

**INTERREG V-A COOPERATION PROGRAMME**  
**GREECE – BULGARIA 2014 – 2020**  
Reinforcing Protected Areas Capacity through an Innovative  
Methodology for Sustainability  
**– BIO2CARE –**

## **Minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> Project Steering Committee Meeting**

16-17 April 2019,  
Venue: **SWU Rectorate, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Project Steering Committee Meeting of the Project "BIO2CARE" took place in the Rectorate Building of South-West University Neofit-Rilski, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria, on 16-17 of October 2019. In total, 17 participants representing all 8 Project Beneficiaries (PBs) participated in the meeting.

The meeting started on Tuesday 16 of April (1<sup>st</sup> day). Professor Georgi Apostolov – Vice Rector of South-West University Neofit-Rilski, welcomed the participants, provided information regarding the university and wished for a fruitful meeting.

Then, Assoc. Prof. Georgios Gaidajis, gave a speech regarding the completed actions during the six months period from the 2<sup>nd</sup> PSC meeting until now, as well as the expected results for the near future. Dr. Gaidajis mentioned, once again, that BIO2CARE combines different scientific fields and produces a wide range of deliverables that can be utilized by various agents increasing the added value of the project. He then proceeded with the presentation of Work Package 1, its timeline and respective deliverables. Issues discussed included (a) the time and place of the 4<sup>th</sup> PSC meeting, (b) the 4<sup>th</sup> progress report, (c) the initiation of the procedures for the evaluation of the project, and (d) a potential 9 month extension of the project, based on various delays mostly on the tendering procedures for bureaucratic reasons. It was mentioned that the extension will ensure a far better quality on some deliverables, as well as provide more time to present valuable results regarding the infrastructure and monitoring activities.

Following Dr. Gaidajis' presentation, Mrs. Simana Markovska, representative of PB9, Pirin Tourism Forum (Responsible partner for Work Package 2), proceeded with the presentation of Work Package 2, its timeline and respective deliverables. Issues discussed included, (a) the compilation of the second newsletter of the project, (b) the presentation of the current promo material, and the finalization of further relevant promo material, (c) the BIO2CARE website and social media

campaign and (d) the participation in external events. During the presentation of WP2, Mr. Alexandros Mourouzis, representative of PB5, presented the website of BIO2CARE, while discussing the use and the relevant content.

After a quick break, Dr. Komninos Angelakoglou and Mr. Ilias Kakanis, senior researchers/representatives from LB presented the deliverables of Work Package 3, while mentioning the level of technicality that was needed to complete this Work Package. Since every deliverable of WP3 is finalized, Dr. Angelakoglou presented the results of Del. 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3, and Mr. Kakanis presented the results of Deliverable 3.4.

Following the presentation of WP3, Mr. Miroslav Ivanov, representative of PB8 (South-west University Neofit Rilski – Responsible Partner of WP4), proceeded with the presentation of WP4, presenting its timeline and respective deliverables and leading a discussion. Issues discussed included (a) the progress of Deliverable 4.2, (b) the state of Deliverable 4.4, (c) the progress of Deliverable 4.5, and (d) he included a presentation of the monitoring system installed for study area 2.

Following the presentation of WP4, Assoc. Prof. George Gaidajis concluded the first day of the meeting by summarizing key points discussed for every Work Package.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the meeting (17 April 2019), started with the presentation of WP5 from the representative of PB7 (Rila National Park, Responsible Partner of WP5), presenting its timeline and respective deliverables and leading a discussion. Issues discussed included (a) the technical specifications of the training sessions and workshops from Deliverables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3, (b) the ESAMEA visits for the completion of Deliverable 5.4, and (c) the state of Deliverable 5.5.

After the presentation of WP5, Prof. George Gaidajis concluded the meeting and the partners discussed and summarized every pending issue.

After the meeting, followed a visit/roadtrip to the new visitor centre in Blagoevgrad, which was built under the BIO2CARE project, as well as a trip to Rila National Park.

Overall, the 2<sup>nd</sup> PSC meeting was very successful and all partners gained a clearer picture of their obligations and the objectives of the BIO2CARE project, in order to move forward with a fruitful co-operation.

