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## **DIRECT JOINT ACTIONS**

**Deliverable D.2.2.1 Report on minimum 2  
demonstrative collaborative surveillance actions  
organised**

Split, October 2024

## Direct joint actions

### Deliverable D.2.2.1 Report on minimum 2 demonstrative collaborative surveillance actions organised

#### Report information

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This document was developed by the Association for Nature, Environment and Sustainable Development Sunce and Ugento Municipality.





Report completed 31.10.2024.

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#### Project information

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Start date 1.8.2023.

End date 31.12.2024.

Total budget 249.144 EUR

Project website <https://www.italy-croatia.eu/web/efficientn2k>

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This project is co-funded by the European Union.

This project is co-financed by the Office for Cooperation with NGOs of the Government of the Republic of Croatia. The views expressed in this report are the sole responsibility of the Association for Nature, Environment and Sustainable Development Sunce and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Office for NGOs of the Government of the Republic of Croatia.



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
Office for Cooperation with NGOs

Citation recommendation: Špika, M., Zrnčić, V., Miletić, A., Scordella, G., Dadamo, M., Pinto, M. (2024). *Direct joint actions*. Deliverable D.2.2.1 Report on minimum 2 demonstrative collaborative surveillance actions organised. Interreg Italy – Croatia EFFICIENTN2K Project, 16 pages.





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## 1. INTRODUCTION – EFFICIENTN2K project

In recent years, substantial efforts have been dedicated to creating new protected areas and formulating management plans in alignment with global and EU conservation strategies, especially through establishing the Natura 2000 network. Nevertheless, the primary challenge lies in enhancing on-site management effectiveness, where surveillance and enforcement play pivotal roles in achieving this goal. Because many different institutions have authority over the sea and coastal public maritime domain, coastal and marine protected zones are extremely difficult to manage.

The primary objective of the EFFICIENTN2K project is to enhance surveillance and enforcement within protected coastal and marine Natura 2000 sites in Italy and Croatia, ensuring the preservation of biodiversity and the protection of these vital natural assets. The project intends to improve collaboration between competent organisations in two countries in the field of environment conservation, as well as between individuals and civil society organisations. Because of the ability to share experiences, data, and information, as well as undertake joint measures, cross-border cooperation leads to more effective nature conservation.

The EFFICIENTN2K project is a small-scale project financed by the Interreg Italy-Croatia CBC Programme (Program Priority 5 – Integrated Governance for Stronger Cooperation), started on August 1, 2023 (duration 18 months). The project partners are the Association for Nature, Environment and Sustainable Development Sunce (Sunce) as lead partner and the Municipality of Ugento.



## 2. DIRECT JOINT ACTIONS (A2.2.)

Demonstrative collaborative surveillance actions in Natura 2000 sites were planned in the project proposal to showcase in practice how collaboration can contribute to surveillance and enforcement efficiency. Each partner planned to organise at least one demonstrative collaborative surveillance action, in coordination with a minimum of two competent authorities. Project funds were allocated to support the planning and coordination of these actions and their related direct costs.

This short report summarizes a description of joined actions organised by both partners, institutions involved, results and lessons learned based on internal evaluation of these actions by participants and recommendations for future implementation of similar actions. The report also includes the agenda, participants list, and photos.



### 3. DIRECT JOINT ACTIONS IN CROATIAN NATURE 2000 SITES

Sunce, in collaboration with the Public Institution for Management of Protected Parts of Nature of the Split-Dalmatia County, “Sea and Karst”, organised two demonstrative collaborative surveillance actions in marine Natura 2000 sites during the summer months of 2024. Although the project planned only one joint action, good results and experience from the first one imposed the organisation of the second one.

These joint actions focused on informing nautical tourists about the importance of *Posidonia oceanica* as a priority EU habitat type and the impact of free anchoring on the state of the meadows. *Posidonia oceanica* is on the list of strictly protected species in Croatia. These campaigns within the Natura 2000 area also aim to show that cooperation between different competent authorities at sea can significantly contribute to the effectiveness of protection. Actions and their results were also promoted in the media to raise their profile and general public awareness on issues that Natura 2000 sites are dealing with.

The vast majority of sailors, professional or recreational ones, are people who love the sea and want to preserve it. However, many remain unaware of the critical role *Posidonia* meadows play in the marine ecosystem over which they sail and where they frequently anchor. Besides providing habitat for many marine species, these seagrass meadows reduce coastal erosion, protect beaches, produce oxygen, and improve water quality. Given the slow growth of *Posidonia* meadows, adopting sustainable practices at sea is essential. When anchoring, sailors should avoid *Posidonia* meadows and utilise ecological moorings whenever available.

