

NEWSLETTER AND THE WINNER IS... IASON+

A SUCCESS STORY IN ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION

At the Black Sea CMA Annual Stakeholder Conference 2025, held in Constanța, Romania, several initiatives were recognised for their contribution to regional cooperation and innovation in protecting ecosystems, biodiversity and local communities. Among them, the **IASON+ Project** – „*Invasive Alien Species Observatory and Network Development for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts and Contextual Ecosystem Services Evaluation in Black Sea Deltaic Protected Areas*” was recognised as the **best project** for environmental monitoring action supporting ecosystem resilience and climate change adaptation across the Black Sea region, obtaining the highest score in the category **Healthy Marine and Coastal Ecosystems**. This recognition highlights the relevance of IASON+'s transnational approach to one of the region's most pressing environmental challenges: the spread and impact of **Invasive Alien Species (IAS)** and the resulting pressures on **Ecosystem Services (ES)**.



NEXT Black Sea Basin

The IASON+ Approach

IASON+ brings together partners from Romania, Ukraine, Greece, Türkiye and Georgia to establish joint monitoring of invasive alien species and assess their impacts on ecosystem services in protected deltaic areas. Through shared methodologies, coordinated fieldwork and comparable data, the project supports evidence-based approaches to climate adaptation and ecosystem management. It also aims to harmonise monitoring and risk assessment procedures, strengthen long-term scientific cooperation and make greater use of innovative digital tools. A key element of the project is the involvement of stakeholders in the process, creating opportunities for scientists, public authorities, practitioners, local communities and other relevant actors to exchange knowledge and contribute to the development and application of monitoring results.

Why IASON+ Matters

Invasive alien species are among the major drivers of biodiversity degradation across the Black Sea region. Understanding their impacts requires long-term monitoring of species distribution, ecosystem interactions and ecological change. At the same time, the project examines the **Ecosystem Services** provided by deltaic and coastal ecosystems.

IASON+ NEWSLETTER

WHAT DO WE GET FROM ECOSYSTEMS?

PROVISIONING SERVICES food wood medicines energy fibres	REGULATING SERVICES water filtration waste decomposition crop pollination climate regulation disease control
CULTURAL SERVICES aesthetic spiritual personal growth leisure and fun	

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES – BENEFITS FOR PEOPLE AND NATURE

 FOOD & WATER Essential resources for communities and local economies	 REGULATION Flood and disease regulation, water quality, nutrient cycling	 BIODIVERSITY Healthy ecosystems supporting diverse species and ecological functions	 CULTURE & RECREATION Landscapes, cultural heritage, tourism and recreation	 CLIMATE RESILIENCE Strengthening ecosystems in a changing climate
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THE IASON+ APPROACH

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- Joint monitoring of Invasive Alien Species (IAS)
Shared methodologies and coordinated fieldwork
- Assessing impacts on Ecosystem Services (ES)
Comparable data for evidence-based climate adaptation
- Harmonisation and innovation
Harmonising procedures, using digital tools
- Stakeholder involvement
Co-creating and applying monitoring results together

FIVE DELTA AREAS – ONE REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- Romania / Ukraine
Danube Delta
- Greece
Nestos Delta & Lake Vistonida
- Türkiye
Kizilirmak Delta
- Georgia
Chorakhi Delta & Kolikheti National Park

WHAT MAKES IASON+ INNOVATIVE?

- Integrated approach**
Combining IAS monitoring, ecosystem services assessment and climate risk evaluation in one operational framework.
- Advanced tools and data sharing**
Using modelling and analytical tools and ensuring consistent data exchange among partner countries.
- Stronger regional capacity**
Building research capacity and supporting sustainable and resilient blue-economy development.

WHO JOINED FORCES TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

IASON+ unites the efforts of 6 Project Partners from 5 Black Sea countries.

- Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development (DDNI) – Romania
- Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority (DCBRA) – Romania
- Institute of Marine Biology – Ukraine
- Democritus University of Thrace – Greece
- Karadeniz Technical University – Marine Science Faculty – Türkiye
- International Business and Economic Development Center – Georgia

Stakeholders involved as dialogue partners and beneficiaries include local and regional authorities, national administrations, NGOs, academia, training centres, cross-border entities and the general public.

FROM MONITORING TO ACTION

In line with EU Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 and the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (Priority Area 06), IASON+ promotes:

- ✓ Early detection and monitoring
- ✓ Shared risk assessment
- ✓ Scientific cooperation
- ✓ Stakeholder engagement
- ✓ Awareness raising and policy integration

CONTRIBUTION TO CMA GOALS

IASON+ supports the priorities of the CMA by advancing coordinated environmental protection, integrated coastal and marine planning, science and monitoring, and stakeholder engagement.

Together, we strengthen cooperation and safeguard ecosystems for future generations.

NEXT STEPS AND REPLICABILITY

IASON+ is developing tools, guidelines and training to ensure that results are accessible and can be applied in other regions.

Partnerships, open access and continuous feedback will support the transfer and long-term use of our outcomes across the Black Sea region and beyond.

COOPERATION INNOVATION RESILIENCE

<https://iasonplus-bsb.eu/>

AI MODIFIED

Project Code: BSB00174
Interreg NEXT Black Sea Basin Programme 2021–2027

NEXT Black Sea Basin

What Makes IASON+ Innovative?

IASON+ brings together three interconnected dimensions within a single operational framework: the monitoring of invasive alien species, the assessment of ecosystem services, and the evaluation of climate-related risks. Through IAS monitoring, the project tracks the distribution and spread of invasive alien species, while ecosystem services assessment examines how biological invasions affect the benefits and functions provided by ecosystems. At the same time, climate risk evaluation addresses the environmental pressures associated with climate change and supports the development of appropriate adaptation responses. By integrating these three dimensions, IASON+ provides a more comprehensive understanding of ecosystem change than monitoring programmes focused on a single environmental issue. The project further strengthens this integrated approach through advanced modelling and analytical tools, consistent data exchange, and enhanced research capacity. In doing so, it contributes to the development of a shared scientific knowledge base among partner countries, supporting more informed, coordinated, and evidence-based environmental decision-making.

What Comes Next?

The project is now focusing on ensuring that its results can be **shared, understood and applied beyond the immediate project partnership**. A comprehensive communication and dissemination framework is being developed to make project findings accessible to stakeholders. User-friendly guidelines, documentation and digital tools will support the transfer and application of IASON+ methodologies in other regions. Training activities will help **local authorities, researchers and practitioners** use the project's tools effectively, while new partnerships will encourage the exchange of experience with organisations facing similar environmental challenges. Open access to key resources will further support the **replication and long-term use** of IASON+ results across the Black Sea region and beyond.

Project Information:

IASON+ "Invasive Alien Species Observatory and Network Development for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts and Contextual Ecosystem Services Evaluation in Black Sea Deltaic Protected Areas"

Project Code: BSB00174

Interreg NEXT Black Sea Basin Programme 2021–2027

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