

5th Newsletter



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Dear Reader!

This new edition highlights the latest events and activities of **Delta Lady** over the past six months (from 01.06.2020 till 30.11.2020). Partners are motivated to collaborate and work continues despite Covid-19 related restrictions. Meetings and activities in this period were held online and the main event of this semester was organised online. Enjoy the read!

DELTA LADY AT A GLANCE

Delta Lady is about improving the regional policy instruments on ecosystem services for sustainable nature, culture and economy in river deltas.

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1. The 5th Interregional Learning Event & Partner Meeting Online

On **8-9 September 2020**, project partners met Online as Covid-19 outbreak prevented the planned meeting in Tulcea, Romania, to be hosted by **THE DANUBE DELTA NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**. The **main focus** of the meeting was on **action plans** and **sustainable business models**. 18 participants attended the online meeting.

On the **1st day**, partners **presented their progress** related to the regional **action plans**. The **2nd day** was dedicated to the experts' **presentations on sustainable business models** in deltas. **Romanian partner** presented **sustainable tourism activities** in the Danube Delta. **Dutch expert on sustainable innovations** presented the **methodology of Innovative Business Model** in the delta environments. This was followed by a **Steering Group meeting**. Consequences of Covid-19 for the project were discussed, partners were encouraged to organize online meetings with the regional stakeholder groups.



An interregional cooperation project for improving natural and cultural heritage policies in delta regions.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PARTNERS' INPUT

- **UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK (IE)** presented academic side of the ecosystem services work in the Blackwater Delta. Publication of an open access [book](#) “Ecosystem-Based Management, Ecosystem Services and Aquatic Biodiversity. Theory, Tools and Applications” (by O’Higgins, *et al*) was announced during the presentation. Moreover, a **semi-quantitative assessment of ecosystem service** of the development sites in the **Blackwater Estuary** was done by the Master student from the University of Twente in cooperation with University College Cork (UCC). This **study has been published in October 2020** in the **Special Issue** of the journal *Sustainability* and can be accessed [here](#).
- **CORK COUNTY COUNCIL (IE)** presented update and an **early achievement of inclusion of ecosystem services objective in the adopted RSES (Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy) in January 2020**. Number of potential actions are identified for Regional Action Plan and grouped by themes: (1) Policy Related Actions; (2) Funding Related Actions; (3) Other Actions. Selection will be through collaboration with project group, RSG members and other relevant stakeholders in the region.
- **THE REGIONAL NATURAL PARK OF CAMARGUE (FR)** presented progress on the development of their activities in the Camargue Delta and mentioned difficulties related to health and containment measures due to Covid-19, which prevented meetings with regional stakeholders. Regarding action plan, **two topics** were highlighted: **the reed beds exploitation** and **pesca tourism development** in Camargue.
- **ART-ER & PO DELTA PARK (IT)** proposed **actions** which are **composed of 2 tools** for integration of ecosystem services into the Policy Instrument: (1) **mapping of ES in the park** and (2) **matrix of links between identified ecosystem services and areas of application of territorial policies**. The questionnaire was designed for the evaluation of the non-use value of the ecosystems (wetlands) (by willingness to pay method) and the recreation value of ecosystems with free-entrance areas (travel costs method). The first results were presented during the last RSG meeting in July 2020.
- **PROVINCE OF FRIESLAND (NL)** defined two actions: (1) **utilize & describe the qualities & characteristics of delta** in the new RIS3 (**Regional Innovation Strategy**), and (2) **utilize a tool in the assessment of nature/delta projects**. The starting point is a new method adopted from another Interreg project Islands of Innovation. This new method is already accepted and written in the new RIS. **Province cooperates** with the **University of Groningen (RUG)** to develop a tool that can convince policy makers that investment in nature is not only ecologically but also economically beneficial.
- **COUNCIL OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE OF VALENCIA (ES)** selected **two actions** to include in the action plan. **Action (1)** Implementation plan for the promotion of the use of electric boats in the Albufera Natural Park. **Action (2)** Navigation touristic activities tax reinvest in Albufera Natural Park preservation (PES). Policy improvement is expected through the development of healthy leisure and touristic activities that have an economic impact in the development of the region.

Towards developing action plans for regional development policies in river deltas!

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- **THE DANUBE DELTA NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (RO)** highlighted **two actions** for their action plan. **The 1st action** aims at **Supporting ROP** (Regional Operational Program) applicants in implementing sustainable solutions in their projects by integrating environmentally friendly local elements in tourism infrastructure and associated activities. **The 2nd action** aims at **Mapping non-listed and intangible Danube Delta heritage for ROP and Management Plan inclusion**.



