



Building Capacity for a Centre of Excellence for EO-based monitoring of Natural Disasters

Kick-Off Meeting Minutes

Thursday, 18th of July, 2013, NOA Premises, Athens

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Call: Integration of research entities from the EU's Convergence and Outermost regions in the ERA and enhancement of their innovation potential

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1 LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

BEYOND EC OFFICER : Ms. RALITSA ATANASOVA

NOA BEYOND GROUP

Dr. CHARALAMPOS KONTOES - Resarch Director of the Institute for Space Applications and Remote Sensing of the National Observatory of Athens (IAASARS/NOA), Project Coordinator of the Project BEYOND

Dr. KONSTANTINOS LAGOUVARDOS - Resarch Director of the Institute of Environmental Research and Sustainable Development (IERSD/NOA)

Dr. VASILIKI KOTRONI - Resarch Director of IERSD/NOA

Dr. ATHANASIOS GANAS - Resarch Director of the Institute of Geodynamics (GI/NOA)

Dr. VASILIOS KARASTATHIS - Resarch Director of GI/NOA

Dr NIKOLAOS SIFAKIS - Resarch Director of IAASARS/NOA

Dr. IPHIGENIA KERAMITSOGLOU - Associate Researcher of IAASARS/NOA, Member of Project Managent Board (PMB)

Dr. VASSILIS AMIRIDIS - Associate Researcher IAASARS/NOA, Member of PMB

Dr. GIORGOS BALASIS - Associate Researcher IAASARS/NOA, Member of PMB

Mr. IOANNIS PAPOUTSIS - Research Assistant IAASARS/NOA, Member of PMB

Dr. EMANOUELA IERONYMIDI - Research Assistant of IAASARS/NOA

Ms. ALEXIA TSOUNI – Research Assistant of IAASARS/NOA

Ms. ELENI MARINOU – Research Assistant of IAASARS/NOA

Ms. ELENI CHRISTIA - Head of NOA Greek GEO Office, Member of PMB

Mr. THEMISTOKLIS HEREKAKIS - Computer Assistant - IT Developer of IAASARS/NOA

PARTICIPANT INSTITUTIONS' REPRESENTATIVES :

Mr. MILAN DACIC - Republic Hydrometereological Service of Serbia HIDMET RS – BEYOND Partner

Dr. RONNY ENGELMANN - Leibniz Institute for Tropospheric Research TROPOS DE-BEYOND Partner

Dr. HYWEL GRIFFITHS - Earth Observation Laboratory of the Aberystwyth University (AU-EO) IGES UK - BEYOND Partner

Dr. ALBERTO MAURIZI - Institute of Atmospheric Sciences and Climate of the Italian National Research Council ISAC IT - BEYOND Partner

Dr. SLOBODAN NICKOVIC - Republic Hydrometereological Service of Serbia HIDMET RS - Member of the BEYOND Advisory Committee

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Dr. SALVADOR PABLO - Remote Sensing Laboratory of the University of Valladolid
LATUV ES – BEYOND Partner

Ms EIRINI ALEXIOU – Ministry of Environments and Climate Change - Member of the
BEYOND Advisory Committee

Location & duration :

The meeting was held at NOA premises, Metaxa and Vassileos Pavlou Str, Palea Penteli, Athens, GR 152 36, on Thursday, 18th of July 2013, from 09.30 am to 15.00 pm.

2 OPENING OF THE MEETING

Dr. Charalampos (Haris) Kontoes, Research Director of IAASARS/NOA, Project Coordinator of BEYOND, opened the works of the meeting with a brief presentation of the participants.

3 INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT AND ITS WORK PLAN

Dr. Kontoes in his introductory speech presented the BEYOND project, including the project's goals and strategic objectives, the project's workplan, and timetable, and the working team, the latter referring to the existing NOA research team, the new recruitments, and the personnel of the partnering organizations. He also referred to the Reporting periods of the project, the specific project Deliverables and Milestones, and gave insights on the project's budget and its breakdown per activity/WP. Finally, he presented the Project Management Structure, and the members and roles of the project's Boards and Committees, such as the Project Management Board (PMB), and the Steering & Advisory Committees.

