

May 2021 | ISSUE 6

INVALIDIS

Newsletter



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

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INVALIDIS | Protecting European Biodiversity from Invasive Alien Species: 6th semester of the project implementation

INVALIDIS brings together 7 partners to improve their environmental policies, by supporting policy measures for the prevention, early detection and control of IAS. It will enable the participating territorial authorities to address common challenges associated with biological invasions such as a) knowledge gaps in ecosystems' vulnerability to biological invasions, b) lack of awareness about IAS environmental and socioeconomic risks, c) low level of cooperation between key stakeholders for the implementation of IAS management measures, and c) conflicts of interests.

During the last Semester of the project implementation partners almost finalised their activities of the project, organising also meetings and events for the dissemination of the results of the project. Action plans are taking over now and it is time to proceed with policy making interregionally.



Trachemys spp

SAVE THE DATE: 31/05/2021 –EU wide Policy Learning Event

As part of the Interreg Europe INVALIS program (<https://www.interregeurope.eu/invalidis/>), we would like to invite you to participate in the EU wide policy learning event, on May 31, 2021, from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm (CET) on Zoom (https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4038372068?pwd=a10ZFdE_Q2Y3N21ubFIEYUQxQzZjZz09). In this event we will discuss measures and policies for the prevention, early detection, control and eradication of invasive alien species in natural ecosystems in the European Union. We will benefit from the participation of representatives of international public and private authorities, to promote inter-regional learning and define a coordinated approach for the management of invasive alien species across the EU. Everyone is welcome to attend and discuss these issues with a highly motivated international and multidisciplinary group. If you believe you could provide an interesting presentation for the event, please inform your country's representative or Dr Joana Ribeiro (joanatribeiro@cibio.up.pt)



Save the date: 20/5/2021 - Interregional Workshop organised by Zemgale, Latvia

On 20th May 2021 Zemgale Planning Region will host an interregional workshop with topic sections such as: an overview of the recent

studies on invasive species in EU and Latvia, the main regulations concerning the invasive species in EU and Latvia, the climate and territorial aspects in Latvia, as well as an overview about environmental impact assessment of invasive alien species (IAS).

Considering the current epidemiological situation and travel limitations, the workshop will be organized through an internet platform and it will last one day. Thematic focus of the workshop will be: Territories' vulnerability to invasive alien species and the workshop will be structured around three related topics related to the regional risk assessments: 1) legislative framework; 2) assessment methodologies; 3) risk assessment of IAS. Presentations from the partners will give an overview on the existing experience and applied practices, thus paving way for a more unified approach and more efficient management of the IAS in the EU.

Zemgale Planning Region expects that all the project partners, as well as regional authorities' officials, experts; stakeholders will attend the interregional workshop.

The LIFE project Drylands –FLA, Italy

The loss of biodiversity, habitat reduction and invasive species are the main problems that affect the environment also in high impacted areas such as the Po river plain (Northern Italy).

Silvia Assini of the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences of the University of Pavia is the scientific director of the LIFE project DRYLANDS.

The main goal of the project is the restoration of the dry-acidic continental open habitats (2330, 4030, 6210/6210*) found within the 7 Nature 2000 sites of the western Po Plain, to a favourable conservation status; and the creation of core areas and ecological corridors to reduce fragmentation and increase connectivity.

One of the main actions of DRYLANDS is the control and reduction of the invasive woody species Robinia pseudoacacia, Prunus serotina, and Ailanthus altissima, those most responsible for biodiversity loss in the target habitats.

Drylands represents a good example of combination between habitat restoration actions and control of invasive alien species.

The other project partners are: University of Bologna, the Ticino regional park, the Po river park of Piedmont region, the management body of the protected area of Ticino and Lake Maggiore and the botanical garden network of the Lombardy Region.

More information at:

WEB site: www.lifedrylands.eu

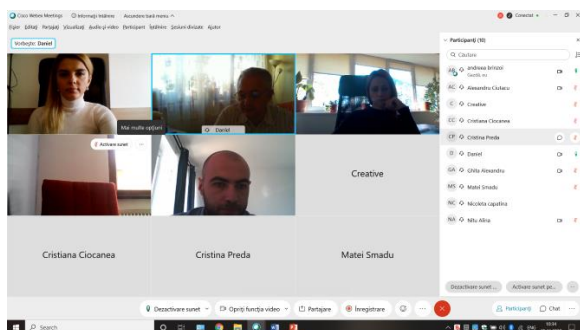
FACEBOOK:

<https://www.facebook.com/LifeDrylands>

ADR BI organised the 4th Stakeholders meeting

On 25.11.2020, the Technical Assistance Department of the Bucharest-Ilfov Regional Development Agency organized the 4th stakeholder group meeting within the Invalis project, an event held online.

