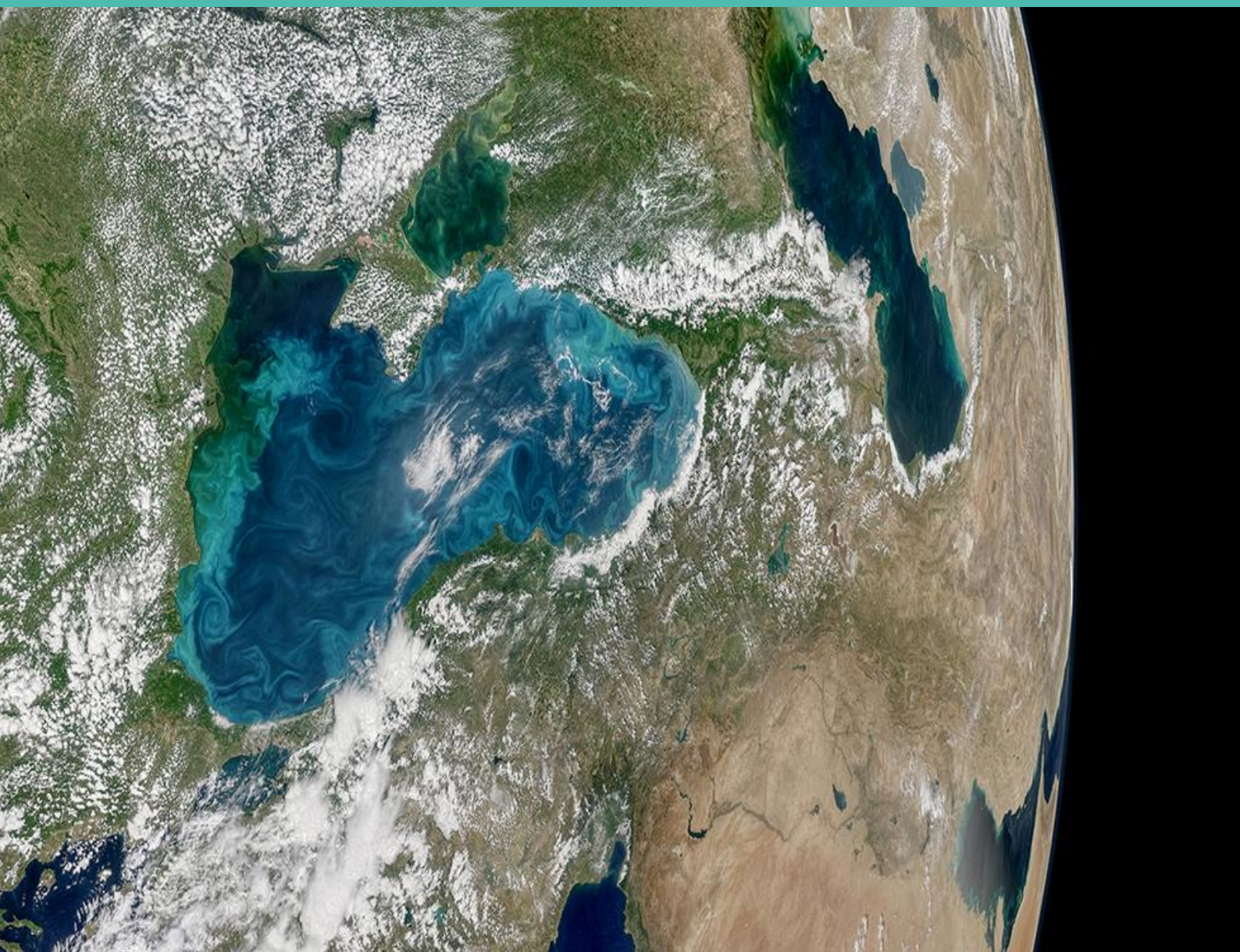
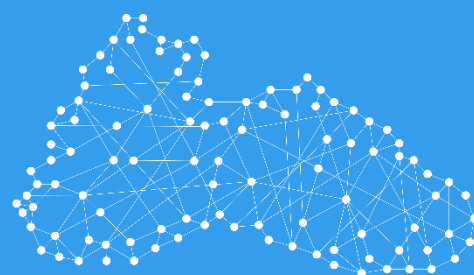


Coordination of Marine and Maritime Research and Innovation in the Black Sea Black Sea CONNECT

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D1.1 Project Management Guide (Handbook)



CONNECT  BLACK SEA

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Glossary/List of Acronyms

Definition	Acronym
Black Sea CONNECT Coordination and Support Action	CSA, Action
Consortium Agreement	CA
Coordination Team	CT
European Commission	EC
European Union	EU
General Assembly	GA
H2020	Horizon 2020
High Level Board	HLB
Project Coordinator	PC
Project Management Guide (Handbook)	PMG
Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	SRIA
Steering Committee	SC
The Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea	The Initiative
Work packages	WPs
Dissemination, Communication, and Exploitation Plan	DCEP
Directorate-General Research and Innovation	DG-RTD

Consortium Partners	Acronym
Helmholtz-zentrum Geesthacht Zentrum Für Material- und Küstenforschung gmbh	HZG
Institut Drancais de Recherche Pour l'exploitation de la mer	IFREMER
Institute of Oceanology - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences	IO-BAS
Institutul National de Cercetare-dezvoltare Marina Grigore	INCDM
Institutul National de Cercetare-dezvoltare Pentru Geologie	GEOECOMAR
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi state university	TSU
Middle East Technical University	METU
Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation	BSEC
P.p. Shirshov Institute of Oceanology of Russian Academy of Sciences	SIO-RAS
Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, North-west Institute of Management	NWIM RANEPА
Secretariatul National Roman al Retelei Universitatilor de la Marea Neagra	BSUN
Turkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Arastirma Kurumu	TUBITAK
Ukrainian Scientific Centre of Ecology of the Sea	UkrSCES
Universitatea de Stat Din Tiraspol	UST



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Executive Summary

Project Management Guide (Handbook) is designed to support the partners in the effective and efficient administration, procedural and financial management of the project. It details management bodies and their roles and responsibilities, documents, and procedures described in the Grant Agreement and Consortium Agreement, including quality assurance procedures for the production of reports and other required deliverables, version control of documents.

