

ECOLOGICAL OBSERVING SYSTEM IN THE ADRIATIC SEA: OCEANOGRAPHIC OBSERVATIONS FOR BIODIVERSITY

PRIORITY AXIS 3: ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 3.2: CONTRIBUTE TO PROTECT AND RESTORE BIODIVERSITY

D2.4.2 WORKSHOP FOR STAKEHOLDERS 1 REPORT

WP2 – COMMUNICATION AND CAPITALIZATION ACTIVITIES

A2.4 – MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

Blue World Institute

Final

Public

30th September 2020

Activity 2.4

Deliverable D2.4.2 Workshop for stakeholders 1

Report

On 25th September 2020 BWI, in collaboration with the Lead Partner and WP3, WP4 and WP5 leaders, has hosted an online workshop entitled “Needs and challenges to build the Adriatic ecological observing system ECOAdS”. The workshop was held between 10:00 and 13:00 on Zoom platform. There were 34 participants, representing various project’s target groups: 6 governance bodies, 7 protected area management bodies, 4 universities and institutes, and 6 NGOs (Table 1).

Table 1. List of target groups

Institution	Target group
Regione del Veneto	Governance
Regione Emilia-Romagna	Governance
ARPA Marche	Governance
ARPA Veneto	Governance
Comune di Rimini	Governance
Comune di Grado	Governance
Parco Delta Po'	MPA
Ente Parco Regionale del Conero	MPA
PIDNIC	MPA
National Park Kornati	MPA
Javna ustanova Priroda Šibensko-Kninske županije	MPA
National Park Brijuni	MPA
Javna ustanova Kamenjak	MPA
Dolphin Biology and Conservation	NGO
CESTHA	NGO
LIPU	NGO
Associazione "Tegnue di Chioggia"	NGO

Udruga Biom	NGO
Udruga za prirodu, okoliš i održivi razvoj Sunce	NGO
ISPRA-Chioggia	Institute
Università di Trieste	University
Università di Padova	University
University Dubrovnik	University

The workshop started with welcome speech, followed by short introduction of all participants. This was followed by presentation of the ECOSSE project, with emphasis on ECOAdS, and the aims of the workshop. The subsequent interactive part of the workshop was held in three groups moderated by work package leaders. During this part, questionnaires were filled by participants through Mentimeter platform. Finally, the workshop concluded with presentation of results and a discussion.

