

*XVI International Scientific & Practical Conference*

# Transcarpathian Legal Readings: Sustainable Development and Institutional Capacity in the Conditions of War: National and International Legal Aspects



**26–27 April 2024**  
Uzhhorod, Ukraine

## ABSTRACT

### **Addressing Emerging Legal and Policy Issues for Sustainable Development in the War-Affected Carpathian Mountains of Ukraine**

The Carpathian Mountains, extending across Ukraine and neighbouring countries, face escalating environmental degradation partly aggravated by the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. There is sporadic direct shelling in Carpathian territories, causing not a significant direct harm; but, of course, the Carpathians, like the entire natural environment, suffer from war through air pollution, migration, climate change and the like. This paper explores the emerging legal challenges regarding the sustainability of the Carpathian ecosystem, considering the context of the Ukrainian conflict and the involvement of the European Union (EU). Exacerbated by full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, degradation encompasses deforestation, illegal logging, habitat destruction, and water pollution, posing severe threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services. This paper identifies key legal issues and

proposes strategies to address them, taking into account the EU's role and relevant policies.

Firstly, strengthening and enforcing existing environmental protection laws is crucial to combat illegal activities such as logging and poaching, aligning with EU directives and regulations. Additionally, enhancing international cooperation through EU initiatives and frameworks such as the Carpathian Convention is vital for addressing transboundary environmental issues effectively. Furthermore, leveraging EU funding and expertise can support capacity-building efforts and sustainable development projects in the Carpathian region. Community engagement and participation are essential for empowering local populations in decision-making processes, aligning with EU principles of participatory governance and sustainable development. Conflict-sensitive approaches, integrated into environmental policies with EU support, can mitigate conflict-related environmental impacts and contribute to rebuilding efforts. Moreover, comprehensive land use planning and zoning regulations, in line with EU spatial planning directives, are necessary to guide sustainable development practices and prevent further environmental degradation. Promoting alternative livelihood options such as eco- and cultural tourism and sustainable agriculture, with EU funding and technical assistance, can alleviate pressure on natural resources while supporting local economies and aligning with EU strategies for rural development and biodiversity conservation.

In conclusion, addressing the sustainability of the Carpathian Mountains in war-affected Ukraine requires a multifaceted approach that integrates legal, environmental, social, economic, and EU dimensions. Effective implementation of legal frameworks, international cooperation, community engagement, and conflict-sensitive approaches, supported by EU policies, funding, and expertise, are essential for safeguarding the Carpathian ecosystem amidst ongoing conflict and environmental challenges while advancing regional development goals and EU sustainability objectives.

## **Authors**

### **Arjjumend, Hasrat [Dr.]**

*President*, The Grassroots Institute, 548 Jean Talon Ouest, Montreal, QC, H3N1R5  
Canada, Email: harjjumend@gmail.com, ceo@grassrootsinstitute.ca

### **Donets, Olga [Dr.]**

*Secretary*, The Grassroots Institute, Ukraine  
[& *Associate Professor*, Department of Environmental Law, Yaroslav Mudryi  
National Law University, 61024, Pushkins'ka St, 77 Kharkiv, Ukraine,  
Email: olya.donets@gmail.com