Project Management Guide sets out:

- Project management procedures and standards
- The key role and responsibilities
- How the project will be carried out, monitored, communicated, and accounted for.

1. Introduction

Black Sea CONNECT is a H2020 coordination and support action (CSA) which will scientifically, technically, and logistically support the broader Black Sea Blue Growth Initiative, supported by the European Commission (EC) and composed of country-appointed experts, stakeholders and various national and international organizations.

Black Sea CONNECT is the first project in its own field for the Black Sea. The overall objective of the Black Sea CONNECT is to coordinate the development of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA), based on the defined principles in the Burgas Vision Paper and support the development of the Blue Growth in the Black Sea.

The SRIA and its Implementation Plan will guide stakeholders from academia, funding agencies, industry, policy and society to address together the fundamental Black Sea challenges, to promote blue growth and economic prosperity of the Black Sea region, to build critical support systems and innovative research infrastructure and to improve education and capacity building.

To support the strategic coordination and overall management structure of the project, a Project Management Guide (Handbook) (PMG) is essential. It is a reference document for all members of the consortium and defines the internal processes for securing successful management and completion of the project.

2. Project Management Structure and Responsibilities

The Grant Agreement and the Consortium Agreement (CA) specify how the management of the project is to be organized.

The Black Sea CONNECT organization structure consists of two different levels; The Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea (the Initiative) and CSA to give appropriate and necessary tools to guarantee the compliance of the commitments with the European Commission detailed in the Grant Agreement;

- Initiative Level** denotes the policy process driving the Blue Growth's research and innovation segment in the Black Sea, and comprises the the broader group of scientists, stakeholders, and policy experts that that are selected by the European Commission, DG RTD, to be involved in the implementation of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) of the Black Sea. As of March 2020, countries have completed the selection of members for the steering group of of the Initiative. In the official letter addressing the countries in this issue, these members have been



called as 'National SRIA Coordinators'. The naming of this steering group is still under way, hence to be consistent with the Black Sea CONNECT Grant Agreement in this document the already used term 'high level board - HLB' will be used to exactly correspond to the steering group of the Initiative.

- ii) **CSA Level** composed of several governance bodies: Coordination Team (CT), the Steering Committee (SC), the General Assembly (GA), the Work Package (WP) Leaders.

2.1. Initiative Level

2.1.1 High-Level Board (HLB)

The High-Level Board (HLB) will be the main body that approves what is delivered by the Black Sea Blue Growth Initiative and provide specific and targeted advice to the EU and national policymakers for future actions on the Blue Growth in the Black Sea. The HLB will approve and promote the implementation of the Black Sea Blue Growth SRIA that will be developed by the action and its continuous revision in order to develop a cohesive SRIA for the Black Sea, at national, European and Black Sea level by nurturing a real partnership, social inclusion and resourcing access to research infrastructures and collaboration. The HLB will be composed of appointed 'National SRIA Coordinators' from each Black Sea country nominated by the countries legal bodies and facilitated by the EC.

2.1.2. Black Sea Blue Growth Initiative

Black Sea Blue Growth Initiative is composed of the broader expert working group consisted of experts from Black Sea coastal countries, (Republic of Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine, as well as the Republic of Moldova), in cooperation with marine experts from leading European marine institutes and organizations, with the support of the European Commission. The Initiative was launched and supported by the European Commission (EC) to develop a joint research and innovation agenda and guide national and EU-level policymakers named as 'The Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea.'

2.2. Coordination and Support Action Level

2.2.1. The Coordinator and the Coordination Team (CT)

Middle East Technical University (METU) is the coordinator of the Black Sea CONNECT project. METU is the authorized representative and chair of the Steering Committee and General Assembly (all partners) and responsible for the successful delivery of the coordination and support action, including meeting the specified scientific, social, operational, and technical aims of the project. The coordinator is the primary interface with the European Commission, facilitator of the Initiative, and the HLB and responsible for keeping the General Assembly fully informed.

The Coordinator is the legal entity acting as the intermediary between the Parties and the Funding Authority. The Coordinator shall, in addition to its responsibilities as a Party, perform tasks assigned to it as described in the Grant Agreement and the Consortium Agreement.

The project coordinator and project manager have the assistance of the Research Support Offices of the METU with negotiation and legal matters and monitoring the accounts and payment for project participants.

The CT of Black Sea CONNECT is composed of the Coordinator, Project Manager, Assistant Project Manager, and Communication Manager. The CT is responsible for the implementation of all activities, including monitoring of milestones and deliverables, and overall management.



Coordination Team

Project Coordinator (PC)	Associate Prof. Dr. Baris Salihoglu
Project Co-Coordinator and Manager	Associate Prof. Dr. Mustafa Yucel
Assistant Project Manager	M.A. Pinar Uygurer
Communication Manager	M.Sc. Ezgi Sahin

The Coordinator will oversee the strategic direction of the action, including:

- Arrangement of Steering Committee and General Assembly meetings and consequent reporting;
- Monitoring and control of the work plan, and other roles in the project (Work Package leaders, etc.), the lists of Deliverables and Milestones being key elements;
- Quality assurance and the submission of deliverables;
- Ratifying of risk contingencies for each project stage;
- Confidentiality, ethics, and data handling procedures (including Data Management Plan, D1.2);
- Monitoring content and submission of periodic reports, including monitoring the actual consumption vs. planned budget and person efforts.

2.2.2. Work Package (WP) Leaders

WP Leaders are responsible for the day-to-day technical management of their Work Package to ensure that:

- the actual work defined in the project plan completes in a timely fashion and within budget by task leads/contributors;
- achieves the WP objectives and deliverables;
- successfully interfaces with other WPs;
- appropriately included in project reporting.

The WP Leaders will be responsible for monitoring progress (task goals, milestones, adequacy of results, deviations) and handling small issues but, when an issue will have an impact outside of their work package, they will escalate issues to the coordinator and implement any mitigation actions as advised.

