

**FROM ANALYSIS TO ACTION:  
DEVELOPMENT OF A CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING  
PROGRAMME FOR PROTECTED AREAS IN UKRAINE**

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*Prots B., Jungmeier M. From analysis to action: development of a capacity building and training programme for protected areas in Ukraine.* Based on an analysis of the status quo and a qualitative training needs assessment the Capacity Building and Training Programme Development for Protected Areas in Ukraine has been developed in a process of discussion with Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine. The programme addresses professionals in protected areas at all categories. Primarily focussing on the protected areas in the Carpathian the particular modules shall be offered to the whole country. The SWOT analysis and working steps on Capacity Building and Training Programme Development for Protected Areas in Ukraine are presented. The programme intents to enable and empower personalities, institutions and civil society as well to shape the future of the protected areas in Ukraine and to enrich their natural and cultural values in close cooperation with regional stakeholders and local actors.

*Проць Б., Юнгмейер М. Від аналізу до дії: формування програми розвитку спроможностей та навчання працівників природно-заповідного фонду України.* На підставі аналізу статусу-кво та оцінки потреб якісного рівня навчання розроблено основні засади Програми розвитку спроможностей та навчання працівників природно-заповідного фонду України. Це реалізовано шляхом обговорення й погодження із керівництвом Міністерства екології та природних ресурсів України. Програма адресована фахівцям природно-заповідних територій усіх категорій. Незважаючи те, що програма орієнтована для природно-заповідних територій Карпатського регіону, проте вона адресована для усіх працівників природно-заповідного фонду України. Представлено SWOT-аналіз та робочі етапи й заходи щодо формування

Програми розвитку спроможностей та навчання працівників природно-заповідного фонду. Програма передбачає формування та покращення можливостей розвитку особистостей, установ та відповідного сектору громадянського суспільства, а також формування майбутнього стану природно-заповідних територій в Україні шляхом збагачення їх природних й культурних цінностей в тісному співробітництві із регіональними й місцевими зацікавленими сторонами.

### **Introduction**

Recent study indicates a positive correlation between staff capacity and conservation outcomes (Geldmann et al., 2017). New infrastructures and equipment need be utilized and maintained by qualified staff and the implementation of plans and conservation measures needs high level motivated staff to overcome the usual obstacles. Especially the involvement of the local communities is challenging and needs a variety of competencies. Communication, moderation and even mediation skills, conflict solving competence and branding and marketing skills are demanded.

The fundamental shift in paradigms towards a new understanding of conservation in general and protected area in particular has been reflected by scholarly world and international institutions as well. The IUCN's Promise of Sydney, UNESCO's Lima Action Plan and CBD's Aichi Targets are amongst the most powerful statements of international community stressing on new functions and roles of protected areas in a changing world. Mainly, these strategies give a strong reference to United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and therefor give a voice to local interests, stress on good governance, participatory and evidence-based approaches in planning and management and advocate for the importance of traditional knowledge and eco-cultural heritage.

These changes in paradigms require new competencies that need to be developed in the sector. So does the ongoing economisation of the sectors, for instance in the context of ecosystem services or sustainable financing.

The investment in Ukraine's PAs regarding planning, infrastructure, equipment, socio-economic measures and management effectiveness will stay and fall with the long-term application and use by skilled staff members. Ukraine works intensively towards expansion of existed protected areas and establishing a new one as well as preparing to launch soon the National Emerald network, based on improved legislative framework. At present, the national protected areas system of Ukraine includes 7,800 protected areas covering 6.2% of the national territory, which is rather low in comparison with other

European countries. On European perspective Ukraine has made substantial effort to intensifying the countries relation to the European Union. Hence the European Directives, policies and funding are of increasing importance for nature conservation in general and protected areas in particular. The Habitat and Bird Directives pose fundamentally new requirements and technical standards and consequently call for habitat-based approaches in the management. In addition, new emerging technologies and innovations offer new opportunities for nature conservation. For instance, unmanned area vehicles ("drones") already do allow for new methods in monitoring and surveillance. So do mobile GIS-solutions (e.g. "map and go"), a new generation of satellite imagery (e.g. Sentinel), new ways of modelling (e.g. interactive, agent-based, hexagonal grids etc) and manifold devices (e.g. camera-traps, bat recorders, bird radars, data loggers etc). Particularly in the field of visitors' management and nature interpretation the completely new opportunities and offers are emerging. These technologies need to be tested, selected and integrated into daily business.