The two-day meeting was finalized by **Steering Group** discussion on further **management and communication & dissemination** activities of the project, on **scientific outputs and project indicators**. Partners are mobilized to continue their work on **drafting the regional action plans** and are motivated to **share experiences** with each other. The next **6th Interregional Learning Event / Partner Meeting** is

planned in the beginning of the next year in the **Dutch Province of Friesland**. For more information visit project [website](#).

2. The 4th Regional Stakeholder Group meeting in Spain

VALENCIA REGION COUNCIL OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE organised the **4th RSG meeting** on

16th of July 2020 face-to-face in Valencia. The meeting was dedicated to the **evaluation** and revision of the **content of the Case Study: “The Tourist Navigation in the Albufera Natural Park” (PNA)**, assessing contributions of different stakeholders, revising content, results and proposals, and revealing **potential actions** to be included in the **regional action plan**. The **main discussion** was around the Case Study on **sustainable tourist activities** in the PNA and evaluation of the final draft content, suggestions and results. More specifically, the relevant topics discussed were related to **better regulation** of the **touristic navigation** activities in the ANP and



raising awareness of their importance for the benefit of all actors, managers, companies, boatmen, users and citizens. Moreover, discussion was held on the **proposed actions** to be included in the Action Plan analysing other possible actions from the good practices of other project partners and from Interreg good practice database. Read more [here](#)

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3. The 4th Meeting of Stakeholders in Italy

ART-ER & PO DELTA PARK organised the 4th RSG meeting on 28th of July 2020 Online using Google Meet platform. 17 participants attending the meeting were from local **public institutions**, municipalities, **union of municipalities**, representatives from **University of Ferrara** and representatives from **Po Delta Park**. This **focus** of the meeting was to discuss **how to implement ecosystem services** into the **Territorial Plan** of the **Po Delta Park**. The meeting was an opportunity to **present** the first **results of the survey** to stakeholders, to assess **the values of ecosystem services** by **Willingness To Pay** approach. The attendants were encouraged to identify the links between ecosystem services and areas of application in the territorial planning process.

Another topic discussed was an **assessment** of **ecosystem services** and **integration** of their values **into the urban planning of municipalities**, as in recent regional regulation no standardized methods were defined on values of ecosystem services. Read more [here](#)



4. The 4th Meeting of Stakeholder in the Netherlands

PROVINCE OF FRIESLAND organized the 4th RSG meeting on October 28, 2020. The meeting took place **Online**. The main goal of the meeting was to **discuss** development of the **action plan** and the **progress** of the ongoing activities. After discussing action points from the previous RSG meeting and main outcomes of the previous partner meeting, the results of the ongoing research “**Nature investment and value for money**” undertaken by **University of Groningen (RUG)**, were presented. **Province of Friesland** wants to **evaluate the nature investments**. The **Multi-Criteria Cost-Benefit Analysis (MCCBA)** method was used to evaluate 3 Dutch case studies. It is a useful method to show value of nature projects.

Regarding the action plan development, **2 actions** are defined:

- (1) utilize and describe elements, qualities and characteristics of Delta in the new **RIS3 (Regional Innovation Strategy)**;
- (2) Utilize a tool in the assessment of nature (delta) projects. The **Northern Innovation Agenda** ends in 2020, therefore **the focus is** on the **RIS3**.

For more information, read [here](#)

Boosting regional economy through ecosystem services in river deltas!

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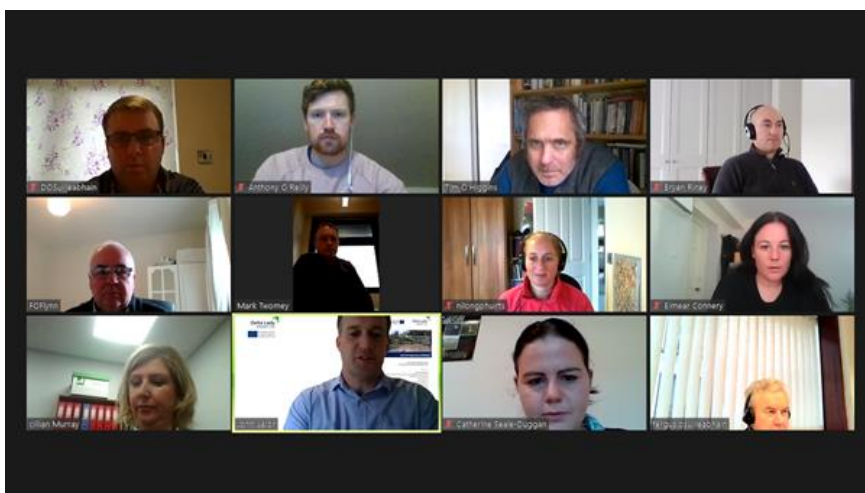
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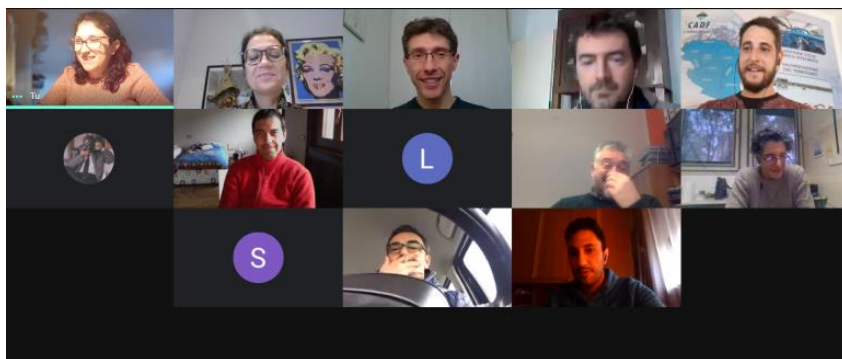
5. The 5th RSG Meeting in Ireland