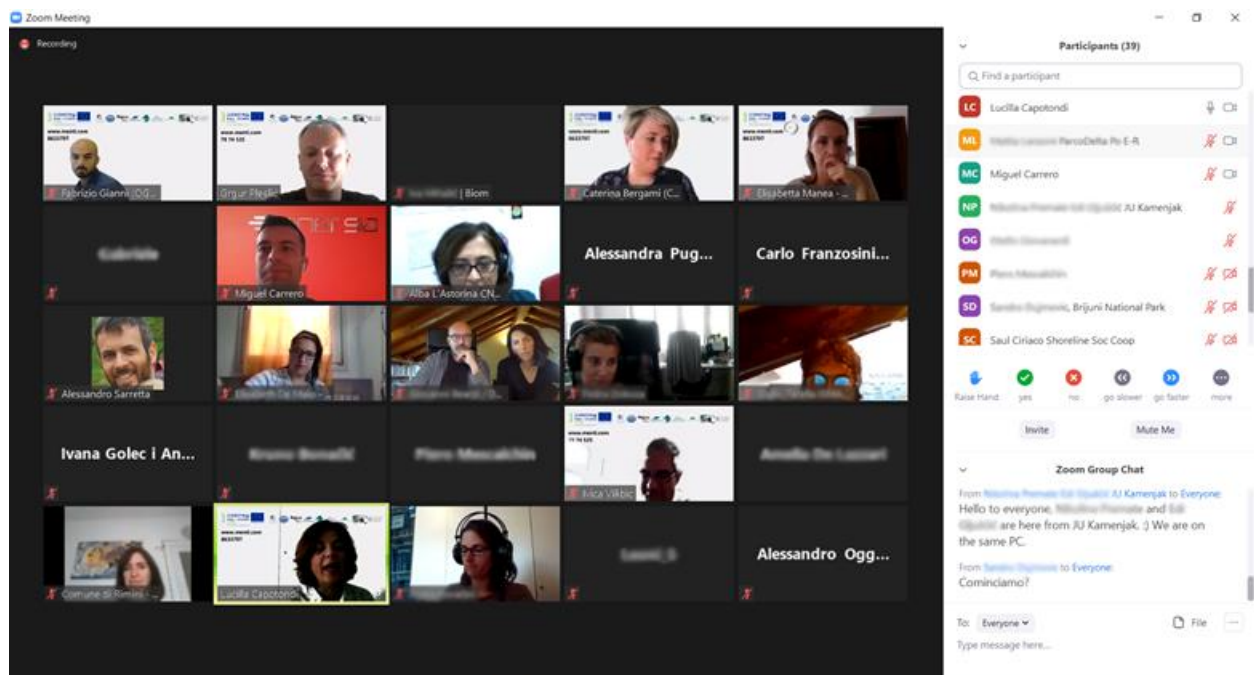


Figure 1. Screenshot of the online workshop for stakeholders. Participants' names are blurred due to GDPR requirements.

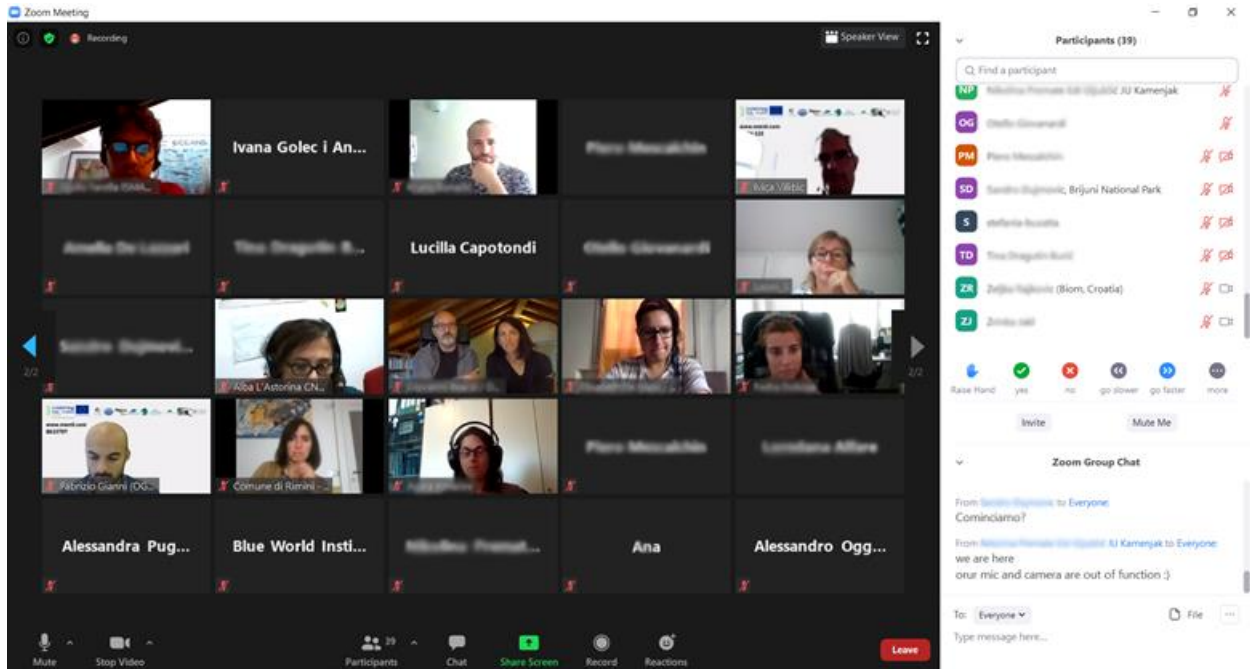


Figure 2. Screenshot of the online workshop for stakeholders. Participants' names are blurred due to GDPR requirements.