Ongoing digitalisation has also lead to considerable new opportunities and training formats. These formats allow for a very effective distribution on new knowledge, to highly individualised training offers and to disconnect learning from space and time. This of particular relevance for protected areas that usually exist separate in peripheral regions. Such formats, e-learning platforms (e.g. Moodle), Moocs (Massive open online courses), virtual colleges and academies, learning videos, online-tutorials as well online-coaching and online-mentoring will fundamentally change the training and learning habits and have already started to do so.

#### **Existing training offers and relevant networks on national level**

The State Ecological Academy of Postgraduate Education and Management (Kyiv) is providing training mainly on PA statutory requirements for selected senior staff. The Educational Centre of Shevchenko State University & Kaniv Nature Reserve provided more applied trainings in protected area management skills, but it was in the past and the Center is not operational anymore. Additional trainings have been provided though internationally funded projects, like by WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme on CCPAMET effectiveness management evaluation tool (Carpathian Protected Areas Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool, 2012), which is based on Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) (Hockings et al., 2006; Stolton & Dudley, 2016) and also the GIS use and Nature Interpretation Trainings, by the USPB on field survey methods on old-growth forests or Association of Protected areas of Ukraine on landscape parks functioning, which were random and non-systemic.

Overall, the protected areas personnel (excluding support staff) in Ukraine received very different trainings between 5 and 20 days (depends on protected areas) annually per person. The number of people participated in trainings during the last 5 years for Carpathian protected areas were partly below 35% and partly between 35 and 70% (based on recent CCPAMETT evaluations). The number of days per person and number of participated staff in trainings per year are much below the current need for PA development.

Furthermore, the current, sometimes randomly conducted training for protected areas personal, have only covered a limited number of topics and items, focusing primarily on field survey skills, protected area management and legislation changes. As mentioned above, an encouraging proportion of training has been provided already (with different scopes for different PAs) both on administrative and theoretical/methodological topics and on practical protected area management (mainly for rangers). In general, there is no institutionalised programme or centralized plan for capacity development for PA staff at the moment.

A centralized institution and programme existed in the past: the so called "Educational Centre of the Shevchenko State University/Kaniv Nature Reserve" was such an important example of a protected area training centre but ceased to operate 6 years ago. The aim of the programme is to re-establish a structured, targeted and long-lasting training programme for park personal of all levels within the protected area system of Ukraine.

### **Institutional gap analysis**

More than 5,000 persons are employed within the system, mainly located in the territorial administrations of the protected areas. Most Ukrainian protected areas reflect a typical centralised PA administration which feature a relatively large technical and administrative team, with a gender balance of in average 2/3 male and 1/3 female. The personnel surveyed are very well educated, with approximately 90% having a university education and the remainder educated to high school level. The workforce has quite a good balance of ages. Despite the core team of protected areas usually has got longer 5 years' experience, but it lacks in international experience and innovation. Feedback received from parks also revealed that the manager's preferred learning methods are study visits and short courses, study visits abroad were recognised as an efficient training approach for protected areas staff.

A SWOT analysis of the protected areas staff on capacity development in Ukraine is provided in Table 1.

Table 1

**SWOT analysis on protected areas staff capacity development**

STRENGTHS / OPPORTUNITIES	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The existing legal framework enables improvement of capacity building (capacity building still remains a priority for improvement of management of protected areas);</li> <li>• Relatively well educated staff in the protected areas system;</li> <li>• Large group (more than 5000 staff) for building the people network;</li> <li>• Relatively balanced range of staff (gender, age);</li> <li>• A critical amount of motivated people (protected areas core group) exists to manage protected areas for most target protected areas;</li> <li>• There are people in Ukraine with knowledge and skills that can be applied in training programmes (there are potential trainers inside and outside protected areas system);</li> <li>• There are some strong links between the focal protected areas and other countries (this refers to existing partnerships with sister parks/organizations outside the country);</li> <li>• Existence of Department for protected areas as a coordinating institution for protected area management;</li> <li>• Existence of the State Ecological Academy of Postgraduate Education and Management;</li> <li>• Certain level of support from decision makers.</li> <li>• Medium/non-conflict level support from local administrations/local communities for targeted protected areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of capacity building strategy and action plan;</li> <li>• Capacity building financing partly depends on external support (funding for capacity building is insufficient and unsustainable, coming mainly from donors);</li> <li>• Absence of MENR group on capacity development for protected areas (no strategic management);</li> <li>• Lack of international experience for protected areas staff;</li> <li>• Lack of incentive system for the staff (no promotion scheme, reward system, etc.);</li> <li>• Non stable situation in MENR (constant reforming and position changes for authorities);</li> <li>• Existing trainers don't cover all the relevant topics (there is a lack of national/local expertise in some of the fields/training topics);</li> <li>• Lack of cooperation between different protected areas;</li> <li>• Lack of institutional arrangements for internal capacity development (no training centre for protected areas staff);</li> <li>• Centralized management and lack of incentives for capacity building (protected areas system is highly-centralized, and protected areas managers do not feel sufficiently empowered to undergo training on planning.);</li> <li>• Not all staff positions adequately defined for modern conservation management tasks.</li> </ul>