The first joint action was organised within marine Natura 2000 site HR3000120 Zlatni rat na Braču - podmorje (19<sup>th</sup> July). It is a small marine site located in Bol, in the south part of the Island of Brač. The site covers marine area up to approximately 80 meters distance from the coastline and supports three target habitat types: 1110 Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time, 1120\* *Posidonia* beds (*Posidonia oceanicae*) and 1170 Reefs. *Posidonia* beds are extremely important for the protection of Zlatni Rat Beach which attracts many visitors to the area. Thus, protecting *Posidonia* meadows the beach is also protected.

Besides Sunce and the Public Institution “Sea and Karst,” Grabov rat d.o.o., the Municipality of Bol, and the Split-Dalmatia County (Department of Tourism, Maritime Affairs, and Transport) also participated in joined action. Nautical tourists were approached and informed about *Posidonia*, and the damage anchor can cause on its meadows. Communication materials (leaflets about proper anchoring and waterproof bags) were distributed. Sailors reacted very positively with everyone advised to avoid anchoring over *Posidonia* meadows willingly relocating to other areas. Additional communication leaflets were provided to Grabov rat d.o.o. throughout the summer, enabling them to continue educating nautical tourists about *Posidonia* protection during their regular activities.





Figure 1 Joint action organised within marine Natura 2000 site HR3000120 Zlatni rat na Braču - podmorje (19th July)

The second joint action was organised within marine Natura 2000 site HR3000119 Šćedro - podmorje (21<sup>st</sup> August). The site is located south of the island of Hvar and includes a marine area around Šćedro island, approximately 250 meters distance from the coastline. It supports 5 target habitat types: 1110 Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time, 1120\* *Posidonia* beds (*Posidonium oceanicae*), 1160 Large shallow inlets and bays, 1170 Reefs and 8330 Submerged or partially submerged sea caves. Island Šćedro (without the marine part) has been protected as a significant landscape since 1968. The area attracts many nautical tourists during the summer months. There are mooring sites installed in 2 bays, but there is also free anchoring present around the island and within mooring sites which is prohibited by current maritime laws in Croatia.

Besides Sunce and the Public Institution “Sea and Karst,” Port Authority Hvar, Prijatelji Šćedra d.o.o. (concessionaire), and the Split-Dalmatia County (Department of Tourism, Maritime Affairs, and Transport) participated in joined action. The focus of the action was the same as on previous one, informing nautical tourists about *Posidonia* and the damage the anchor can cause on its meadows, using project communication materials (flyers about proper anchoring and waterproof bags). Sailors coming from Spain and France were familiar with the issue, as these countries had already started with the regulation of anchoring over *Posidonia*. Concessionaire Prijatelji Šćedra d.o.o. pointed out their challenges in managing the sites as they are not authorised to act if someone anchors within their concession site where buoys are placed. Port authorities, despite their ability to take action, often face capacity challenges due to



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insufficient staffing or equipment. As a concessionaire Prijatelji Šćedra d.o.o. also has a legal obligation to collect waste. They distribute “Nautical box” to tourists with bags for separate waste collection and QR codes with lots of valuable information for nautical tourists and they are willing to include info on Posidonia protection for next season. While on the field, it was also noticed that some of the boats discharge wastewater, another problem analysed more in-depth within the EFFICIENTN2K project. For sure, actions targeting this problem in the future are needed.



Figure 2 Joint action organised within marine Natura 2000 site HR3000119 Šćedro - podmorje (21st August)



## 4. DIRECT JOINT ACTIONS IN ITALY

The pilot action carried out by PP2 in the Natural Regional Park “Litorale di Ugento” is an exemplary case of advanced coordination among various institutions and stakeholders operating in the area. The action aimed to strengthen wildfire prevention and control strategies to address the significant threat they pose to protected natural areas. This initiative, implemented in close collaboration with the Municipal Police and the Airspace Control Service of the 61st Wing of the Lecce CTR, was conducted at Galatina Airport, a strategic location for planning and organising monitoring operations.

The primary goal of the action was to identify and monitor the areas within the Park most exposed to wildfire risks, specifically focusing on the zones of Torre San Giovanni, Torre Mozza, and Lido Marini. To achieve this, an innovative technological solution was adopted: the use of a drone. This approach was selected based on the findings of the analysis report conducted during the initial phase of the EFFICIENTN2K project. The drones proved to be particularly effective in surveying vast territories quickly and accurately, enhancing the capacity for rapid response and prevention of fires.

A key factor in the success of this action was the involvement and coordination of all stakeholders operating in the area, as listed on the D-Flight portal. Specifically, nine local operators were engaged: Aerop Lecce-Lepore, ASD Salento Fly, Avios Corte, Avios Fondone Lecce, Avios Melendugno S. Andrea, Campo di Volo Condor, Campo Volo Gemini, Campo Volo Pietralata, and Campo Volo Gallipoli. The collaboration between these operators and the Park ensured a synergistic control of aerial activities, avoiding interferences and promoting the safety and effectiveness of monitoring operations. The Airspace Control Service granted formal authorisation for the use of airspace on August 2, 2024, through protocol note no. 22774. Subsequently, the Park planned and conducted several monitoring days, actively involving the Municipal Police and promptly informing local operators. Monitoring activities were carried out on August 30, 2024, September 3, 6, 10, and 15, 2024, with additional operations conducted from October 21 to 25, 2024, and from October 28 to 31, 2024. This schedule allowed for continuous monitoring during and beyond the period of greatest fire risk.