Workshop evaluation

Following the workshop, the participants were asked to fill out an evaluation form. Following are the results of the evaluation.

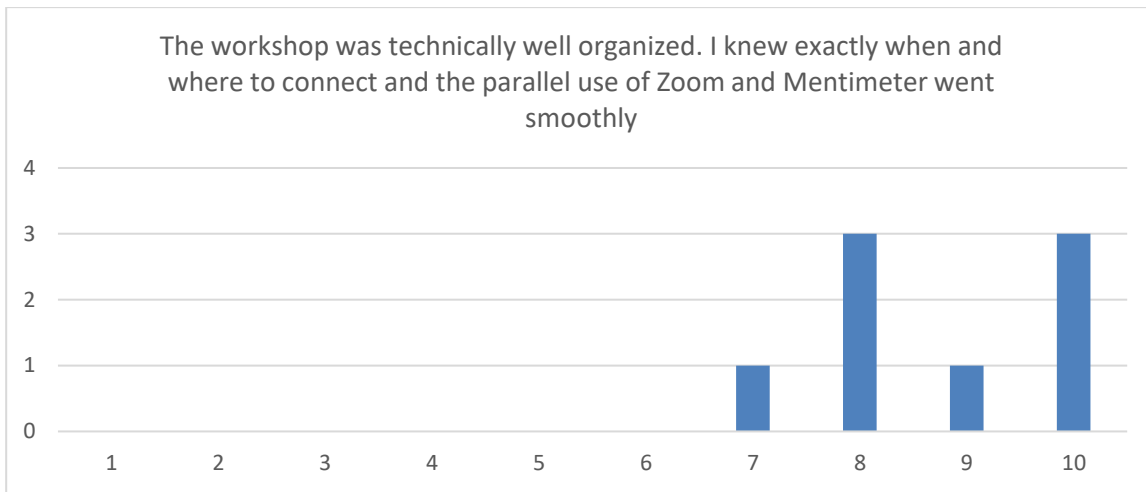


Figure 3. Evaluation of technical aspect of workshop organization. The y-axis represents number of answers. The x-axis represents how much the participants agree with the title statement.

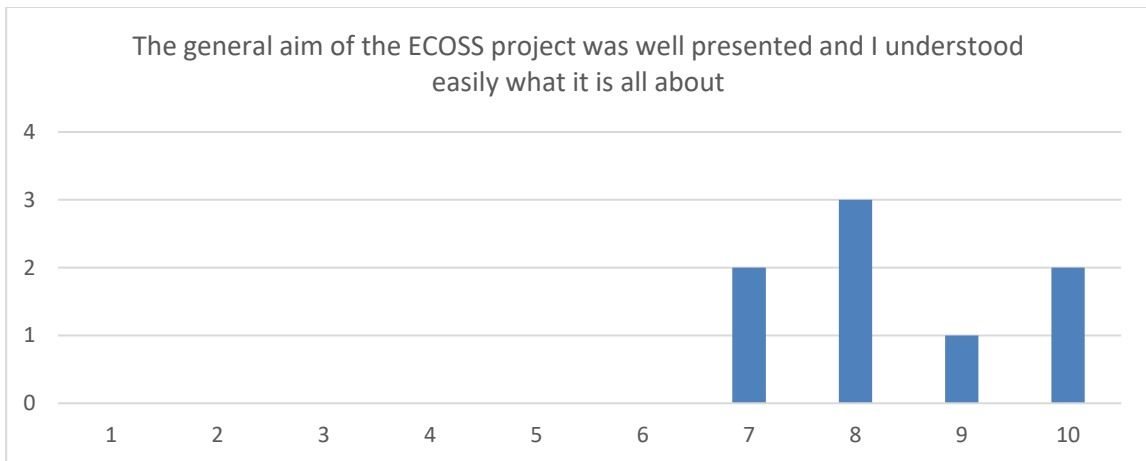


Figure 4. Evaluation of presentation of ECOS project. The y-axis represents number of answers. The x-axis represents how much the participants agree with the title statement.