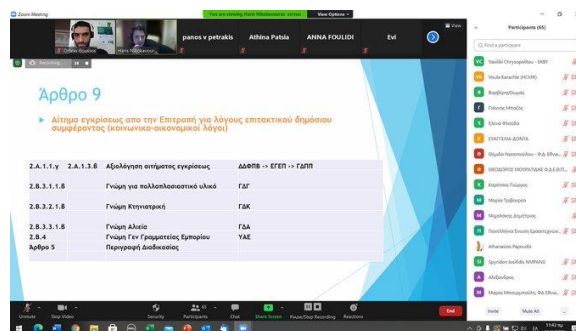
This event aimed to address topics such as the state of implementation of the project, the progress of activities, studies and materials carried out in the last two semesters of implementation, namely the sustainability plan of the project and the risk assessment framework.



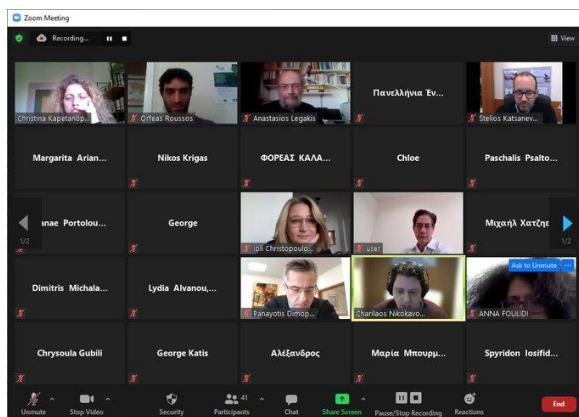
The second part of the seminar consisted of the presentation of two videos on the protection of two vulnerable species in the partner territory of Lombardy, Italy and the presentation of good practices identified at partnership level and in the annual European Week of Region and Cities event.

N.E.C.C.A organized the 4th and 5th Stakeholders meetings

On the 31st of March 2021, NECCA organized the 5th Regional Stakeholders' Meeting in Greece. The meeting was held as on-line event and the stakeholders represented public authorities, management bodies of protected areas, universities/research centers, environmental NGOs and hunters' and fishers' associations. The subject of the meeting was the implementation of the EU directives regarding IAS and the participants focused on the draft of a Joint Ministerial Decision for implementing the Regulation (EU) No. 1143/2014 on IAS in Greece. The meeting concluded by stressing that the JMD will only be the first step, providing the legislative framework for a series of measures and actions, with which the problem of IAS management in Greece will be addressed.



Also, on the 5th of February 2021 NECCA organized the 4th Regional Stakeholders' Meeting in Greece, the subject of which was the evaluation of the territories' and ecosystems' vulnerability to IAS. There was a general agreement on the need of raising public awareness on IAS, not only among common citizens but also including public authorities, since they often have a limited knowledge of the problem.



EXTREMADURA organized the 5th Stakeholders meeting

On April 22, Earth Day, the V RSM of Invalis was held, where the subject of the transposition of European directives to the Spanish legislative framework and also to the regional scope of the rules and legislation relating to IAS was discussed. For this meeting we have representatives of the Valencian government, the Ministry for the ecological transition, and director of the public company of the Portuguese government IDEA, in addition to staff from the Extremadura Government.



Although the topic is sometimes difficult to understand, the day was very enjoyable, where the participants (60 participants) understood and participated with their questions and dissertations on the topics that were presented.

EXTREMADURA organised meeting with coordinators with the agents of the natural environment

In January, a meeting was held with the Coordinators of the Agents of the Natural Environment of Extremadura. To give a boost to the collaboration between this body of the Extremadura administration with the Interreg

Europe Invalis project and the existing alert network. The agents of the natural environment are an important part of the control of the species, both in species conservation tasks and in invasive alien species control tasks. With this meeting, cooperation is reinforced and their opinions are taken into consideration in relation to the actions to be carried out with the IAS. In addition to their active participation in Invalis meetings, their participation makes knowledge and collaboration with the agricultural and livestock sector more accessible in which they carry out their daily activity.