WP	WP Name	Institution	WP Leader
WP1	Management and coordination	METU-IMS	Associate Prof. Dr. Baris Salihoglu
WP2	SRIA Development and Implementation Plan	IO-BAS	Associate Prof. Dr. Snejana Moncheva
WP3	Synergistic Activities towards SRIA Implementation	GEOECOMAR	Dr. Adrian Stanica
WP4	Visibility and Dissemination	METU-IMS	Associate Prof. Dr. Mustafa Yucel

2.2.3. Steering Committee (SC) of the CSA

The SC will be composed of the project coordinator, project manager, the work package leaders, and of a representative for each partner Black Sea coastal country not being a WP leader. The Coordinator will liaise with the SC for input and ratification as necessary, including decisions regarding:



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- technical and business direction of the project;
- amendments to the work plan, tasks & budget shifts;
- specific contractual issues with the EC;
- policies for promotion and exploitation of results; and
- financial planning and other administrative arrangements, including defaulting partners, etc.

By default, it meets twice per year in person or remotely; in addition, other meetings will be scheduled if needed.

Steering Committee Member	Title	Institution
Associate Prof. Dr. Baris Salihoglu	Project Coordinator	METU-IMS
Associate Prof. Dr. Mustafa Yucel	Project Co-Coordinator and Manager and WP4 leader	METU-IMS
M.A. Pinar Uygurer	Assistant Project Manager	METU-IMS
M.Sc. Ezgi Sahin	Communication Manager	METU-IMS
Associate Prof. Dr. Snejana Moncheva	WP2 Leader	IO-BAS
Dr. Adrian Stanica	WP3 Leader	GEOECOMAR
Associate Prof. Dr. Kakhaber Bilashvili	Representative of Georgia	TSU
PhD Tudor Castravet	Representative of Moldova	UST
Dr. Tamara Shiganova	Representative of Russia	IO-RAS
Dr. Viktor Komorin	Representative of Ukraine	UkrSCES

2.4. The General Assembly (GA)

General Assembly is the body where all partners and people from their staff are represented, present, and discuss the developments of the activities, providing advice to the Steering Committee, favoring involvement, and co-responsibility. It meets once per year back-to-back with the Steering Committee meeting.

3. Management Procedures

3.1. Convening meetings

The chairperson of a Consortium Body (the coordinator) shall hold meetings of that Consortium Body.

	Ordinary meeting	Extraordinary meeting
General Assembly	In months 1, 12, 24, 36	At any time upon written request of the Steering Committee or 1/3 of the Members of the General Assembly
Steering Committee	In months 1, 6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36	At any time upon written request of any Member of the Steering Committee
Coordination Team	In months 1, 6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36	At any time upon written request of any Member of the Coordination Team



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3.1.1. Notice of a meeting

The chairperson of a Consortium Body shall give notice in writing of a meeting to each Member of that Consortium Body as soon as possible and no later than the minimum number of days preceding the meeting

	Ordinary meeting	Extraordinary meeting
General Assembly	45 calendar days	15 calendar days
Steering Committee	14 calendar days	7 calendar days
Coordination Team	7 calendar days	2 calendar days

3.1.2. Sending the agenda

The chairperson of a Consortium Body shall prepare and send each Member of that Consortium Body a written (original) agenda no later than the minimum number of days preceding the meeting, as indicated below.

General Assembly	21 calendar days, 10 calendar days for an extraordinary meeting
Steering Committee	7 calendar days
Coordination Team	3 calendar days

3.1.3. Adding agenda items

- Any agenda item requiring a decision by the Members of a Consortium Body must be identified as such on the agenda.
- Any Member of a Consortium Body may add an item to the original agenda by written notification to all of the other Members of that Consortium Body up to the minimum number of days preceding the meeting, as indicated below.

General Assembly	14 calendar days, 7 calendar days for an extraordinary meeting
Steering Committee	2 calendar days
Coordination Team	1 calendar days

- During a meeting, the Members of a Consortium Body present or represented can unanimously agree to add a new item to the original agenda.
- Meetings of each Consortium Body may also be held by teleconference or other telecommunication means.
- Decisions will only be binding once the relevant part of the Minutes has been accepted, according to Section 3.1.6.
- Any decision may also be taken without a meeting if the Coordinator circulates to all Members of the Consortium Body a written document, which is then agreed by the defined majority of all Members of the Consortium Body. Such document shall include the deadline for responses.
- Decisions taken without a meeting shall be considered as accepted if, within the period set out in Section 3.1.5, no Member has sent an objection in writing to the chairperson. The decisions will be



binding after the chairperson sends to all Members of the Consortium Body and to the Coordinator a written notification of this acceptance.

3.1.4. Voting rules and quorum

- Each Consortium Body shall not deliberate and decide validly unless two-thirds (2/3) of its Members are present or represented (quorum). If the quorum is not reached, the chairperson of the Consortium Body shall convene another ordinary meeting within 15 calendar days. If in this meeting the quorum is not reached once more, the chairperson shall convene an extraordinary meeting which shall be entitled to decide even if less than the quorum of Members is present or represented.
- Each Member of a Consortium Body present or represented in the meeting shall have one vote.
- Decisions shall be taken by a majority of two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast, with the exception of any amendment to the Grant Agreement, which shall require a unanimous vote.

3.1.5. Veto rights

- A Member who can show that its own work, time for performance, costs, liabilities, or other legitimate interests would be severely affected by a decision of a Consortium Body may exercise a veto with respect to the corresponding decision or relevant part of the decision. To consider interest as 'severely affected' mutual consent of all Members is needed.
- When the decision is foreseen on the original agenda, a Member may veto such a decision during the meeting only.
- When a decision has been taken on a new item added to the agenda before or during the meeting, a Member may veto such decision during the meeting and within 15 calendar days after the draft minutes of the meeting are sent. A Party that is not a Member of a particular Consortium Body may veto a decision within the same number of calendar days after the draft minutes of the meeting are sent.
- When a decision has been taken without a meeting, a Member may veto such decision within 15 calendar days after written notification by the chairperson of the outcome of the vote.
- In case of exercise of veto, the Members of the related Consortium Body shall make every effort to resolve the matter which occasioned the veto to the general satisfaction of all its Members.
- A Party may neither veto decisions relating to its identification to be in breach of its obligations nor to its identification as a Defaulting Party. The Defaulting Party may not veto decisions relating to its participation and termination in the consortium or the consequences of them.
- A Party requesting to leave the consortium may not veto decisions relating thereto.

3.1.6. Minutes of meetings

The chairperson of a Consortium Body shall produce written minutes of each meeting, which shall be the formal record of all decisions taken. He/she shall send the draft minutes to all Members within ten calendar days of the meeting.