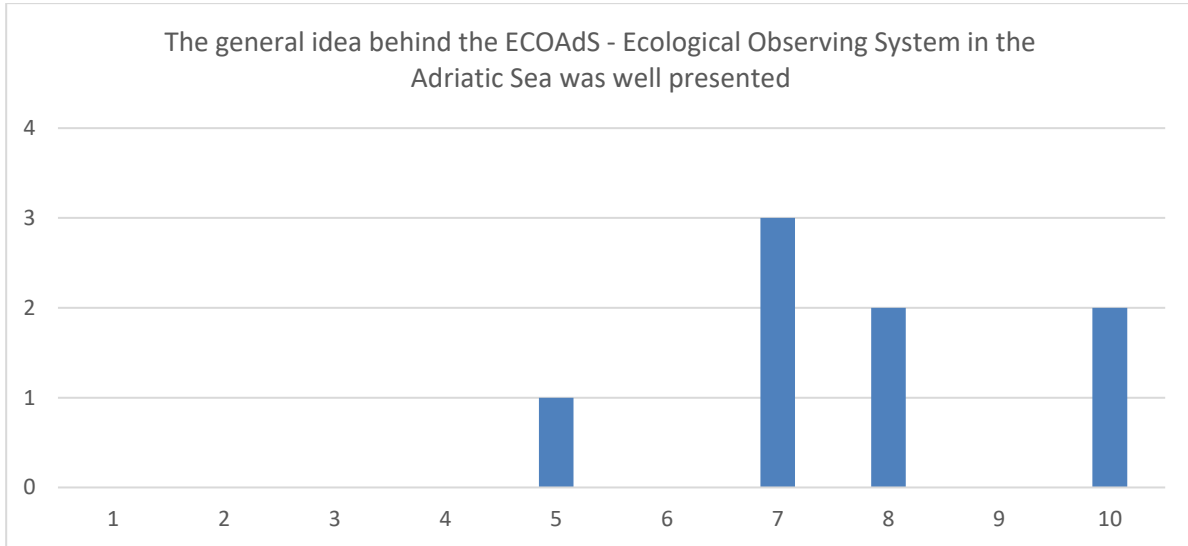


Figure 5. Evaluation of presentation of ECOAdS. The y-axis represents number of answers. The x-axis represents how much the participants agree with the title statement.