Agreements are reached to update the alert network, the use of new technologies to pass the information on the presence or absence of EEI in the work areas and be in direct contact, which enables greater success in the planned actions by optimizing existing resources.



20 years of the Insect Conservatory Observatory: continuation of IAS management actions

The online event "OCIC turns 20" allowed the OEC, for 10 weeks, to address various topics including IAS through the OCIC Facebook page, to which 695 people subscribe. The INVALIS project was presented there as well as the

ALIEM project, in particular in the conference to launch the animation on January 28, 2021:

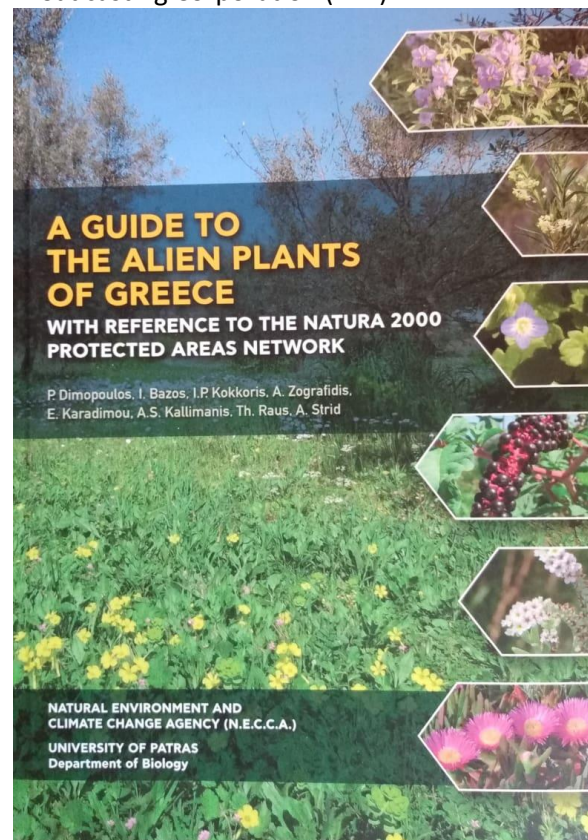


3 weeks were devoted to the issue of IAS, with dedicated conferences posted online every Tuesday at 6 pm: March 9 (theme "species introductions"), March 16 (theme "the tiger mosquito, *Aedes albopictus*") and March 23 (theme "the Asian hornet, *Vespa velutina nigrothorax*"). On the occasion of this event, stakeholders were particularly made aware with a dedicated awareness day on March 18 and 23, where these conferences were broadcast as a focal point for discussion.

GOOD PRACTICES in Greece

On December 2020, NECCA published "A Guide to the Alien Plants of Greece" with reference to the NATURA 2000 protected areas network, a valuable edition about the alien plants of Greece, accompanied by the web-based platform www.alienplants.gr. The creation of a relational database – web platform for the alien plants of Greece is a pioneering project that happens for the first time in our country, assigned to the University of Patras, Department of Biology, funded by and delivered to NECCA. On the web platform the user can find the checklist of alien plants of Greece, search the database through the mentioned categorizations and the functional and ecological characteristics of plant taxa (including families, floral, origin, etc.), see the data through dynamic graphical presentations and statistical reports, etc. On the 12th of December 2020, Professor P. Dimopoulos, one

of the leading authors, presented both "A Guide to Alien Plants of Greece" and www.alienplants.gr on The Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (ERT).

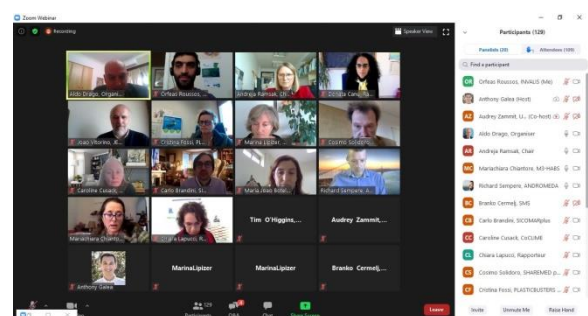


Beekeepers concerned by the issue of IAS

In Corsica, a Beekeeping Scientific and Technical Committee (CSTA) was set up at the end of 2020, and held several meetings in 2021.

The issue of IAS was regularly discussed there, in particular during the working groups of Februarys 9 and 16 (5 actors) and the plenary meeting of the CSTA (February 24 - 14 actors).