The minutes shall be considered as accepted if, within 15 calendar days from sending, no Member has sent an objection in writing to the chairperson with respect to the accuracy of the draft of the minutes.



The chairperson shall send the accepted minutes to all the Members of the Consortium Body and to the Coordinator, who shall safeguard them. If requested, the Coordinator shall provide authenticated duplicates to Parties.

3.2. Communication Flow

The communication within this project's consortium is expected to be fluent to identify unexpected problems and handle them effectively. Communication between consortium members will be facilitated in meetings, telephone, and online (web) conferences so that they get to know each other intensively and appreciate cultural differences. All project data will be documented and made available on project's Intranet tool. The project coordinator will undertake the responsibility to timely communicate on a systematic and frequent basis (even if no problems are identified) with all WP Leaders during the lifecycle of their WP, to guarantee the smooth flow of the project activities. Detailed information on internal and external communication procedures that are deployed is explained in Section 4. Communication Structure and Procedures.

3.3. Conflict Resolution

All available possibilities to reduce conflict potentials will be pursued, such as cooperative leadership in the project and in the different working teams and consultation with different stakeholders. Conflicts will be managed in the following four consecutive stages:

- Problem-solving discussions and negotiations between relevant partner(s) and WP leader (while project coordinator must be informed); if no solution is achieved, then:
- Mediation between relevant partner(s), WP leader, and coordinator; if no solution is achieved, then:
- Discussion and decision within the General Assembly; if at least 2/3 majority is not achieved, and if the conflict significantly affects the viability or scope of the project as a whole, then:
- The project coordinator will inform the European Commission immediately in case additional steps become necessary.

3.4. Quality Assurance

Implementing quality control measures to ensure the proper achievement of project objectives and meet the obligations of the Consortium and Grant Agreement is under the responsibility of the Black Sea CONNECT coordinator. In this guide, procedures for management, communication, implementation, and monitoring stated are aligned with the Consortium Agreement and Grant Agreement. These measures all together serve as quality control procedures, and this document itself will be used as a Quality Plan. The guide and, therefore, the Quality Plan will be updated in the lifetime of the project, if necessary.

Specific principles for quality assurance for deliverables and monitoring processes are mentioned in the respective sections (Section 5 and 6).

3.5. Risk Management

Most of the partners have already been part of international projects and are aware that policy-oriented coordination and support action like this is subject to a number of risks. General risks resulting from the nature of this multidisciplinary, multicultural, and multitasking collaborative project – are being considered and handled within the aforementioned management structures and decision-



making processes. Such risks have been identified and presented in the table below, which also indicates possible solutions to overcome them. If necessary, contingency plans will be re-assessed and updated throughout the execution of the project.

The coordination team and each WP leader are responsible for executing risk identification and mitigation measures if necessary. If any new risks are identified in the project duration, the risk register and contingency plans will be updated accordingly

Description of risk (level of likelihood: Low/Medium/High)	WP	Proposed risk-mitigation measures
Deviations from the Work Plan (Low)	1	Implementation of an effective action management structure with clearly defined responsibilities and close monitoring carried out by the Project Management Team in close collaboration with all governing bodies
Delays in work performance while recruiting new staff for action management (Low)	1	All project-related processes are well documented in the Project Management Guideline to facilitate the fast introduction of new staff. Coordinating institute's researchers are already working on the SRIA development thus what is needed in terms of new staff is identified, and the recruitment process will be kept short
A partner leaves the Consortium or is unable to fulfill its task (low)	all	METU takes full responsibility to take over the task. The Black Sea CONNECT Consortium has the capacity to find alternatives; for example, BSEC can play a role in finding alternatives, and the coordinator will have enough flexibility in the budget to reallocate tasks and corresponding P/M and budget. If a country and its institutes are obliged to leave the consortium because of political reasons, the action will continue as decided by the EC. In case the partners from the Russian Federation cannot secure national funding the PM of the contributors will be supported by their own institutions (in-kind contribution) and Black Sea CONNECT will cover their travel costs to join the Black Sea Blue Growth Initiative meetings.
Slowness in activating the national stakeholders in each country to receive background data and input on defining the national SRIA priorities and actions (Medium)	2	Involving the coordination team, EC, BSEC, BSC to national workshops to speed up the process. Holding the Black Sea Blue Growth Initiatives meetings in each Black Sea country.
Lack of commitment to the "operational network" may slow down its functioning.	2, 3	This network will be established considering a delicate balance between all key actors. Partners will pay extra visits to their national key actors to clarify national level benefits of the Blue Growth strategies and introduce Black Sea CONNECT's scientific approach. This will help assure their commitments to the network. Extra attention will be paid to the selection of stakeholders based on their track record, experience, and achievements will be accomplished. In addition, a proactive



		approach to monitor the work progress and performance will be also carried out.
Delays in defining the prioritized joint actions (Medium)	3	If consensus among all the countries is not established, joint actions among 3 or more countries will be established.
Difficulties in streaming the funding agencies towards joint actions (Medium)	3	Available financial mechanisms will be identified in the scope of WP3 to support the development of the joint pilot actions (e.g., facility funds of BSEC, Erasmus programmes, available bilateral calls, JPI funds)
Slowness in getting input from the industry due to underdeveloped blue economy industry (e.g., blue biotechnology, energy) in the Black Sea (High)	2, 3	IFREMER, HZG, and Clusters will link the action to players in the other European Seas to receive feedback on the missing Industry sectors in the Black Sea.
Incorrect selection of target audiences to disseminate the CSA main outcomes. (Low)	4	Low risk due to vast experience of the partner/s in charge of the dissemination and exploitation WP. METU and BSUN will take extra responsibilities to reiterate the target audience. The monitoring of the dissemination plan will allow identifying and adjust in a very early stage any possible deviation from the expected impact.

4. Communication Structure and Procedures

4.1. Internal Communication

Internal project communication will be carried out by the WP1 leader and project coordinator, METU. The coordinator will ensure that communication between the project partners is running smoothly, facilitated by e-mail and web conference tools or phone calls between WP leaders and partners, and through regular meetings as required. In addition, WP1 will put in place an effective, efficient and responsive structure for the coordination and support action to ensure an open and engaged dialogue at all times with, the DG RTD and the HLB of the Black Sea Blue Growth initiative.

