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IASON Project, BSB 1121 - Work meeting (Türkiye) and ADDENDUM No. 2 To the grant contract

Karadeniz Technical University, Marine Science Faculty organized the third partner meeting of the IASON project. The main purpose of this meeting is to bring together all project partners in order to review and evaluate the project actions, discuss about the upcoming activities and the overall project progress. Every team presented the actions that coordinate and their progress. The project meeting took place on 14-16 December 2022 in Samsun, Türkiye.

ADDENDUM No. 2 - Extending the implementation period of the project from 30 to 34 months and the rescheduling of some activities for the following reasons:

The epidemiological situation related to COVID-19 has created important difficulties regarding the implementation of the Activities in the framework of the project. From the beginning of the project implementation period until now, we have gone through 2 consistent periods of emergency epidemiological situation, which were accompanied by periodic blockades, severe restrictions in terms of free movement, or related to the reception of foreigners and the establishment of mandatory quarantine upon arrival and/or return to the country of residence. These restrictions ultimately led to the impossibility of organizing physical meetings between the partners according to the initially agreed calendar.

The project was started with the organization of an online meeting (Kick-off project meeting), meetings that continued for the next 19 months of the project.

In the hope that the working meetings can be carried out and also the planned Activities can be implemented, a series of Notifications and an Addendum have been elaborated, allowing us to draw up the related Deliverables.

A perhaps even more important cause of the impossibility of carrying out activities related to field investigations, at least for some of the partners (especially PP3 - IMB), was the situation created by the social complications existing in Ukraine during the military armed conflict, currently in progress throughout the country.

The partner from Ukraine (PP3 - IMB) fulfilled its responsibilities related to the elaboration of the Deliverables related to the Activities held in coordination, but it was made impossible to carry out the investigative activities in the field, to physically participate in the International Conference dedicated to the project, organized in Romania, scheduled meetings with stakeholders or even simple meetings between members of the implementation team.

On the background of the measures taken at the governmental level, however, the possibility emerged that at least one representative of the PP3 implementation team - IMB could participate in the physical meetings that remained to be organized - in Türkiye and Georgia. The work meeting scheduled in Ukraine, also unfulfilled, is still considered a major

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risk and will be removed from the list of scheduled activities within the project, this step being necessary and requested at this time, together with the related financial changes.

On the other hand, the conflict on the border of Romania led to restrictions related to movement in the field and therefore field investigations in one of the main components of the investigated deltaic ecosystem, the Chilia Arm of the Danube - border area between Romania and Ukraine and element common of the two deltaic areas investigated in the project: Danube Delta - Romania and Danube Delta - Ukraine. Also, the coastal area of the Danube Delta was considered at risk, being removed from the list of areas to be investigated for almost the entire period of the warm season of 2022.

The imposed restrictions led to the implementation of the activities with double efforts due to the imposed restrictions on the occupancy of the halls, distance between participants, use of hybrid forms - online and face-to-face. The pandemic has had an extremely negative impact on public events, seminars and conferences, leading to difficult, or partial, dissemination of results, information and data collected. We state that, under the mentioned conditions, some of the communication activities were either difficult or impossible to implement.

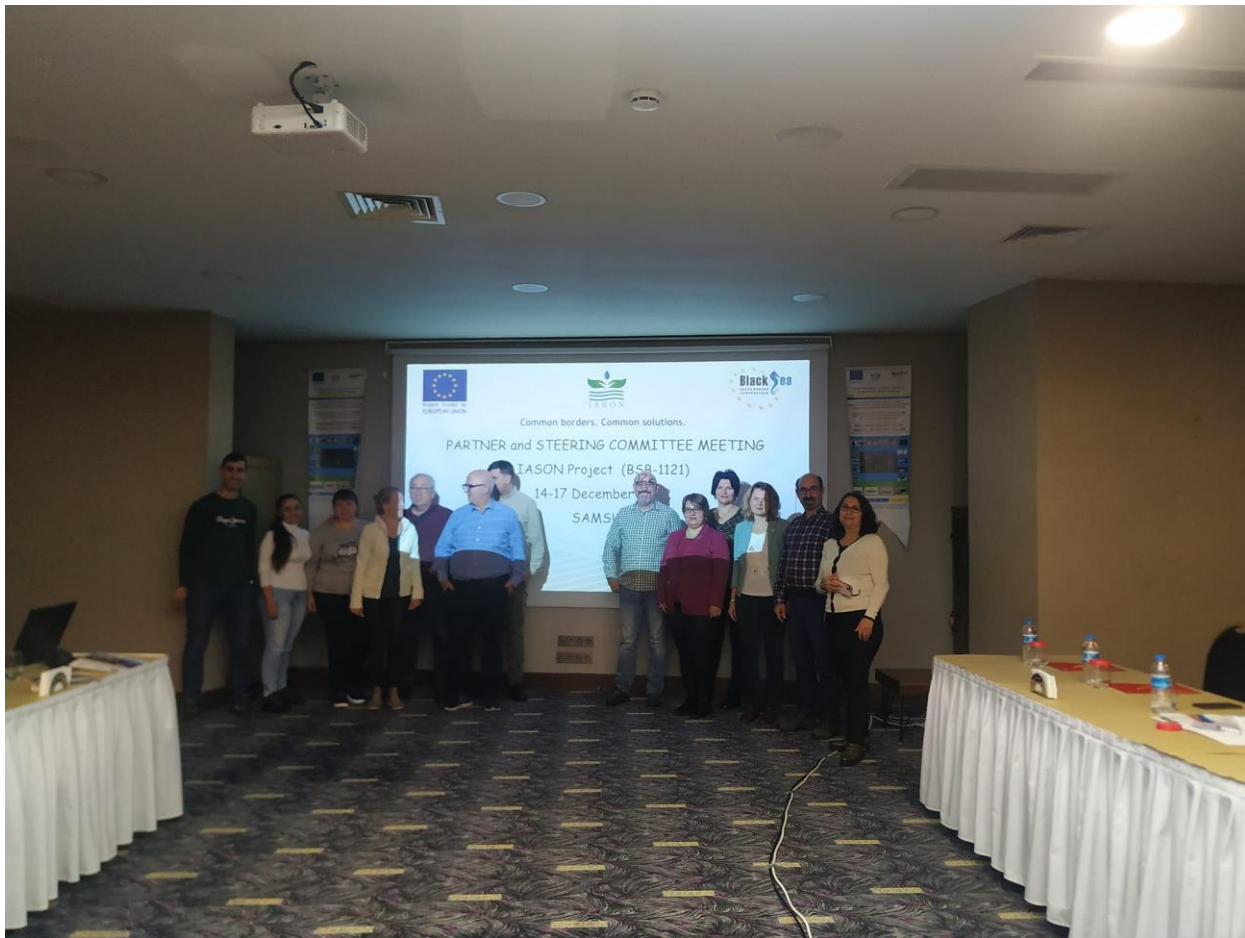
All these circumstances led to the search for possible solutions in order to achieve the general objective of the project: "to establish and perform joint monitoring actions on IAS in Black Sea deltaic ecosystems and assess their response under current and predicted climatic conditions" and improve long-term cross-border cooperation.

Given that the development of the "Invasive Alien Species Observatory and Network Development for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts" and their functionality is based on the data collected and interpreted by the implementation teams of each partner, they considering different monitoring activities, communication activities, training activities (Summer School), stakeholder consultation or implementation of "living-lab" type activities, that were delayed for objective reasons, requiring an additional period of time for the implementation / completion of the activities.

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