CORK COUNTY COUNCIL and UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK organized the **5th RSG meeting** on **17th November 2020** Online via Zoom calls. The meeting was attended by RSG group members who could provide policy input and advice on good practices throughout the project. A quadruple helix approach was adopted incorporating representatives from University College Cork, different departments from Cork County Council, the Southern Regional Assembly (SRA), the Forestry Service, The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), LAWPRO (Local Authorities Water Program), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Teagasc, Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) and Youghal Socio Economic Group. **The main topics** of the meeting were **regional action plan development, action selection & ecosystem services assessment methodology** applied at a local scale in Youghal. In terms of a policy context, **an excellent early policy achievement** for the project was highlighted **through formal recognition of ecosystem services at a regional level in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region.**



Read more [here](#)

6. The 5th Meeting of Stakeholders in Italy



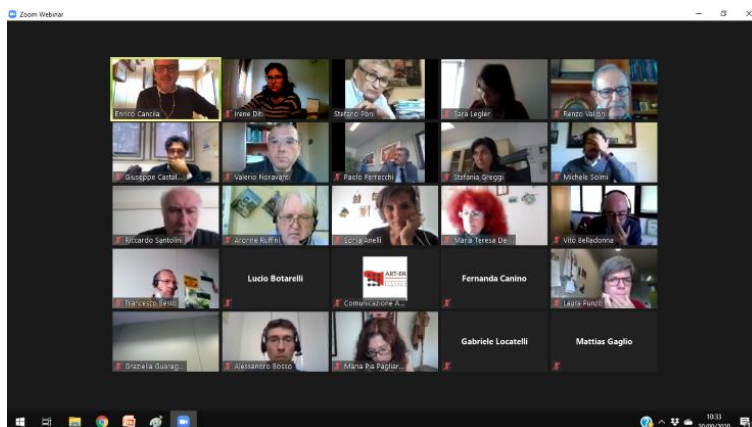
Another meeting of stakeholders organised by **ART-ER** and **PO DELTA PARK** in this semester, the **5th RSG meeting**, was held on **19th of November 2020** using Google Meet platform. 14 participants attended the meeting, including representatives from ART-ER, University of Ferrara, Po Delta Park and representatives of local stakeholders. The **main focus**

was on the presentation of **final results of the survey on ecosystem services values in Po Delta** water lands (presented by University of Ferrara) and the discussion with tourism stakeholders on a **possible PES mechanism** for biodiversity conservation **linked to tourism activities** in Po Delta Park (by ART-ER). The PES feasibility study is one of the activities considered in Action 2 of the Action Plan. Read more [here](#)

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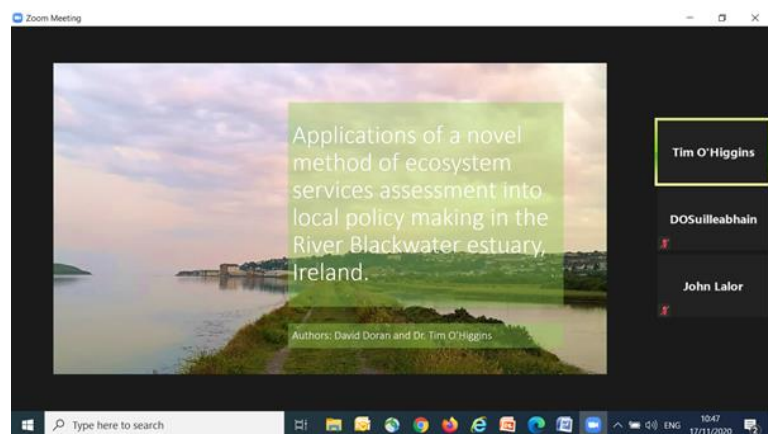
7. Workshops with Universities of Italian Partners

