

Science for the Carpathians (S4C)

An interdisciplinary research network for the Carpathian Mountains

Memorandum of the S4C Scientific Steering Committee

Bratislava, Slovakia, 10 June 2009

On the occasion of the planning meeting organized on 10 June 2009, an interim Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) has been established to guide the development of the Science for the Carpathians (S4C) initiative. The S4C is planned as an active network of mountain researchers interested in interdisciplinary and international research collaboration, in developing the scientific community and in building research capacity in the region. The network strongly relies on the input and participation of all its members.

The interim Scientific Steering Committee will serve the network until the first Forum Carpathicum meeting scheduled for 15-17 September 2010. At this international meeting, the final SSC will be elected.

I. Aims and Objectives

1. The Science for the Carpathians (S4C) initiative is a regional science network targeting at mountain research in the Carpathians. The aims and objectives of the S4C initiative are:

- to develop a research strategy for the Carpathian region covering both natural and social sciences that will be topically prioritized. Among the main topics currently identified for the Carpathian region are: climate change, land use and land cover change, cultural landscapes, tourism, forestry, biodiversity & nature conservation, sustainable development, and water management;
- to promote applied research generating knowledge on mountain systems under Global Change;
- to strengthen the research capacity, and to make Carpathian science more prominent in the European and global science community;
- to facilitate the development of new research projects by means of networking and a targeted information strategy, to initiate and facilitate communication and cooperation between research institutions dealing with the Carpathian mountain system;
- to design and implement research aiming at the support of sustainable development in the Carpathian region.

II. Scientific Steering Committee

2. The S4C Initiative is guided by the Scientific Steering Committee nominated by the S4C community. Steering Committee members should represent the major natural and socioeconomic disciplines in the global change research in the Carpathians. The authority for all S4C policies and activities resides with the S4C SSC.

3. The primary functions and responsibilities of the SSC are:

- a. to provide scientific guidance to and oversee the development, planning and implementation of the S4C aims and objectives,
- b. to demonstrate progress and achievements of the S4C aims and objectives through setting and monitoring of milestones and results,
- c. to promote the coordination of the international activities that constitute the S4C aims and objectives,
- d. to encourage national, regional and local governments and regional and international funding agencies to support the implementation of the S4C aims and objectives through the provision of adequate funding,
- e. to prepare S4C meetings, workshops, and conferences including the Forum Carpaticum,
- f. to disseminate the outcomes using information tools for different target audiences and platforms for effective science-policy-practice dialogue,
- g. to foster long-term funding for an S4C coordination office,
- h. to meet annually to review progress in the development and implementation of the S4C aims and objectives and to advise the SSC Chair on future activities.

4. The S4C SSC targets at 12 Members, including the Chair and Co-Chair. Members shall be selected based on their standing in the international scientific community with due consideration to scientific expertise and national representation. For each Carpathian country (Austria, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, Romania and Serbia) one member should be chosen as the main contact person of the national S4C working group serving as the S4C node in the respective country. In addition to these 8 national representatives, members from other countries or international bodies can be nominated to support the SSC.

5. If the person elected as S4C member can not serve the entire period, she or he should delegate another member of the National Working Group for the remaining period.

6. The term for these appointments (SSC members, Co-Chair and Chair) will normally be two years.

7. Members of the Scientific Steering Committee are expected to:

- a. actively attend meetings of the Scientific Steering Committee,
- b. expend considerable effort outside of SSC meetings,
- c. provide the best possible scientific information and advice concerning their field of expertise as it relates to the objective of the S4C aims and objectives,
- d. provide scientific advice to the Chair of the SSC on the development and implementation of the S4C aims and objectives,
- e. represent the scientific interests of the S4C aims and objectives at relevant scientific meetings,
- f. provide a two-way channel of communication between the SSC and the national and where possible, regional or international research communities,
- g. keep the Chair of the SSC informed of all actions directly or indirectly related to the S4C aims and objectives.

8. The Chair of the SSC is expected to:

- a. represent and run the S4C aims and objectives,
- b. organize, chair and conduct the meetings of the SSC,
- c. work closely with the SSC Members in implementing agreed activities between meetings of the Committee.

9. The Co-Chair of the Scientific Steering Committee is expected to:

- a. organize, chair and conduct the meetings of the committee in the absence of the Chair of the SSC,
- b. assist the Chair and the SSC Members in implementing agreed activities between meetings of the Committee.

10. The Chair of the SSC may invite observers to attend meetings of the SSC.

11. The observers are active representatives of relevant organizations and should be elected by the SSC.

III. S4C Thematic Working Groups

12. S4C actively promotes and develops Thematic Working Groups (TWG) in various research fields relevant to the Carpathian region. The TWGs consist of scientists from a broad range of disciplines related to the global change research who like to actively participate in the S4C activities.

13. The TWGs are open to new members and organize themselves.

IV. Forum Carpaticum

14. Forum Carpaticum is an international meeting of scientists interested in the research in the Carpathian region and of representatives from policy, economy and administration working in the Carpathian countries.

15. Forum Carpaticum is the S4C open meeting. The S4C SSC members are expected to act also as the Forum Carpaticum Steering Committee.

16. Forum Carpaticum objectives are to link research and practice related to coupled human-environmental systems in the Carpathians, to support actions leading towards sustainability, and to increase the visibility of the Carpathian region in the global change research agendas for mountain regions.

Bratislava, Slovakia, 10 June 2009

Accepted by the interim S4C SSC members