Based on the discussions during the meeting the Project Steering Committee decided that:

- The next Project Steering Committee meeting will be held in Xanthi, Greece, between 14/10/19 – 16/10/19.
- The partners agreed on a possible 9 month extension of the project for the successful completion of every work package.
- All the necessary actions for the successful submission of the 4<sup>th</sup> progress report, will be completed until the end of June.
- Every partner will initiate the procedures for the evaluation of the project in due time, by filling the relevant self-evaluation matrix provided by the LB.
- The second project newsletter will be completed within May 2019.
- Every partner is responsible for providing content for the successful operation of the BIO2CARE website and social media campaign.
- PB7 will update every PB within a month, regarding the state of the two smart applications
- The ESAMEA visit in the Rila National Park for the construction of the Pathway will happen during May of 2020.
- PB3 stated that the infrastructure works for the pathway for Deliverable 4.2, will be concluded by October 2019.

On behalf of the LB  
Georgios Gaidajis



Project Manager of BIO2CARE Project  
Director of Laboratory of Environmental Management & Industrial Ecology  
Department of Production Engineering and Management  
School of Engineering  
Democritus University of Thrace

## **ANNEX 1 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Project Steering Committee Agenda**

### **INTERREG V-A COOPERATION PROGRAMME GREECE – BULGARIA 2014 – 2020**

Reinforcing Protected Areas Capacity through an Innovative  
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**Draft Agenda – 3<sup>rd</sup> Project Steering Committee Meeting**  
**16-17 April 2019,**  
**Venue: Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria**

Time	Task	Responsible
<b>Monday 15/4</b>		
	Arrival to Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria	
<b>Tuesday 16/4</b>		
09:30 – 10:00	Registration	
<p><b>10:00 – 16:30, Project Activity Planning - Part A</b></p> <p>Each WP Leader will present a more detailed description of the Work Packages, timeline and respective deliverables and lead a discussion. Issues to be discussed include the work done so far, current and future responsibilities by all partners, analytical description of deliverables and deadlines etc. Every PB participating in the WP must be ready to present the progress achieved so far (e.g. experts assigned, tasks accomplished, problems etc.).</p>		
10:00 – 10:30	Work Package 1: Project Management & Coordination - Progress - Future goals and activities - Discussion and problem solving	Georgios GAIDAJIS (LB)
10:30 – 12:00	Work Package 2: Communication & Dissemination - Progress - Future goals and activities - Discussion and problem solving	Simana MARKOVSKA (PB9)
12:00 – 13:00	Coffee break	
13:00 – 14:30	Work Package 3: Integrated Management – Decision Support System - Progress - Future goals and activities - Discussion and problem solving	Komninos ANGELAKOGLOU & Ilias KAKANIS (LB)
14:30 – 16:00	Work Package 4: Mitigating illegal activities and promoting protected areas Sustainable Development: Circular Economy and Green Entrepreneurship	Miroslav IVANOV (PB8)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Progress</li> <li>- Future goals and activities</li> <li>- Discussion and problem solving</li> </ul>	
16:00 – 16:30	Summary – Closing remarks of 1 <sup>st</sup> day	George GAIDAJIS (LB)
<b>18:45, Welcome Dinner</b>		
<b>Wednesday 17/4</b>		
09:00 – 10:00	Organized transport from Blagoevgrad to Panichishte Visitor Center of Rila National Park	Rila NPD
10:00 – 10:40	Walk around the Visitor Center; presentations of Rila NP activities	Rila NPD
10:40 – 11:00	Coffee break	
11:00 – 12:00	Visit the Two Firs Eco-Trail in the vicinity of the Visitor Center	Rila NPD
<b>12:00 – 13:30, Project Activity Planning – Part B</b>		
12:00 – 13:30	Work Package 5: Integrated Approach – Policy Recommendation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Progress</li> <li>- Future goals and activities</li> <li>- Discussion and problem solving</li> </ul>	Representative of PB7
13:30 – 14:00 (Optional)	Visit to the town of Sapareva Banya with the hottest thermal spring in Continental Europe (103°C)	Rila NPD
14:00 – 15:00	Organized transport to Blagoevgrad	Rila NPD
<b>15:00 Departure</b>		



## ANNEX 2 – Photographic Documentation