4.1.1. Meetings

Kick-off meeting (Milestone 1): Held in the second month of the project with the participation of the partners, kick-off meeting laid out the specific tasks for each WP and general project management and communication procedures.

WP's coordination video/teleconference meetings: Regular meetings with the WP leaders and the CT will be held to monitor and update project status as well as having the opportunity to discuss technical, operational, and administrative issues in a timely fashion.

WP Progress video/teleconference meetings: The CT will follow-up on the task leaders to monitor the work progress of their respective tasks regularly.

Regular Black Sea Blue Growth Initiative meetings(Milestone 7 and 12): Under the WP1, the Black Sea CONNECT action is tasked to support and facilitate the activities of the Black Sea Blue Growth Initiative. For that purpose, the periodical meetings of the Initiative will be organized; the input from the Initiative on the SRIA and the Implementation Plan will be collected and collated. Twice per year, the



Black Sea Blue Growth Initiative meetings will be extensive, held in collaboration with the representatives of innovation clusters or linked project coordinators as well as Black Sea CONNECT Consortium.

Steering Committee Meetings: SC meetings will be held at least twice a year, if possible in person or via online web conferencing. More meeting will be scheduled if needed.

4.1.2. E-mail Correspondence

The primary mean of communication between the partners will be conducted via e-mail when distributing project-related information. The e-mail list for day-to-day communication has been formed based on the contacts available on the Participant Portal of the EC. The list is updated when necessary.

In recognition of the fact that many institutions participate in multiple projects, all e-mail correspondence must be headed with the Black Sea CONNECT in the title, followed by a short title giving context to the content contained therein, e.g., **Black Sea CONNECT [Subject]**

Partners are encouraged to retain all project e-mails including copies of sent e-mails.

4.1.3. Intranet

A project Intranet was set up to act as a repository for all working documents, minutes, reports, and multimedia files. It is designed specifically for the CSA's needs from a user-based point of view. The purpose of the internal portal is to give partners a platform for sharing information relevant to the project and for facilitating communication.

The address of the Intranet is: <https://intranet.connect2blacksea.org/>

Every member of the consortium has access to the Intranet.

i. Intranet Features

- Consortium members
- WP-related documents
- Project Management-related areas
 - o Contractual documents (Consortium Agreement, Grant Agreement) available for download
 - o Forms and templates available for download
 - o Minutes of meetings
 - o Deliverables
 - o Online versions of printed materials
- Project Calendar
 - o Upcoming deliverables
 - o Black Sea CONNECT events
 - o Upcoming video/teleconferences, meetings, and other important information
- Discussion Forum
- Multimedia Files
-

ii. Intranet Security

- The intranet platform is password-protected.



- The platform is only accessible by registered members. Registration is tracked and approved, denied, or suspended by the administrators. There are limit of 2 login attempts after which the IP address gets locked out of the system which prevents unauthorized access.
- The platform is managed by the CT, who holds the authority to manage the access of the members.
- The content and the Intranet itself is blocked to search engine indexing.

4.2. External Communication

Principles of the external communication strategy of Black Sea CONNECT CSA are laid out in the Deliverable "D4.1 Dissemination, Communication, and Exploitation Plan (DCEP)" submitted in the third month of the action. DCEP describes the activities to be performed, and the dissemination and exploitation mean any effort that will be spent in order to promote the Black Sea CONNECT and any other activities associated with the project. Furthermore, it delineates the strategies that will be used to disseminate and exploit Black Sea CONNECT outcomes, achievements, and progress.

4.2.1. Website

The project website is a virtual and public platform for communicating and promoting the overall Black Sea CONNECT activities. It will be a vehicle for running and promoting the project, providing a platform for project partners and stakeholders interested in the project. This tool will provide the main features of the action (e.g., objectives, timeframe, funding, etc.) in a clear and structured way. The website will not be a classical 'project' website; instead, the essential function of the website will be to bring the Black Sea Blue Growth Initiative to the forefront, with Black Sea CONNECT and the EU funding acknowledged.

The URL for the website: <http://connect2blacksea.org/>

4.2.2. Social Media

An ongoing strategy intended for social networking and web marketing of the project will be developed. This strategy will incorporate social networks (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) in order to build and maintain the public's awareness of the Black Sea CONNECT project and Black Sea Blue Growth Initiative achievements. As well as raising awareness on project achievements, social media accounts will be used to disseminate general information, news, upcoming events, and updates about the project by transmitting catching messages.

Following social media channels is used for the dissemination activities of the Black Sea CONNECT project.

Channel	Shortcuts	Links
Facebook	@connect2blacksea	https://www.facebook.com/connect2blacksea
Twitter	@ConnectBlackSea	https://twitter.com/ConnectBlackSea
YouTube	Connect Black Sea	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCplbmRdEeliqHz0hG8Z_a3g



4.2.3. Dissemination Materials

Printed materials such as brochures, flyers, thematic area fact sheets, and roll-up banners will also be produced as project dissemination material, and their electronic version will be available on the project website. The dissemination materials will be available in English.

4.2.4. Promotional video and educational motion graphics

A promotional video featuring the Black Sea, its Blue Growth potential, and the promotion of the Burgas Vision Paper principles and SRIA pillars will be produced to enhance the visibility of Black Sea CONNECT activities. The promotional video will be used in conferences, exhibitions, educational activities, science fairs/stands, and at mobile exhibitions when possible.

Short educational motion graphics on topics such as; i) the importance of the Black Sea ii) stressors of Black Sea biodiversity and heritage; iii) blue growth in the Black Sea, will be produced and released periodically throughout the project to increase awareness on sustainable and environmentally friendly blue growth in the Black Sea. The videos will include 'call-to-action' activities to entice the audiences to participate in activities and engage more actively in the project. Both the project promotional video and educational motion graphics will be shared on selected websites (the project website, websites of project partners etc.) and social media platforms.

4.2.5. Blue Growth E-Newsletter

A dedicated newsletter on the activities of the Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea, as well the Black Sea CSA's activities, will be developed and produced, at 6-month intervals. The electronic newsletter will highlight project progress and news as well as upcoming events and activities. The newsletter will be sent out to project partners, stakeholder contacts, and other interested individuals or organizations. The Newsletters will also be available on the project website.

4.2.6. Liaison with related initiatives and projects

Black Sea CONNECT CSA will work together and will be aligned with other funded similar projects and entities to widen the dissemination of its results. In the work plan, there are deliverables targeted at creating assessment document mapping of relevant projects, initiatives, linked entities and projects. Updated information about these documents will be published on the website.

