PRESS RELEASE 20

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Third Workshop of the ILMM-BSE project and International Black Sea Day Celebration in Batumi, Georgia on 30 - 31 October 2014 in the media and press

The ILMM-BSE project funded by the European Cross-Border Cooperation Joint Operational Program ‘Black Sea Basin 2007-2013’, planned organizing 4 workshops. The Workshop 3 in Georgia was devoted to Catchment Observations, Modelling and Management as its main themes and had a twofold objective. The workshop was promoted as the international Black Sea Day event in Georgia by the Black Sea Commission Permanent Secretariat (BSC PS) and the Ministry of Environment & Natural Resources Protection of Georgia, represented by the Commissioner (BSC Member) from Georgia, who also announced the address of the BSC PS Executive Director to the participants of the policy workshop on the Black Sea Day of 31st October.

The “Bringing GEOSS services into Practice” hands-on workshop introduced attendees how to set up their own Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) and how to publish and share data and metadata through the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS). The second concluding part of the capacity building workshop on further demonstration of SDI tools, started with the hands-on interactive ArcSWAT hydrological model set-up session and continued with live demonstration of gSWAT hydrological model calibration with remote access to high performance computation resources. The second Black Sea Day Workshop (31 October) was devoted to plenary presentations promoting integrated catchment monitoring, modelling and governance principles, communicated by various project representatives, dealing with catchment monitoring and governance issues. The meeting was targeting policy makers, researchers, and stakeholders from the region along with European experts that helped local stakeholders to be informed on the current European needs and trends in Earth Observations. Through this workshop, ILMM-BSE project communicated the need to bring the scientific communities and programs closer to each other with regard to EO initiatives in the Black Sea region. Knowledge gained in the workshop will allow to better cope with the regional needs for EO applications not only in the addressed themes, but also in a broader area so that all GEO Societal Benefit Areas can be addressed.

The workshop days were extensively covered through local media. Informative press releases were issued for journalists. Two press conferences were organised on days 1 (capacity building) and day 2 of the workshop (policy discussion). Local television stations Adjara TV (governmental) and Channel 25 (independent), both with national coverage in Georgia, broadcast announcements and thematic interviews with several workshop participants, including the interviews with the Black Sea Commission Representative from Georgia (she was special guest at
Channel 25 news studio on 29th of October, a day prior to the workshops), Coordinators of ILMM-BSE Project, JRCs, representatives of co-organizers Civitas Georgica and GeoGraphic, as well as several other partners and participants of the Workshop.

Web links to video coverage by local television are provided below:
http://www.tv25.ge/?page=news&news_id=14189
http://www.tv25.ge/?page=news&news_id=14182
http://www.tv25.ge/?page=news&news_id=14207

ILMM-BSE Workshop 3 organized in Batumi, Georgia on 30-31 October 2014 was a success with an important participation of experts from 14 countries (with 5 Black Sea countries including Georgia, latter constituting 50% of participants). These were: ILMM-BSE partners and beneficiaries, IASON partners, EU & other regional projects concerned in catchment observations & management, authorities & scientists/experts from Georgia and other Black Sea region countries and public and NGO representatives.

Important outcome of the meeting is the capacity building delivered and received by IASON, ILMM-BSE and other projects, establishment of person-to-person links and networking between institutions represented at the meeting. Particularly high level of satisfaction was expressed by participants regarding the advanced acquaintance with GEO/GEOSS knowledge; opportunities to exchange knowledge and experience on hydrological modelling tools, with particular satisfaction regarding the high power computing resource access opportunities. European experts were satisfied as well with the better understanding of ongoing projects and initiatives in the Black Sea region. It also needs to be noted that direct personal contacts strongly support the knowledge sharing and experience distribution in the application of modern Earth Observations tools and instruments in support of environmental governance.

Project website: http://www.e-blacksea.com

The project Integrated Land-use Management Modelling of Black Sea Estuaries (ILMM-BSE) is financed by the Second call of the Joint Operational Programme “Black Sea Basin 2007 - 2013” http://www.blacksea-cbc.net. It started on 25 May 2013 and involves partners from four countries: Bulgaria, Ukraine, Georgia and Turkey. The duration of the project is 24 months. The overall objective of the project is to develop, enhance and evaluate impact assessment and management tools for the sustainable land use of the watershed areas of coastal deltas.