ART-ER in collaboration with PO DELTA PARK organized a **workshop** with regional **Universities** and stakeholders which took place on the **30th of September 2020**. The workshop was held online via Zoom platform due to the Covid-19 restrictions. Representatives of 4 Universities (**Università di Ferrara, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore of Piacenza, Università di Parma, Università di Urbino**), local land managing authorities



and parks, and representatives of Emilia-Romagna Region departments attended the online workshop. The **main focus** was on forming a **working group on ecosystem services** and creating a **discussion between academia, local stakeholders and regional authorities** guided by ART-ER and local Universities. The aim was to present **Delta Lady** project and the **main ongoing research** carried out by the Universities. Read more [here](#)

8. University Workshop of Irish Partners



CORK COUNTY COUNCIL (CCC) organized a workshop with **UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK (UCC)** on **21st of October 2020**, Online. UCC reiterated the **ongoing challenge of quantifying and valuing ecosystem services** referring to the model provided as part of the project. A study on **Integrating Ecosystem Services and Policy** and a **site assessment model in Youghal**, undertaken by Master student from the University of Twente in

collaboration with UCC, was presented. Based on this study, **an academic paper was prepared by UCC, and published** in the *Sustainability* Journal. The paper describes a **novel method to incorporate ecosystem services into policy**. A public survey was developed for the semi-quantitative assessment of ecosystem services and applied to prioritise potential development in three sites: the **Slob Bank, Claycastle and Ballyvergan Marsh**. Read more [here](#)

Boosting regional economy through ecosystem services in river deltas!

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9. University Workshop of Spanish Partners

On the **5th November 2020**, the **VALENCIA REGION COUNCIL OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE** organized online University Workshop with experts from the **Polytechnic University of Valencia** and the **University of Valencia**, to share **activities and results** carried out during the project up to date, to discuss and analyse the **draft of the action plan** and the **Case Study** on tourist activities in the Natural Park of Albufera to improve ecosystem services, as an instrument of governance of protected areas. Read more [here](#)



10. Good Practices identified so far

2 Good practices identified by **Romanian partner** in the **5th Semester** are in the submission process.

Good practices identified in the previous semesters by **Irish, Italian, Spanish and French partners** are published on the project website under [good practices](#). Out of 11 good practices identified so far, 6 are included in the **Interreg Europe Good Practice (GP) database**.

- **JURILOTCA (RO)** - cyclo-nautical recreational club in Jurilovka settlement offers nature and culture based adventure and wilderness guided tours ([in a validation process](#)).
- **DELTACRAFT (RO)** - is an example of social entrepreneurship that brings together local artisans and contemporary designed ([in a validation process](#)).
- **The BRIDE Project (IE)** - Biodiversity Regeneration in a Dairying Environment is an innovative agri-environmental project that adopts a results-based payment approach to conserving, enhancing and restoring biodiversity ([in GP database](#)).
- **LAWPRO model (IE)** is a new way of working to achieve better water quality. It is a service working with Local Authorities and state agencies to improve water quality by developing and implement Water Framework Directive (WFD) River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) in Ireland. ([in GP database](#)).
- **Hunting for wildlife conservation in the river Po Delta (IT)** - Hunting in the Po river Delta Park is regulated by hunting permits and the related incomes are reinvested in wildlife and habitat conservation ([in GP database](#)).
- **Extensive Fishing in Comacchio lagoon (IT)** - Reinvestment of revenues from traditional fishing activities into habitat/species conservation: the case of Po river Delta Park fishing in Comacchio lagoon ([in GP database](#)).

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- **Tancat de la PipaPark of l'Albufera (ES)** - public-private management of a protected area; includes training activities, visits and acts as an interpretation center of the Albufera Natural Park ([in GP database](#)).
- **Rice of Albufera (ES)** - Example of promotion of a quality brand of rice that develops different business activities related to the cultural and natural values of Albufera.
- **Asociación de Guías de Birding de la Comunitat Valenciana (ES)** - Union of companies linked to nature and ornithological tourism that carries out a large part of its activities in the Albufera Natural Park.
- **Identification of agroecological practices and organization of field exchange days and training (FR)** - aims at reducing pollution and preserving ground functions without additional financial cost for the farmers.
- **Contrat de Delta Camargue (FR)** - The Delta Contract action program for a balanced and sustainable management of water and aquatic environments ([in GP database](#)).

11. Upcoming events

The next **Partner Meeting** and the **6th Interregional Learning Event** is planned to be organized **in the Netherlands**, in **Friesland**, in the beginning of **2021**. More information will follow on the project [website](#).

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT DELTA LADY?

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