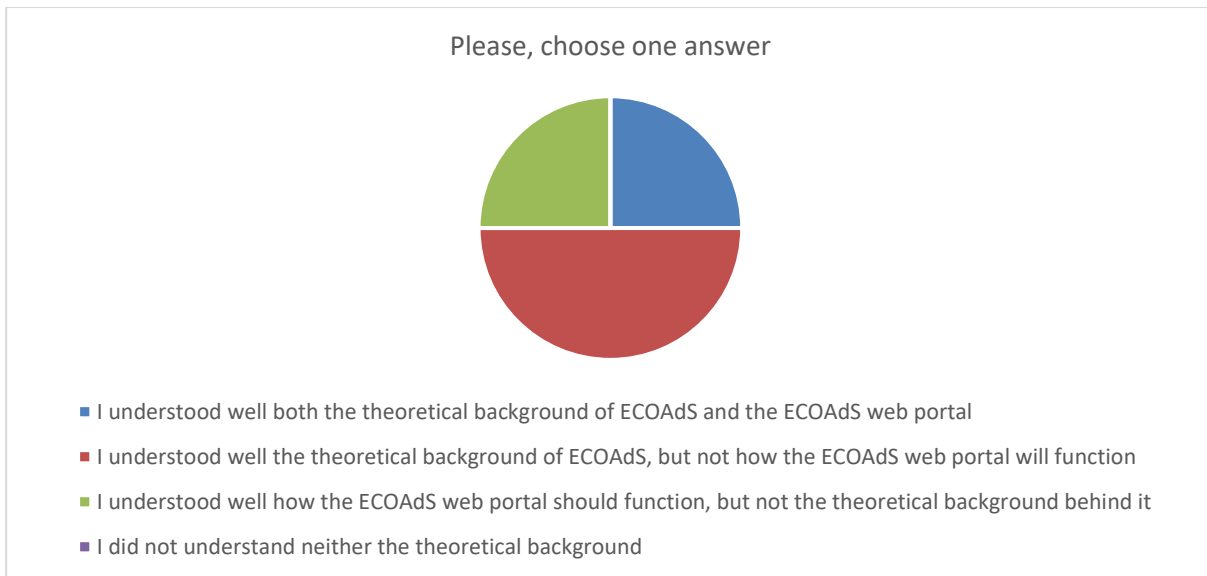


Figure 6. Evaluation of how well the participants have understood the ECOAdS

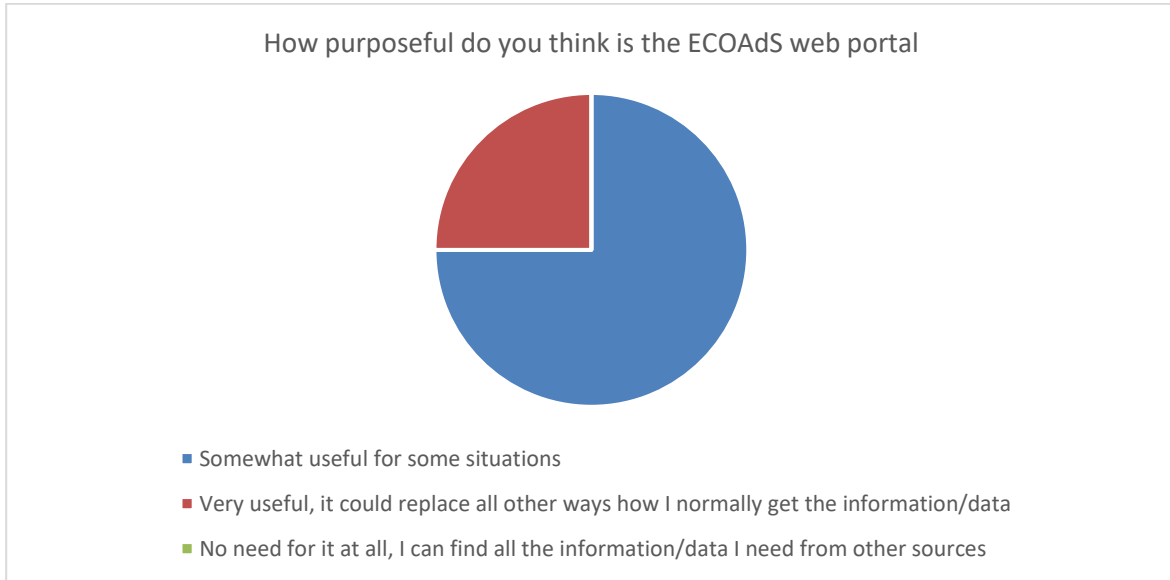


Figure 7. Evaluation of how purposeful the ECOAdS web portal is for the participants