4.2.7. Obligation and right to use the EU emblem

Following Article 29.4 of the Consortium Agreement, any dissemination of results (in any form, including electronic) under Black Sea CONNECT must:

- a. display the EU emblem and
- b. include the following text:

“The activities of the Black Sea CONNECT Coordination and Support Action are funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 860055.”

5. Deliverables

As defined by the European Commission, Deliverables' is “additional outputs (e.g., information, special report, a technical diagram brochure, list, a software milestone or other building block of the action)



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that must be produced at a given moment during the action (normally not at the same time as the periodic/final reports).” (AGA, Version 5.2, 2019)

Deliverables of the Black Sea CONNECT as enumerated in Annex 1 Grant Agreement will be tangible outputs of the CSA.

5.1. Development of Deliverables

Each deliverable is associated to a WP, and therefore, the development of the deliverable shall include both the task leader who is responsible for the task, the WP leader, and the CT. The accountable partner will coordinate contributions from other partners, if necessary, to create the deliverable.

5.2. Deliverable Template

Deliverables produced under the Black Sea CONNECT is standardized with a format created specifically for the project. The use of this format in deliverables are mandatory. The template is attached to this document and available to download on the project Intranet platform. (Annex 1)

5.3. Deliverable Review Procedure and Submitting Deliverables

Deliverables must be first submitted to the respective WP leader for a review. The WP leader can invite the other WP leaders who have sufficient knowledge and expertise for a review. After feedback received from the WP leaders incorporated by the task leader in charge of the deliverable, the deliverable shall be sent the document to the coordinator on time. Finally, the task leader finalizes the document with the comments received from the coordinator and submits the deliverable to the coordinator for final submission. Deliverables must be approved and submitted to the European Commission’s Participant portal by the coordinator.

Action	Time Allowance
Task leader submits the deliverable to the WP	15 working days prior to the EC
WP leader(s) return their feedback	4 working days after having received the deliverable
Deliverable is sent to the coordinator for a review	2 working days after having the first feedback
Coordinator return their feedback	4 working days after having received the deliverable
Final submission to the coordinator	2 working days after having received the feedback

6. Monitoring and Reporting

6.1. Internal Reporting

Unlike other research and innovation projects, coordination and support actions like Black Sea CONNECT does not directly produce scientific knowledge. The success of the project, therefore, depends on the impact that the project has created through outreach efforts and networks formed that will go beyond the project-life time. As these can be hard to measure, the CT has deployed reporting schemes to keep track of dissemination activities and events that Black Sea CONNECT is represented.



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6.1.1. Recording Communication and Dissemination Activities

Consortium members are expected to report their communication activities with the template Recording Communication and Dissemination Activities (Annex 2) This is to keep track of Black Sea CONNECT's dissemination activities and its impact. The report will be submitted to the coordinator at 6 months intervals.

6.1.2. Post-Event Template

An essential part of Black Sea CONNECT activities will be joining a variety of meetings where national, international, regional, and supranational stakeholders are involved. To track the outcomes of these meetings, the partners are expected to report to the coordinator, indicating the feedback, recommendations they received, or key persons they meet. The Post-Event template (Annex 3) shall be submitted every six months along with the recording for communication and dissemination activities.

6.2. Periodic Reports

The coordinator must submit to the EC the technical and financial reports. These reports include the requests for payment and must be drawn up using the forms and templates provided in the electronic exchange system. Under the Black Sea CONNECT, there will be two reporting periods, on the month 18 and 36.

The periodic reports required by the EC is consisted of 2 reports.

6.2.1. Technical Report

This report contains the explanation of the work carried out by the beneficiaries and progress towards the objectives of the action, including milestones and deliverables identified in Annex 1. If any, the differences between the work expected to be carried out in accordance with Annex 1 and that actually carried out. Exploitation and dissemination efforts and results must also be included.

6.2.2. Financial Report

The financial report aims to outline the use of resources used in the reporting period. An individual financial statement, including all eligible costs even if they exceed the amount indicated in the estimated budget, from each beneficiary for the reporting period, must be submitted. The partners are required the fill the individual financial statement provided in Grant Agreement Annex 4 and submit for a review to the coordinator. The coordinator is obliged to submit the periodic reports within the 60 days of the end of the reporting period. Therefore, partners are expected to submit their individual financial statements with complete, reliable, and accurate information no later than 30 days following the end of the reporting period.

Financial reports will be filled in individually on the EC's Participant Portal and submitted for the coordinator review, who will make the necessary controls and submit the report once all the partners have filled out the forms. (Annex 4)

Partners are required to keep a record of the hours worked on the action in accordance with the rules outlined for Horizon 2020 projects as they will need to report the hours in periodic financial reports.



7. Data Management

As a CSA the project will not produce classical scientific data based on novel research. Instead, it will collect information about stakeholders, funding agencies, marine and maritime policy, metadata on ongoing and past research. Further, during the project, a large number of meetings will occur, where meeting minutes and official agendas will be generated. All this kind of information and data will be made available on the webpage of the project within one month of their production.

Details of data management is stated in the D1.2 Data Management Plan.

8. Ethics

Ethics considerations for the Black Sea CONNECT project have been described in detail in D5.1 (POPD-Requirement No.1) and D5.1(H-Requirement No.3). To briefly cover some aspects:

- Black Sea CONNECT will not conduct experiments or surveys on human subjects. Limited personal data will be collected from the attendees of dissemination events upon consent. This data will be limited to name-surname, email, photo, and video recordings.
- No sensitive data will be collected during the lifetime of the project. If collected unintentionally, it will be destroyed.
- Informed consent procedures in compliance with the GDPR regulations are being deployed. That is, the data subject is provided with the information relating to processing to the data subject in a concise, transparent, intelligible, and easily accessible form, using clear and plain language. This is done with the information and consent form that informs the subject on;
 - o the scope and purpose of the project
 - o benefits and risk of taking part in the activity they are taking part in
 - o safeguarding, privacy and confidentiality measures
 - o the fact that Black Sea CONNECT is a multi-partner project with both EU and Non-EU countries involved and, therefore, their limited data may be available for these partners.
 - o Whom to contact in case of a data-removal request.