4 PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

Ms.RALITSA ATANASOVA, EU Project Officer proceeded with the presentation of the research potential 2012-2013 framework, providing information on the Programmatic Issues concerning the REGPOT 2012-2013-1 Support Actions call.

She outlined several of the practical issues to be taken into consideration during the project realization, and emphasized on the need for the timely submission (through the electronic submission service EPSS) of the project deliverables, the technical and financial reports. She presented in detail the expected content of the periodic reports, and also referred to which of the costs are considered eligible versus to the ineligible ones, and also the meaning of the direct costs versus the indirect ones. Ms Atanasova gave insights on many of the technical, administrative and financial management issues to be considered by the project management during the project realization. Finally, she clarified the roles of the Coordinator, and the Project Officer, and listed out the obligations of the Coordinator according to the signed DoW and the programmatic issues.

5 Q & A SESSION

At this point several questions were raised concerning the future of the support actions in the framework of the HORIZON 2020. After the invitation of the chairman, Ms. R. Atanasova kindly provided the audience with more information on the funding scheme, which is likely to be promoted for adoption in the framework of the HORIZON 2020 for the support of actions similar to REGPOT. Ms Atanasova stated that there is a working group for the Horizon 2014

– 2020 programme, that will come up soon with a guide on how to implement this initiative in the future, by defining/clarifying issues allowing the best combination/exploitation of the available research and structural funds at European and national level, towards supporting the future capacity building needs.

6 TECHNICAL ASPECTS – PRESENTATION OF BEYOND WPs

This session covered all of the capacity building aspects foreseen in BEYOND, namely the human, infrastructure, and research capacity aspects, through the detailed presentation of the Workpackages of the project and their attributed tasks. In particular :

WP2 : Dr. Charalampos Kontoes, presented the WP2 tasks, the foreseen timetable, and the actions which have been undertaken as well as the ones that are finalized, as far as the recruitment of the new personnel is concerned. He provided the audience with insights on the various job descriptions, expected skills, responsibilities, and qualifications of the persons to be recruited. He presented all of the completed subtasks for announcing the positions in the public media and several dedicated nation and Europe wide web links, for the wider possible distribution of the announcements at national and European level. He explained that the project is currently collecting CVs from experts, an activity which will be finalised by the end of July 2013, after which the evaluation committee will start to evaluate the CVs and draw recommendations on the personnel to be recruited. This process is anticipated to conclude by September 2013, signing the first contracts in October 2013. If however, for some positions, the collected CVs are not as qualified as it would be expected, the positions will remain open and a new round of CV collection will start by the end of September 2013.

- WP3 : Dr.Vassilis Amiridis, Associate Researcher of NOA, member of the PMB and responsible for the WP3, referred to the infrastructure-related capacity building activities within BEYOND, as these were defined in project's DOW. A presentation on NOA's legal framework for the procurements was given, focusing on the bidding procedures that will be initiated for each BEYOND hardware/software component to be acquired. At this point Dr Amiridis asked the researchers responsible for indicative Research Domains (RD) of BEYOND (RD1, RD2, and RD3) to take the floor and present the vision and activities for research capacity building in their own fields within BEYOND.

- Dr Haris Kontoes, referred to the research advancements, services and state-of-the-art that currently recorded at IAASARS/NOA, as far as the floods and fire disasters are concerned. He gave an overview of the existing capacities (research, quality standards, services, and monitoring infrastructures), and presented the ones that will be developed in the framework of BEYOND, through the acquisition of new observation infrastructures (e.g. the X-/L-band satellite acquisition antenna), and the integration/exploitation of the scientific expertise and know-how through the recruitment of high level experts (WP2), and the involvement of the specific personnel of the partnering organizations, as the Earth Observation Laboratory of the Aberystwyth University, the Remote Sensing Laboratory of the University of Valladolid LATUV, the Republic Hydrometeorological Service of Serbia HIDMET, and the Institute of Methodologies for Environmental Analysis of the Department of Earth and Environment of the Italian National Research Council.

