areas to each country's economy and for the region as a whole.

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Water Administration
(Republic of Albania)

..... Federal Ministry of Environment and
Tourism
(Bosnia and Herzegovina)

..... Ministry of Culture
(Republic of Croatia)

..... Ministry of Tourism and Environment
(Montenegro)

..... Ministry of Environmental Protection
(Republic of Serbia)

..... Ministry of the Environment and
Spatial Planning
(Republic of Slovenia)