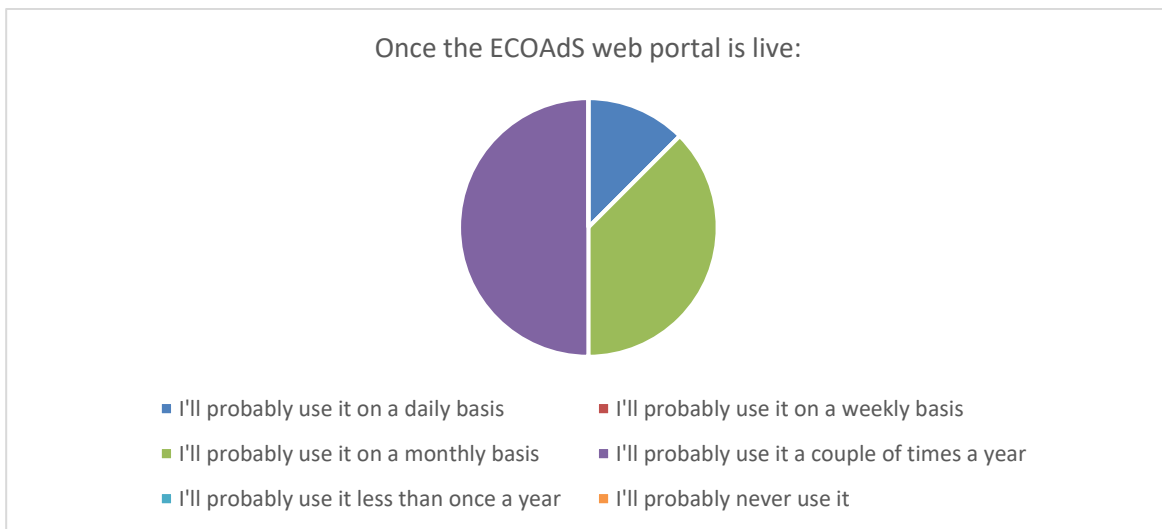


Figure 8. Evaluation of how frequently the participants might use the ECOAdS web portal

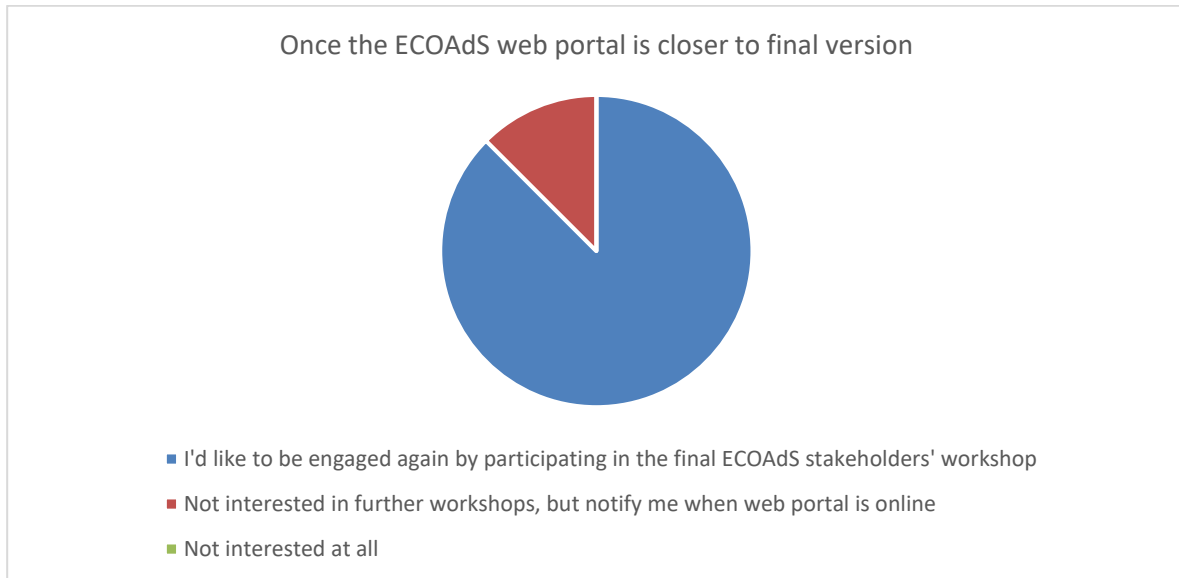


Figure 9. Evaluation of willingness of participants to be further engaged in the development of ECOAdS

Annex 1

Minutes of interactive part of the workshop with Italian stakeholders. Note that participants' names are hidden in the public version of this report.