-Dr. Iphigenia Keramitsoglou, Associate Researcher of NOA and member of the PMB presented the work done at NOA regarding the urban environment, which is a relatively new activity of IAASARS. She started by explaining the urban heat island (UHI) phenomenon and its effects on heat wave hazard and risk. She then presented the current status at NOA, built upon the participation in ESA-funded projects (UHI and Thermopolis 2009), and the impact of the new infrastructure to be acquired in BEYOND, including a very important software component for the extraction of UHI patterns operationally from land surface temperature

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maps of geostationary and near polar orbit satellites. She gave an overview of the BEYOND activities relevant to the thermal Urban Environment, including the recruitment of an experienced researcher and the twinning with GCU of U. of Valencia and Prof. Sobrino, KCL with Prof. Wooster and NASA Marshall Centre with Dr. D. Quattrochi. At the end she stressed the involvement of NOA in GEO task SB-04 which is dedicated to monitoring the urban environment from Space, and the actions within BEYOND to contribute to this international task.

- Mr Ioannis Papoutsis, research associate of IAASARS/NOA and member of the PMB presented the work done at NOA regarding the monitoring of geophysical disasters via Earth Observation (EO) tools. He provided a concise background on where NOA stands in terms of monitoring geophysical disasters, with respect to the human resources available, existing infrastructural capacities including the NOANET, ENIGMA and NATIONAL Seismological networks, and gathered expertise in applying state-of-the-art interferometric techniques. He then moved on to explain what is the BEYOND's vision in this research domain. He explained that the basic concept is to improve NOA's research capacity by integrating the existing GPS, seismological and magnetometer networks with time-series of EO-based products derived from Synthetic Aperture Radar data, towards fostering interdisciplinary research activities. He elaborated that this will be achieved through the reinforcement of NOA's human resources, the acquisition of targeted s/w infrastructure and the close collaboration with key international research players in the field. He then outlined a series of benchmarks for measuring BEYOND's success and finally went through the upcoming foreseen actions that are scheduled to take place in the forthcoming months.

- Dr. Vassilis Amiridis presented the status of atmospheric research at NOA and the expected contribution of BEYOND on the different atmospheric components in terms of infrastructure and human capacities. Dr. Amiridis focused on the developments related to air pollutant dispersion modeling and the related optimization/validation activities. A detailed description of the lidar-related activities foreseen in BEYOND has been given, as well as the expected impacts of this activity, like the anticipated inclusion of NOA in European infrastructure networks like ACTRIS and ESA satellite cal/val activities.

-Dr. Vasiliki Kotroni, Research Director of IERSD/NOA made a presentation on Atmosphere/Weather related disasters management, main activities of the Institute of Environmental Research and Sustainable Development (IERSD), including operational weather forecasting on regional and local scale, using state-of-the-art meteorological models (BOLAM, MM5 and WRF). The development of a dust forecast module within BEYOND has been described.

At this point, Dr. Slobodan Nickovic (SN - member of the External Advisory Committee of BEYOND) acknowledged that the Lagrangian FLEXPART model selected for BEYOND is ideal for near-real-time smoke dispersion simulations that would be available to the BEYOND portal directly after a forest fire episode. However he suggested that the smoke dispersion models should be envisaged for upgrading after BEYOND in order to include Eulerian model simulations as well in complement to the Lagrangian models. The inclusion of an Eulerian approach (e.g. using the DREAM model) was strongly suggested in order to evaluate the accuracy of FLEXPART simulations through detailed model comparisons.