3rd PARTY EVENT PARTICIPATION, NECCA, Greece



On the 14th and 15th of December 2020, the Physical Oceanography Research Group at the University of Malta and Italian National Institute of Oceanography and Experimental Geophysics

(OGS), organized an on-line workshop with the title “Designing the future system of observing systems to assess and address environmental threats to the Mediterranean marine ecosystem – State of the art, needs and future direction”. NECCA was invited to participate in the event as the lead partner in the INVALIDIS project, since invasive alien species are recognized as one of the main threats to the Mediterranean ecosystems. Our agency accepted the invitation as an opportunity to communicate and disseminate the objectives of the project, as well as contributing to the success of the SHAREMED project.

Corsica facing the invasion of blue crabs

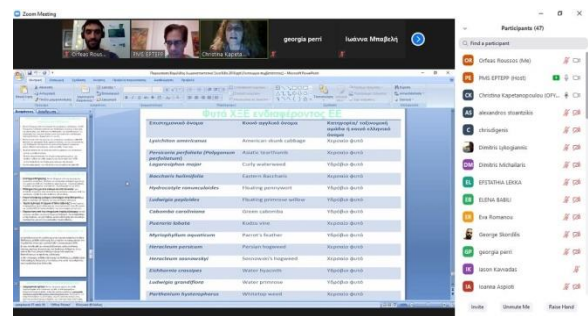
Callinectes sapidus, more commonly known as blue crab, is a real plague for fishermen in lagoons in the Mediterranean. In Corsica, its presence worries professionals and scientists. It was officially sighted on the island for the first time in 2014, but some fishermen claim to have observed it as early as 2010 in the Eastern Plain.



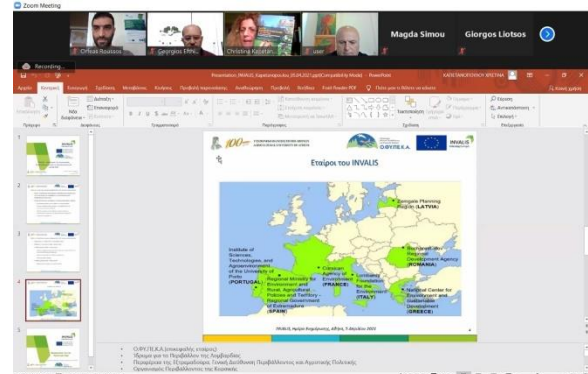
The Corsican Environmental Office (OEC) has organized itself in recent years to study the presence of the species on the island with the aim of establishing a management policy.

Marie Garrido, head of the mission for the Corsica region within the OEC explains that the region must take the lead in order to be able to control the proliferation of the species before it does too much damage on the island. Between 2014 and 2018, it was observed that the blue crab had a stable number of individuals but that its range of movement was expanding. It is between 2019 and 2020 that populations really exploded. The most worrying fact is the presence of grained females in the pond of Palu.

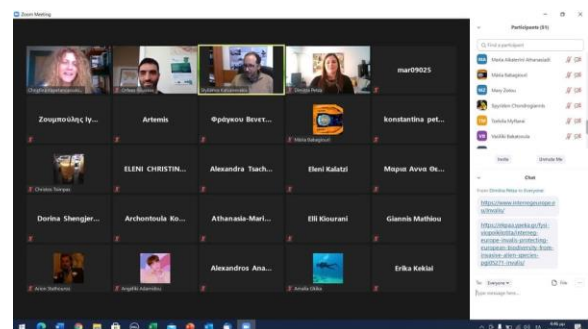
INFODAYS in Greece



From December 2020 to April 2021, NECCA organized three on-line information days for the INVALIDIS project. In cooperation with the University of West Attica (11.12.2020), Agricultural University of Athens (05.04.2021) and University of the Aegean (20.04.2021) NECCA presented to the scientific community all the information about the project, its progress, outcomes and the lessons learnt up to now through the exchange of experience at European and national level.



The event closed with a fruitful discussion on possible management policies, the role that the scientific community can play in raising public awareness, the emerging conflicts of interest and the necessary legal framework for IAS management, etc. All the participants of the information days were encouraged in taking part in project activities.





The INVALIS Partnership



Natural Environment and
Climate Change Agency

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Lombardy Foundation for the
Environment



Regional Ministry for
environment and rural,
agricultural policies and
territory – Regional
Government of Extremadura

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About us

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Corsican Agency of Environment



Bucharest-Ilfov Regional
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Institute of Sciences,
Technologies and
Agroenvironment of the
University of Porto



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