Moderators:

Fabrizio Gianni – OGS (PP1)

Carlo Franzosini – SHORELINE (PP8)

Participants:

██████████ (Veneto Region)
██████████ (CNR ISMAR)
██████████ (ISPRA Chioggia)
██████████ (CNR ISMAR)
██████████ (“Tegnue di Chioggia” Association)
██████████ (Emilia Romagna Region)
██████████ (CNR ISMAR)
██████████ (Dolphin Biology and Conservation)
██████████ (Dolphin Biology and Conservation)
██████████ (University of Trieste)
██████████ (Comune di Rimini)
██████████ (Parco Delta del Po)

The open discussion was guided by the questions formulated during the Mentimeter session to deepen the given answers (see Anenexes). The following general remarks were made:

- One of the main issues was related to the inadequacy of the management plans and the monitoring activities at the N2K sites, in particular it was evidenced:
 - A lack of communication between decision-makers and stakeholders
 - The need of a most effective involvement of the stakeholders
 - The need of adopting an ecosystem-based management approach and to refer to the marine spatial planning
 - The lack of proper understanding of how the management process and implementation works

- The need of enforcement of the management and protection measures, and the monitoring of their effectiveness. To this respect, a participant highlighted, as an example, the presence of a large amount of ghost nets in Chioggia and in the near N2K sites, due to bad waste management strategies and the lack of communication between decision-makers and fishermen.
 - A N2K site has been recently designated in the offshore area in front of Emilia Romagna and Veneto regions and there is the need now to find a management body and prepare a management plan.
 - The need to define specific management methods for offshore sites compared to coastal "on-shore" sites has been mentioned.
 - Species and habitats are not well represented in the N2K currently, and protected areas are isolated and mainly established on economic interests rather than on ecological and conservation reasons.
 - Need of a large scale monitoring.
 - Need to harmonize and standardized monitoring activities.
 - The ecosystem-based approach in the governance of N2K sites is the best alternative to compensate for inadequate checklists.
 - The management of N2K sites is - in many cases - too complacent towards stakeholders. Too little action is really focused on species/habitat protection.
 - The Local Knowledge should be operationally included in practical management activities.
 - The Observatory should become a planning support tool, not just a library or repository of environmental data. Its "mission": to transfer information into the decision-making process. It is necessary to identify an operational managing body.
 - The observatory should involve wide typologies of stakeholders to include also their expectations on ECOAdS.
- Participants commented also on the effectiveness of collaboration between different levels of governance focussing on data / information / monitoring / research, in particular:
 - The sharing and the transparent analysis of the collected data should be enhanced, in order to close the adaptive management cycle.

- It is definitely required an integration of all kinds of data, including human activities, impacts, etc., at the regional scale.
 - There is a lot of work to be done: for example, to share the collected data, join the different survey systems, open the access to databases to the public.
 - The interaction between the uses of ecological systems and threats has been mentioned. Regarding pollution, it has been discussed that part of the waste comes from the Po River and it is difficult to control it.
 - The need of considering commercial fishery within the list of threats.
- Finally some comments were specifically dedicated to the ECOAdS data portal and its functionalities:
 - The most requested access is to search for information. It is essential to create opportunities for broad discussion on what the data collected can express, for instance through the organization of thematic conferences.
 - A synthesis of all features and issues related to the protected areas would be particularly useful for the users.
 - It was suggested to add visual interactive simulations.
 - The portal should also favour and offer citizen-science opportunities.
 - Data should be understandable and usable from any ECOAdS user.
 - Need of integration of all kinds of data on the protected areas and most of all on their marine region.
 - ECOAdS portal can be useful to do research specifically focused on the protected areas and to understand where data are absent.

The detailed results of Mentimeter session are available as annexes to this report. For the Q5, which was the open-ended question, the English translation of the answers is given here:

Q5 – How can local ecological knowledge (LEK) be integrated into N2K governance?

- Adaptive co-planning practices.
- Enhancement of best practices of local sustainable human activities.