Then, Dr. Alberto Maurizzi of Institute of Atmospheric Sciences and Climate of Italy of the National Research Council of Italy, suggested that the BEYOND modeling groups should follow the weather forecasting advances that have been discussed and reported under the COST action.

Dr. Athanasios Ganas research director of GI/NOA proposed an alternative application of the MIDAC FTIR instrument to be acquired in the framework of BEYOND, for the estimation of volcanic ash emission parameters over the areas of volcanic activity in Greece, such as the Santorini and Nisyros islands.

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This concluded the presentation of WP3.

WP4 : Ms. Eleni Christia, leader of the WP4 presented the dissemination actions which are foreseen to take place in the framework of BEYOND, and also made reference to the specific WP4 deliverables such as the preparation of the printed and multimedia material for the project, the communication/dissemination actions via the mass media, the development and maintenance of the project's website, the organisation of targeted workshops, the participation to an indicative list of conferences, the publication of scientific papers and the organization of the BEYOND webinars. She also made a reference to the dissemination activities already performed in the first two months of the BEYOND project.

WP 5 : Dr. Iphigenia Keramitsoglou leader of WP5, made a presentation of the Exchange of Know-How and Experience, through the participation and support of fourteen partnering organizations. The organizations are significant players with strong international connections in their domain of expertise. They have major experience in the field of R&D programs at national and international levels. They are committed to support IAASARS/NOA through the tasks they have been attributed. The activities of WP5 include two-way secondments and seminars.

WP6 : Mr. Vangelis Papakonstantinou the consulting solicitor of NOA presented the IPR issues envisaged for study in BEYOND. He made a general presentation of the Exploitation and Intellectual Property Rights, and he analysed in detail the activities to take place in the framework of the Project, in order to secure the proper use the IPR to be developed and disseminated in the form of products and services to the wider stakeholder communities involved in BEYOND. This activity will fully respect the background knowledge ingested in the project, and conclude on a clear indication of the foreground one to be developed for shared use in the framework of BEYOND. Reference was made to the two tasks composing the relevant Work Package (WP6) and their specifics: task 1 referring to two seminars to be held within NOA premises, aiming at introducing and assessing IP rights use and dissemination, and task 2 which refers to the legal support provided throughout the BEYOND project with regard to IP-related matters. The presentation aimed at familiarizing NOA BEYOND group with IP rights management requirements to be handled during the realization of the project.

Before closing the technical session, Dr. Slobodan Nickovic, from the Republic Hydrometeorological Service of Serbia, made an intervention presenting to the audience the preliminary results of using the Fire Spread Limited Area Modelling System (FLAMES) Integrated with the Atmospheric and Aerosol model.

Dr. Kontoes commented that this model looks rather promising and complementary technology/capacity to what has been envisaged and described in BEYOND. He proposed to Dr. Nickovic to examine bilaterally the development of a dedicated to the topic collaboration. Moreover, Dr Kontoes, explained that NOA is capable to provide Dr Nickovic with any fire related validation data sets, and/or fuel data sets needed for the advancement of this common activity in the future.

Finally, Mr. Milan Dacic from the Republic Hydrometeorological Service of Serbia, presented the Integrated Earth Modeling System operated today at the premises of the Hydrometeorological Service of Serbia.

7 CLOSING SESSION

Dr Kontoes summarized the works of the KOM, and initiated the round table discussion inviting the participants for more comments and questions. A number of comments and questions were raised mainly on the definition of a roadmap for the next steps and the timetable to be followed from now on.

Closing the session and the meeting, Dr Kontoes thanked all the participants for their contributions and invited them to the launch that was offered by NOA at the premises of the old Newal Telescope at Penteli premises.

