

**Conveners:**

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**Title:**

Recent and future changes of agricultural areas of Carpathians

**Session description:**

Global and regional economic, social and environmental changes increasingly affect local communities, local environment and ecosystems. Understanding the related processes, including driving forces of these changes and their consequences is inevitable to predict future development trajectories, to mitigate negative impacts and to pursue sustainable objectives in decision making and management.

This section aims to focus on rural areas in which agriculture plays essential role. These areas significantly contribute to the character of Carpathians and host many its important values like traditional cultural landscape, high landscape diversity and biodiversity, valuable natural and semi-natural habitats, traditional ecological knowledge, and traditional culture. However, the agricultural rural areas were heavily influenced by socioeconomic and political changes in the last 30 years and related processes like economic transformation, agricultural abandonment, out-migration and depopulation, marginalisation. On the other hand, especially in last years it is possible to record also positive features like more emphasis on environmental issues and sustainable solutions, ecological production, interest on local culture and handcraft products. The Carpathian Convention recognised importance of agriculture and rural development for the sustainable future of Carpathians and in 2017 adopted the Protocol on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD). SARD Protocol aims “*to cooperate on sustainable development of agriculture and of rural areas based on local resources to protect traditional practices, knowledge and species, to safeguard cultural landscapes and to improve and promote durable economic progress*”.

In the session, contributions from a range of disciplines are welcomed, particularly those addressing question if recent changes (from 1990s) and current processes in the Carpathian rural areas are in harmony or in contradiction to the above-mentioned aim of the SARD Protocol. The role of the Common Agricultural Policy and opportunities linked with its current reform, recent EU policy instruments like Green Deal, Farm to Fork Strategy, Adaptation Strategy and Transition Fund, and implementation of concepts of High-Nature Value Farmland Areas and Green Infrastructure in practical management of the Carpathian rural areas should be discussed in the session. We would appreciate if presenters highlight the best practices and relevant measures contributing to sustainable development of Carpathian agricultural rural areas.

**The title of the introductory presentation**

Mederly, P., Halada, L., Lieskovský, J. et al.: Recent changes and processes of Carpathian rural areas with particular focus to Slovakia