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Nationally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The national capacity building strategy and plan can be developed (capacity building gaps can be identified and action plan can be approved);</li> <li>• Management plan approach (project organizatsiji) has opportunities to improve;</li> <li>• Cooperation with local communities and administrations is a crucial for focal protected areas and got opportunities to improve;</li> <li>• MENR supports initiatives on capacity building;</li> <li>• NGOs and volunteers are a good resource for capacity development;</li> <li>• Existing and functioning vocational standards and qualification framework may need to be improved;</li> <li>• State Ecological Academy of Postgraduate Education and Management has opportunities to improve and provide better support to protected areas;</li> </ul> <p>Internationally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacities of focal protected areas can be substantially improved;</li> <li>• Involve more international donors.</li> <li>• Improve work with sister protected areas (partnerships, exchanges).</li> <li>• Existing programmes to harmonize with EU (harmonization/approximation with EU can be a driver for changes, implementation of Habitat/Bird Directives);</li> <li>• International Conventions and Agreements for focal protected areas can be implemented at higher level;</li> <li>• Guidelines and materials on capacity building need to be improved based on international standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertainty considering future budget. (future budget cuts, uncertainties, lack of funds to implement the capacity development tasks, available "stagnation period" for many PAs capacity development);</li> <li>• Less priority given to protected areas at national level (lower priority is given to nature conservation from the government);</li> <li>• Protected areas salaries become less competitive;</li> <li>• International donors/programmes may lose interest in protected areas support if corruption level will not decrease;</li> <li>• A critical mass of motivated people (protected areas core group) to manage protected areas could drop for most target protected areas, which could lead to poor results on biodiversity protection;</li> </ul>

It provides a review of the current context for individual capacity development for the staff working in protected area management at all levels (Table.1). It was carried out during the target protected areas meetings and random meetings with non-targeted protected areas staff also during 2017. The rich strengths and opportunities provide a good possibility to develop well balanced capacity building programme for protected areas staff. The weaknesses and threats, like poor funding, corruption, poor technical support should, low number of motivated staff could make not working many good ideas and developments. Opportunities and risks both are high, which needs a good team and support to implement this concept. The sustainable implementation of this idea would require also an establishment of MENR (Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine) focal point on capacity building programme with at least 2 staff members. Currently, the capacity building tasks are divided into different departments of MENR and have common management at lower level.

### **Capacity building and training needs assessment**

A training needs assessment is a tool to describe the available capacity regarding relevant fields of activities of various staff groups and to identify knowledge gaps and training needs. Hence, the training needs assessments refers to most recent training needs and is a relevant overview of existing capacities and development needs. Following the method of the TNA (training needs assessment), competence pyramids were drafted for each staff group at various knowledge levels for Ukrainian Protected areas and assessed regarding available competences and training needs.

Like in all organisations, protected area related personnel need different competences at various levels according to their tasks: staff members at MENR level and the protected area administration need different competences compared to staff members working directly with tourists, visitors or the surrounding local communities people. They all need at least a basic understanding and knowledge of the protected area's aims, targets and activities.

### **Target groups for capacity building and training**

- The CCBT (Component on Capacity Building and Training) is addressed to different target groups:

- Top level in the management of protected areas, personalities with strategic and programmatic responsibilities on the national or provincial level and senior staff in the protected areas (MENR), relevant departments at national or provincial level of state regional administrations, directors and deputy directors of the different protected areas);
- Academic staff in administration and management in the protected areas (research personal in the protected areas, outreach and education personal, officers in charge of tourism, regional development, stakeholder involvement, planning, infrastructures, managing national or international projects); by request of MENR these targets groups respectively competencies shall be considered in particular:
  - Scientists (inventories, monitoring, documentation
  - Recreation, touristic facilities and offers
  - Eco-Education and environmental interpretation
- Rangers and forestry services in the park administration (staff in charge of law enforcement, monitoring, guided tours and tourist activities, technical staff);
- Others: voluntary staff and supporters, regional and local stakeholders, NGOs on regional, provincial or national level).