- Engagement of local associations and inclusion of local knowledge within the management plans.
- Local ecological policies involving institutions but also local associations.
- Trough participatory approaches and specific modalities depending on the typology of stakeholders. Important aspect the co-management.
- Coordinated management of marine and coastal human uses and N2K sites. Not only impacts, but also synergies between uses through the application of a co-design approach.
- The inclusion of the LEK should give the opportunity to all stakeholders to participate to the management and to the establishment of the N2K sites as well, and to share competences and useful data.
- Best practices should be transmitted also through educational activities.
- Identification of sustainable activities and re-building of historical datasets.

Annex 2

Minutes of interactive part of the workshop with Croatian stakeholders. Note that participants' names are hidden in the public version of this report.

Moderators:

Grgur Pleslić – BWI (PP5)

Ivica Vilibić – IZOR (PP3)

Participants:

██████████ – BIOM

██████████ – National Park Kornati

██████████ – Sunce

██████████ – National Park Brijuni

██████████ – JU Kamenjak

██████████ – BIOM

██████████ – Sunce

██████████ – JU Priroda Šibensko-kninske

██████████ – JU Kamenjak

██████████ – University of Dubrovnik

During the questionnaire phase (Mentimeter) the following suggestions were made for each question:

Q2 – Better law enforcement should be added as one answer/solution

Q4 – Professional fisheries should be added as a relevant anthropogenic factor

Q8 – Insufficient law enforcement (law are good, but not applied)

Q9 – Add complete openness of data

During the open discussion, the following general remarks were made:

- Exploring the option that state or EU governance enforces more strictly open sharing of data obtained through programs funded with public money

- Socio-economic data are generally easier to obtain and normalize, they can be integrated into ECOAdS, particularly to better describe the ecosystem services
- All areas should be eventually included, not only limited to N2K
- LEK is generally insufficiently included in marine conservation chain. However, problem of normalization of such data should also be considered
- Data on fisheries should also be included
- There is a poor coordination between and within different EU programs. For example, many similar problems are dealt with through too many different Interreg programs
- Good starting point to include more data into ECOAdS might be state governed databases. Cooperation with them is bureaucratically burdened, but that data is fairly systematic
- Participants generally welcomed the idea of having ECOAdS and recognized its potential. However, they noted two main issues crucial for the success of ECOAdS: 1) data sharing policy should be clear and open as possible, and 2) the web portal must be easy to use and maintained also after the project ends

The detailed results of Mentimeter session are available as annexes to this report. For the Q5 which was the open-ended question, the English translation of answers is given here:

Q5 – How can local ecological knowledge (LEK) be integrated into N2K governance?

LEK shows the real situation and provides a basis for future research

LEK should be included into management structures of N2K by stronger involvement of local communities in governing bodies

Development of management plans should include involvement of local communities and their knowledge must be built into the management plan documents

When setting up research programs, time and money should be planned from the start to allow involvement of local communities through direct interaction so that knowledge obtained from them can be built into the design and realization of research program

In Croatia, the county (regional) public institutions govern the N2K areas so these should organize annual meetings with local communities to help improve management plans.

Local communities could propose management actions and be involved into monitoring of status and pressures

Many LEK programs were conducted in NP Brijuni and wider area, showing that the local knowledge is vast, but people have difficulties articulating it. We are too little out there in the field and this limits our knowledge of LEK. Problem is that people are reluctant to be honest towards the interviewer, making the reliability of this knowledge questionable, so everything must be taken with caution and verified somehow.

Organize round tables with locals to exchange knowledge and experiences to collect the knowledge and information which should then be implemented into management. This process can also help develop trust.

Cooperation with local communities and education

LEK can serve only as an orientation for developing the management plans, but has to be confirmed by valid scientific methods. To collect the LEK, one has to go out there and have a live interaction with people, and not rely only on workshops and online questionnaires.

“Consult the map, but ask the local” – LEK should overlap with scientifically obtained knowledge to help put things into context. But when approaching the local communities, their “language” must be used (not scientific) to better present the results

Locals have knowledge about the N2K sites before they were declared protected, so their knowledge can help understand temporal changes and processes.

Other sectors should also be involved, for example fisheries which also have vast knowledge and can contribute to more effective management.