9. Resources

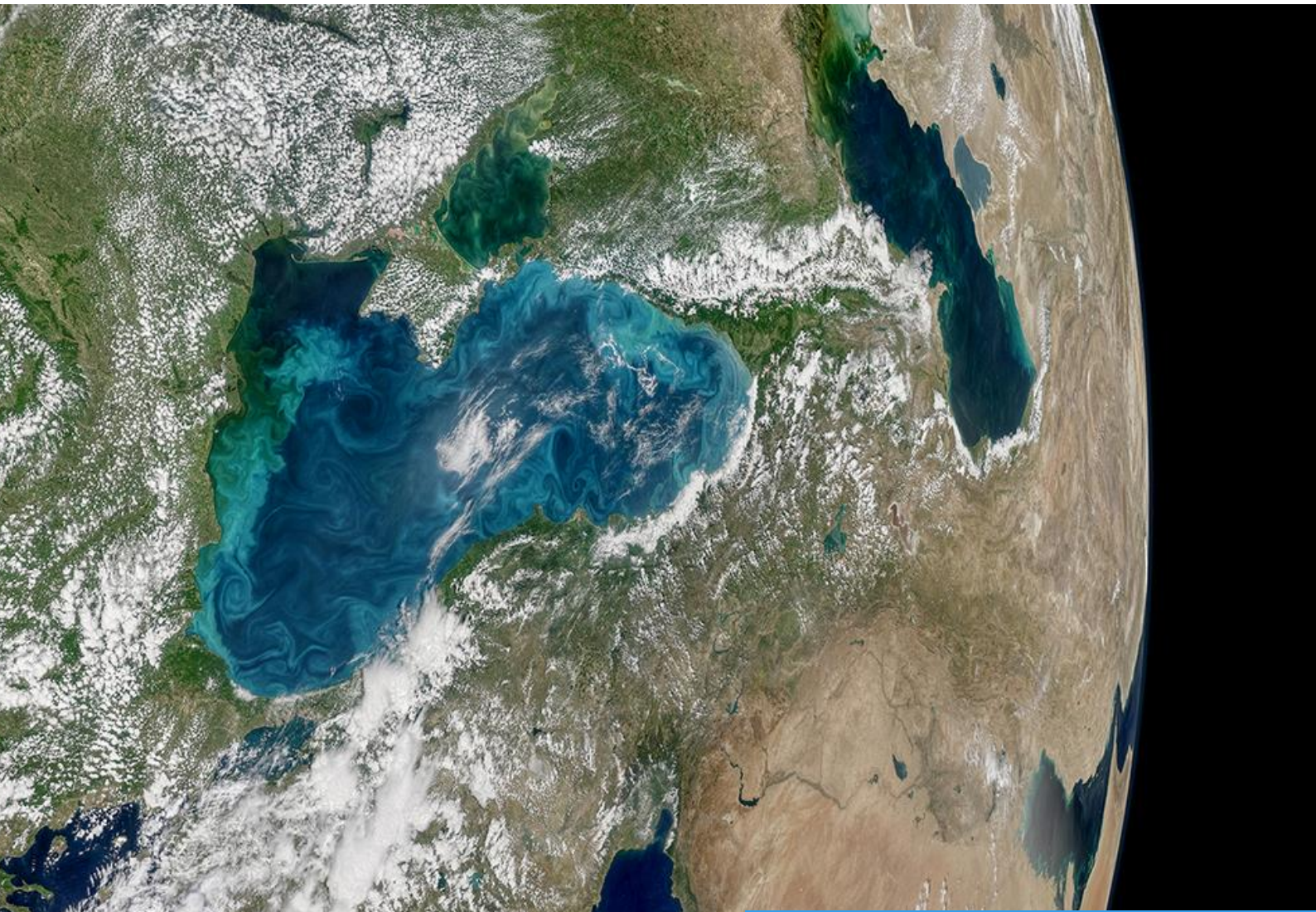
1. Annotated Grant Agreement (AGA, 2019)
2. Black Sea CONNECT Consortium Agreement
3. Black Sea CONNECT Dissemination and Communication and Exploitation Plan
4. Black Sea CONNECT Data Management Plan
5. Black Sea CONNECT Grant Agreement
6. Black Sea CONNECT POPD. Requirement 2



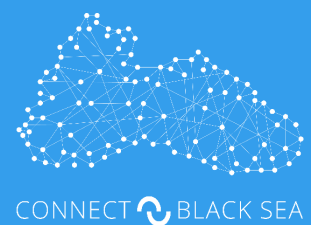
Annex

Annex 1: Deliverable Template

Coordination of Marine and Maritime Research and Innovation in the Black
Sea
Black Sea CONNECT



Name of the Deliverable



DELIVERABLE ID:	WP No/Del No/TASK No
DELIVERABLE TITLE:	Name of the Deliverable
RESPONSIBLE PARTNER:	
CONTRIBUTORS:	
TYPE	Report
DISSEMINATION LEVEL:	PU
FILE:	Black Sea CONNECT_DX_X_(DEL No.)
REVISION:	VX
DUE DATE OF DELIVERABLE:	Date
ACTUAL SUBMISSION DATE:	Date
CALL	H2020-BG-2018-2020 (Blue Growth) Coordination of marine and maritime research and innovation in the Black Sea
TOPIC	LC-BG-09-2019 Focus area: Building a low-carbon, climate resilient future (LC)

Document History

REVISION	DATE	MODIFICATION	AUTHOR
0.1		Document Creation	

Classification

This document is:

Draft	
Final	x
Confidential	
Restricted	
Public	x



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Glossary/List of Acronyms

Definition	Acronym
Black Sea CONNECT Coordination and Support Action	CSA, Action

Consortium Partners	Acronym
Helmholtz-zentrum Geesthacht Zentrum Für Material- und Küstenforschung gmbh	HZG
Institut Drancais de Recherche Pour l'exploitation de la mer	IFREMER
Institute of Oceanology - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences	IO-BAS
Institutul National de Cercetare-dezvoltare Marina Grigore	INCDM
Institutul National de Cercetare-dezvoltare Pentru Geologie	GEOECOMAR
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi state university	TSU
Middle East Technical University	METU
Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation	BSEC
P.p. Shirshov Institute of Oceanology of Russian Academy of Sciences	SIO-RAS
Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, North-west Institute of Management	NWIM RANEPА
Secretariatul National Roman al Retelei Universitatilor de la Marea Neagra	BSUN
Turkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Arastirma Kurumu	TUBITAK
Ukrainian Scientific Centre of Ecology of the Sea	UkrSCES
Universitatea de Stat Din Tiraspol	UST



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Connect Black Sea

www.connect2blacksea.org

Annex 2: Recording Communication and Dissemination Activities



Template for recording communication and dissemination activities

Partner Name				
Partner Country				
Communication Tool	Engagement (likes, shares, comments etc.), if applicable	Estimated number of persons reached	Date	Link to the content-if applicable



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Annex 3: Post-event Template



Coordination of Marine and Maritime Research and Innovation in the Black Sea Black Sea Connect GA 860055 Post-Event Reporting Template¹

1. Event Details

Name of the event	
Date	
Location	
Organizer	
Number of participants (appx.)	