### **Stepwise implementation of trainings**

The different training formats and supporting materials are elaborated. Based on some prototype test-runs the training formats are implemented stepwise within a timeframe of three years. The evaluations and the experiences are documented properly and regularly reflected in the CCBT-Coregroup.

- Long-term perspective: The training activities shall consider the concepts of life-long learning
- Individualised training portfolio: The trainings shall fit to the individual needs and shall be related to the job profiles
- Inspiring and new training formats: The trainings shall beyond "traditional" training offers and shall include interactive, experimental and peer-to-peer formats
- Diversity of training formats: On the national level the different offers shall be divers, providing an attractive "mix" of formal and non-formal, of real-life and virtual and of normative and reflective learning opportunities



The different locations and venues of the training network, respectively the "virtual academy" shall help to reduce costs (travel), to gain new experiences by visiting diverse parks, facilities and areas and finally will contribute to the direct outreach and visibility of the CCBT-program. In the training formats also mixing of target groups shall contribute to new learning experiences, e.g. by eco-education officers working with volunteers or students. A particular emphasis shall be given to linking with European and international standards and training offers, academic and non-academic as well (e.g. European Parks Academy, study programmes such as the international MSc "Management of Conservation Areas").

### **Stepwise development of institutional capacities**

Parallel to the trainings the relevant institutional and infrastructural pre-conditions for a nation-wide human-resource management in the sector are to be developed (as presented below). Progress and results shall regularly be discussed and reflected in the CCBT-Coregroup.

- Transparent qualification scheme: professional job profiles, recognition of qualification, national career tracking tool
- "Chronicle of nature", pa-wiki (open platform to exchange information and materials): databases operationalised and provided via mobile devices
- Research – and training network: developed stepwise on the bases of contractual agreements to secure the future training programme ("virtual academy").

### **Final documentation and working steps**

The results and impacts to CCBT are evaluated on the basis of qualitative interviews and lead to recommendation for the further development of the national training programme. The evaluation is conducted by a team of external experts. All materials, activities and experiences are edited to a final documentation.

For the achievements of the goals of the CCBT the working steps presented in Table 2 are to be implemented. The table data describes all working steps with regards to contents and results. Some of the working steps are repetitive each year. This allows for a concise structure of the workplan. The workplan is prepared for implementation period 2018-2022 and based on MENR approval.

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Table 2

## Working steps on Capacity Building and Training Programme Development for Protected Areas in Ukraine

Year	1. Institutional setting / management	2. Training materials	3. Trainings
2018	18.1.1.	Constitution of CCBT coregroup	18.2.1. Ukrainian PA Wiki
	18.1.2.	Detailed training programme 2018	18.2.2. Ranger Handbook (concept)
	18.1.3.	Quantitative training needs assessment	18.2.3. Materials on management planning
	18.1.4.	Detailed training programme 2019	18.2.4. Materials on GIS and remote sensing
	18.1.5.	Documentation to CCBT coregroup	
2019	19.1.1.	Meetings of CCBT coregroup	19.2.1. Regionalised ranger handbooks
	19.1.2.	Job profiles and accreditations	19.2.2. Chronicle of nature
	19.1.3.	University cooperation fixed	19.2.3. Materials referring to training plan
	19.1.4.	International twinning programme	19.2.4. Learning videos on FoAs
	19.1.5.	Conception "Carpathian training hub"	19.2.5. Materials for coaching and mentoring
	19.1.6.	Detailed training programme 2020	19.2.6. Materials for twinning
	19.1.7.	Documentation to CCBT coregroup	19.2.7. Materials for scientific formats
2020	20.1.1.	Meetings of CCBT coregroup	20.2.1. Materials for open exchange formats
	20.1.2.	Concept of training academy	20.2.2. Chronicle of nature
	20.1.3.	Detailed training programme 2021	20.2.3. Implementation: Carpathian training hub
	20.1.4.	Documentation to CCBT coregroup	
2021	21.1.1.	Meetings of CCBT coregroup	21.3.1. Trainings referring to training plan
	21.1.2.	Establishment of training academy	
	21.1.3.	Detailed training programme 2022	
	21.1.4.	Documentation to CCBT coregroup	
2022	22.1.1.	Meetings of CCBT coregroup	22.2.1. Revision of training materials
	22.1.2.	Establishment of training academy	22.2.2. Revision of training design
	22.1.3.	Financial concept for further trainings	
	22.1.4.	Detailed training programme 2023	
	22.1.5.	Documentation to CCBT coregroup	
	22.1.6.	Evaluation of training programm	
	22.1.7.	Final report and overall documentation	

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