



A quarterly newsletter of the BSB Eco Monitoring project

Common borders. Common solutions.

We start our joint project



**BSB ECO MONITORING: eMS Ref No: BSB - 884**

## Joint Monitoring for Environmental Protection in BSB countries

Four partners from 4 different countries joint their resources and knowledge for implementation of the BSB Eco Monitoring project, funding by the European Union through ENI CBC Black Sea Basin Cross Border Cooperation programme 2014 - 2020.



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### About BSB Eco Monitoring, eMS BSB - 884

#### PARTNERS

- **Association for Culture, Technology, Education and Development - Plovdiv University - Strandzha (AKTORPUS);**
- **Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development;**
- **Regional Environmental Center for Caucasus Armenia Branch Office;**
- **Society for Nature Conservation - SABUKO**

The main objectives of the project are aimed at improving the long-term cross-border cooperation and building information and research capacity to deal with changes in the ecosystems and monitor the biodiversity. For their implementation, a cross-border center will be established dedicated to joint environmental monitoring and research of the ecological status of the protected ecosystems located in the four partner countries and the Black Sea aquatory.



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### Our Activities

The center will form the basis for cooperation between scientists, researchers, local institutions, environmental communities and experts from the four countries. They will develop common approaches, methodologies and models for the responsible use and conservation of natural resources. The project funds will be used to equip the center with all necessary modern facilities, infrastructure and information systems that provide data on the ecological status of natural ecosystems in the targeted protected areas. The ambitious tasks set for implementation within the project include the development of a methodology for joint monitoring of natural habitats and invasive species in the covered areas. The implementation of an online environmental monitoring system, which will integrate the measurement data and will serve as a platform for disseminating the collected information, is envisaged as well.

The project will also introduce specific technology for environmental monitoring by drones and remote measurement and monitoring of river water and air quality, as well as a web-based cloud service for automatic data collection and video content from wireless sensor networks. An intelligent platform for collecting, processing and analyzing compatible data on the state of the environment in the identified areas will also be created.



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### Targeted Protected Areas

The target areas of the project cover:

- **Nature Park Strandja, Bulgaria;**
- **“Bioreserve” the Danube Delta, Romania;**
- **Dilijan National Park, Armenia and**
- **Kokheti National Park in Georgia**

### Research

Over the past 8 months, the BSB Eco Monitoring team’s diligent work has delivered fruitful results on a range of project initiatives. The period marked the start of the scientific work. Our researchers collected a wide range of data on a number of topics, from invasive species and state of the natural habitats to selection of priority protected areas for monitoring, and adaptation of methodologies for anthropogenic pressure monitoring in the protected territories included in the project.

The team has also elaborating the methodology for monitoring the condition of natural habitats and the availability of invasive species for future monitoring. The methodology will guarantee the collection of compatible data and topical information about the location and size of damaged areas, the types of pressure and the evaluation of potential sources and forms of threat.



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### Educational courses

Three educational courses were developed and uploaded in the e-learning system DIPSEIL:

Course 1: Training partner's personnel to upload and process video content to a cloud WEB-based service

Course 2: Training to train drone pilots to manage them

Course 3: Introduction to the main principles of UAV flight;

Distance trainings were organized for the scientists and the staff of the partners within the environment for distance learning DIPSEIL. The participants who have completed the relevant training course developed a solution file and uploaded it to the DIPSEIL system.

Actopus has appointed a specialist to operate drones. At his initiative, an international online meeting was organized at which it was agreed to develop a common methodology for all partners on research with drones. A practical training in the field in Ahtopol is planned in April, May 2021.

Experts on tender procedures has been working on elaboration of tender documents and organization of procurement process for supply of drone and the equipment for water and air quality monitoring. The tenders and are in the final stage of signing contracts with suppliers.



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### Meetings and events

Up to the present moment the BSB Eco Monitoring partners have held a number of workshops & meetings all geared at raising awareness about project deliverables and their relation to designing effective inovative solutions. Unfortunately we've all been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown in one way or the other. A number of ongoing projects, including ours, have suffered and were forced to postpone their scheduled on the spot events. The good news is, that we succeeded to adapt really fast. The project management had to deal with a new reality. While we have hit pause on most of our face-to-face activities, we quickly adapted to the new reality in all aspects.

The biggest challenge we've faced during the lockdown was to learn to communicate, teach, meet and collaborate on virtual platforms. And we've done it and continue to work together. The BSB Eco Monitoring kick-off meeting went virtual for the first time. It was held in August 2020 and gathered the management team with the participation of representatives of all project partners. The work of the Technical committee, the educational courses that were planned at this stage as well as the scheduled communication activities also all were moved online successfully.



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### The Cross-Border Centre

The Bulgarian partner has already started to organize the investment works in Ahtopol. The set of documents required to start the construction and repair activities of the building in which the Cross-border Centre will be situated were prepared. Tender procedure for selection of a company for renovation of the Cross-border Centre building is also underway. The construction work for the new Center is planned to start within the coming months.

**We love talking about our work! Engage with us  
via Facebook, or our website.**

#### CONNECT WITH US:

**website:** <https://bsbecomonitoring.net/>

**facebook:** <https://m.facebook.com/EU-funded-BSB-884-Eco-Monitoring-Project-100677948740069/>



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1<sup>st</sup> newsletter  
2021

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Project lead partner



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