2. Participant Details

Name of the participant	
Organization	
Form of participation	Speaker/Panelist <input type="checkbox"/> Participant <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Please specify)
Did you make a presentation on Black Sea Connect or SRIA?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

3. Executive Summary

¹ Please submit this report to the coordinator after you attend the event and keep it in your records.



Please briefly present the purpose of the event and general event highlights (networking opportunities, constructive feedback, etc.)

4. Black Sea CONNECT Presentation

If you or your team made a presentation, please briefly specify the context of the presentation (SRIA, the Implementation Plan, Black Sea CONNECT CSA, Blue Growth Initiative)

5. Impact and outcome

Please explain results that can be expected due to the presence of the Black Sea CONNECT representation and/or presentation in the event.

6. Feedback and Comments

Please indicate if there have been any constructive comments, suggestions, or recommendations for the project, SRIA, and the Implementation Plan general throughout the event.

7. Networking

Please present the contact details of people who have shown interest in the project and stated that they would like to take part in the project and/or people/organizations you think will be important for the project*

Add more rows if needed.

Name-surname	Organization	Contact Details	Notes



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* Please note that it is significant that you only disclose people who have given their consent to be contacted. For example, you may write down people who have given their business cards.

8. For each statement check the box which best reflects your views on a scale of 1 to 5

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
Content of the event was relevant to the project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black Sea CONNECT's presence in the event increased the visibility of the project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sufficient information has been disseminated on the Black Sea Connect and/or the Blue Growth Initiative during the meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Event was a success in terms of networking with key persons and organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Suggestions

Please indicate your suggestions regarding maintaining Black Sea CONNECT presence and participation in this particular event or events like these. For example, how do you think that Consortium can represent the Black Sea CONNECT in the best way possible in the events like this? If the event is recurring, please tell us how you would recommend representing the project in the upcoming events?

10. Following up the event

Should there be any follow-up documents, actions, events, please indicate it below. For example, you can share related links (Social Media, website, newsletter sign-up) to the event where there will be more updates on the event and/or event summary and outputs and how to access such documents.

11. Other

Please mention if you have any other observation, suggestion, or problem related to the event, please.



Annex 4: Financial Reporting Template

print format A4
landscape

MODEL ANNEX 4 FOR H2020 GENERAL MGA — MULTI

Associated with document Ref. Ares(2019)5646433 - 00/00/2019

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR [BENEFICIARY [name]/ LINKED THIRD PARTY [name]] FOR REPORTING PERIOD [reporting period]

Eligible ¹ costs (per budget category)										Receipts		EU contribution			Additional information				
A. Direct personnel costs			B. Direct costs of subcontracting	[C. Direct costs of fin. support]	D. Other direct costs			E. Indirect costs ²		[F. Costs of ...]		Total costs	Receipts	Reimbursement rate %	Maximum EU contribution ³	Requested EU contribution	Information for indirect costs:		
A.1 Employees (or equivalent)	A.4 SME owners without salary			[C.1 Financial support]	D.1 Travel	[D.4 Costs of large research infrastructure]	D.5 Costs of internally invoiced goods and services		[F.1 Costs of ...]		[F.2 Costs of ...]		Receipts of the action, to be reported in the last reporting period, according to Article 5.3.3				Costs of in-kind contributions not used on premises		
A.2 Natural persons under direct contract	A.3 Beneficiaries that are natural persons without salary			[C.2 Prizes]	D.2 Equipment														
A.3 Seconded persons	[A.6 Personnel for providing access to research infrastructure]				D.3 Other goods and services														
Form of costs ⁴		Actual	Unit	Unit	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Unit	Flat-rate ⁵	Unit	[Unit][Lump sum]							
										25%									
	s	Total b	No hours	Total c	d	[e]	f	[g]	Total h	i=0,25 x (a+b+c+d+[e] + f + [j 4] 6 + [j2] 6 - p)	No units	Total [j1]	Total [j2]	k = a+b+c+d+[e] + f + [g] + h + i + [j1] + [j2]	l	m	n	o	p
[short name beneficiary/linked third party]																			

The beneficiary/linked third party hereby confirms that:
 The information provided is complete, reliable and true.
 The costs declared are eligible (see Article 6).
 The costs can be substantiated by adequate records and supporting documentation that will be produced upon request or in the context of checks, reviews, audits and investigations (see Articles 17, 18 and 22).
 For the last reporting period: that all the receipts have been declared (see Article 5.3.3).

(1) Please declare all eligible costs, even if they exceed the amounts indicated in the estimated budget (see Annex 2). Only amounts that were declared in your individual financial statements can be taken into account later on, in order to replace other costs that are found to be ineligible.

¹ See Article 6 for the eligibility conditions

² The indirect costs claimed must be free of any amounts covered by an operating grant (received under any EU or Euratom funding programme; see Article 6.2.E). If you have received an operating grant during this reporting period, you cannot claim indirect costs unless you can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action.

³ This is the theoretical amount of EU contribution that the system calculates automatically (by multiplying the reimbursement rate by the total costs declared). The amount you request (in the column 'requested EU contribution') may be less.

⁴ See Article 5 for the forms of costs

⁵ Flat rate: 25% of eligible direct costs, from which are excluded: direct costs of subcontracting, costs of in-kind contributions not used on premises, direct costs of financial support, and unit costs declared under budget category F if they include indirect costs (see Article 6.2.E)

⁶ Only specific unit costs that do not include indirect costs



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