8 ANNEX I

MEETING AGENDA

Time	Presenter	Thursday 18/07/2013
09.30 - 10.00		Arrival of project members and partners Welcome & Registration
10.00 - 10.15		Presentation of participants Brief informal presentation of participants/partnering organisations
10.15-10.50	C. Kontoes (Project Coordinator)	Introduction & Programmatic issues of BEYOND Introduce the goals, agenda and outline of the project Introduction to Contract Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objectives- Relevance of objectives to NOA’s Strategic and Societal Role - Work Breakdown Structure & Tasks - Workplan - Partnering organisations - The NOA Team - Reporting periods - Deliverables - Cost Breakdown per activity - Project Management Board & Steering & Advisory Committees
10.50-11.10	R. Atanasova (Project Officer)	Requirements set by the European Commission Information on Programmatic Issues concerning the REGPOT 2012-2013-1 Support Actions call Any important issues/suggestions for further consideration in BEYOND during project realisation
11.10-11.20	All	Q & A Session
11.20-11.30		Coffee Break
	NOA staff	Technical aspects - scope and objectives per activity in BEYOND
11.30-11.45	C. Kontoes (PC)	WP 2 – Personnel Recruitment - Initiated Actions & Roadmap
	V. Amiridis (PMB member)	WP3 – Infrastructure and Capacity Building - Initiated Actions/Foreseen Activities
11.45-12.00	V. Amiridis	Infrastructure Purchase
12.00-12.15	C. Kontoes	Fires/Floods disaster management
12.15-12.30	I. Keramitsoglou	Urban Environment
12.30-12.45	I. Papoutsis/G. Balasis	Geophysical disasters monitoring
12.45-13.00	V. Amiridis/V. Kotroni	Atmosphere/Weather related disasters management
13.00-13.15	E. Christia	WP4 – Dissemination - Initiated Actions/Foreseen Activities
13.15-13.30	I. Keramitsoglou	WP5 – Exchange of know how & Staff- Initiated Actions/Foreseen Activities
13.30-13.45	G. Balasis	WP6 – IPR - Foreseen Activities
13.45-14.15	All	Round table session on setting up a shared vision for BEYOND Group discussion on identifying the common vision
14.15-14.30	C. Kontoes (PC)	Meeting conclusions
14.30-15.00		Lunch
15.00		Meeting wrap-up

9 ANNEX II

LIST OF PRESENTATIONS

The meeting presentations can be downloaded from the following links;

http://ocean.space.noa.gr/BEYOND/KO_meeting/1_BEYOND_KOM_kontoes_mgt.pdf
http://ocean.space.noa.gr/BEYOND/KO_meeting/2_kick-off_BEYOND_July2013.pdf
http://ocean.space.noa.gr/BEYOND/KO_meeting/3_BEYOND_KOM_kontoes_WP2_recruitment.pdf
http://ocean.space.noa.gr/BEYOND/KO_meeting/4_BEYOND_KOM_Amiridis_WP3.pdf
http://ocean.space.noa.gr/BEYOND/KO_meeting/5_BEYOND_KOM_kontoes_WP3_fires.pdf
http://ocean.space.noa.gr/BEYOND/KO_meeting/6_BEYOND_KOM_Urban_IK_compressed.pdf
http://ocean.space.noa.gr/BEYOND/KO_meeting/7_BEYOND_KOM_geophysical_ver2.pdf
http://ocean.space.noa.gr/BEYOND/KO_meeting/8a_BEYOND_KOM_Amiridis_Atmosphere.pdf
http://ocean.space.noa.gr/BEYOND/KO_meeting/8b_BEYOND_KOM_Kotroni.pdf
http://ocean.space.noa.gr/BEYOND/KO_meeting/9_BEYOND_KOM_eleni_5.pdf
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http://ocean.space.noa.gr/BEYOND/KO_meeting/inv1_Miilan_Dacic_BEYOND_kickoff_meeting_Athens.pdf
http://ocean.space.noa.gr/BEYOND/KO_meeting/inv2_Slobodan_Nickovic_Cedar_Fire_California_Oct_2003_case_large.pdf