It is worth noting that the pilot action was launched during the period officially designated by the Apulia Region as the "state of high wildfire risk throughout the territory," which spans from June 15 to September 30. This scheduling ensured that prevention activities aligned with the most critical timeframe for protecting natural areas. The early communication, issued in July via press releases, regarding the initiation of wildfire monitoring activities with drones, played a crucial role in raising awareness among the public and local stakeholders. Furthermore, continuous updates on the ongoing monitoring contributed to reinforcing collective vigilance, leading to tangible results.



Although official data on 2024 wildfires from the Geoportal of Forest Fire Incidents of the Carabinieri Forestale Corps are not yet available, initial analyses from the EFFIS (European Forest Fire Information System) highlight a significant reduction in fires compared to the 2023 fire season in monitored areas. These positive results are further corroborated by observations from local representatives, who reported a clear decrease in fire incidents thanks to precise monitoring and prompt intervention.

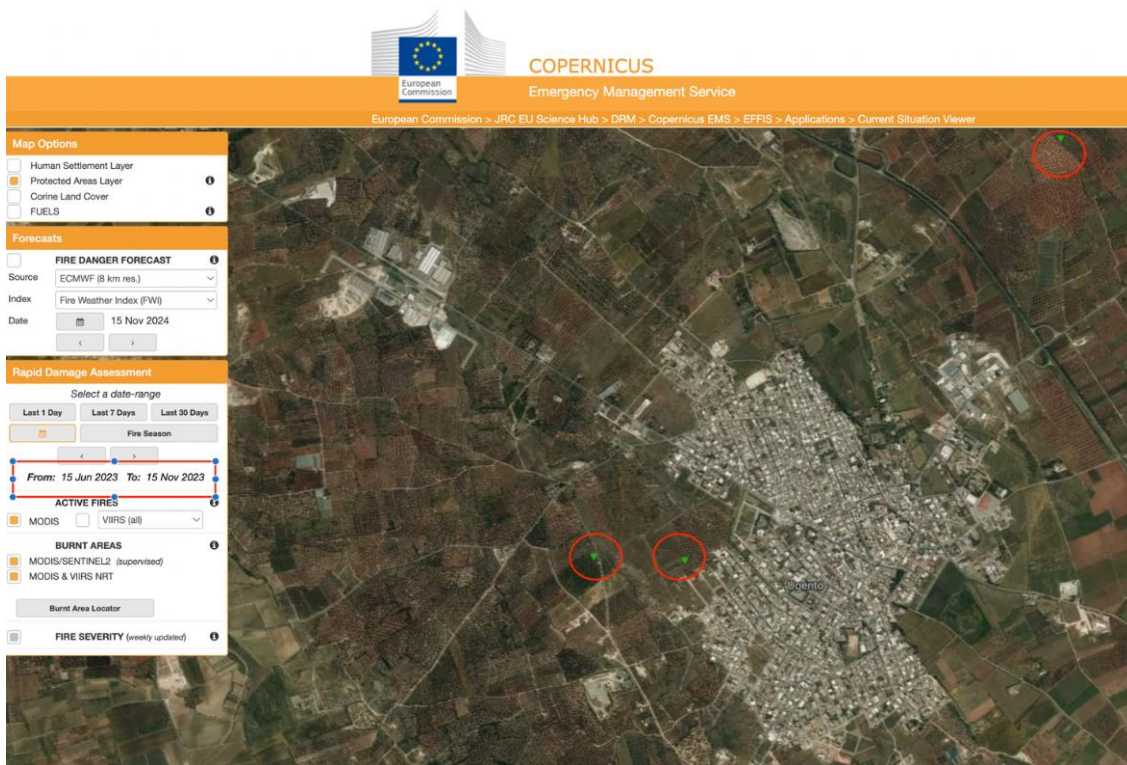


Figure 3 Date Platform EFFIS from 15th June 2023 to 15th November 2023





Figure 4 Date Platform EFFIS from 15th June 2024 to 15th November 2024

Finally, the EFFICIENTN2K project will ensure the continuation of these activities, with the Park maintaining close collaboration with local law enforcement agencies, consolidating prevention strategies, and guaranteeing increasingly effective protection of the territory and its valuable natural resources.



Figure 5 Sites where monitoring actions were conducted





*Figure 6 Sites where monitoring actions were conducted*



*Figure 7 Sites where monitoring actions were conducted*



## 5. MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants from the institutions involved evaluated both joint actions. Evaluation forms were emailed to them to identify lessons learned and recommendations for similar actions in the future. The project team also evaluated these actions internally. Here we summarised the main conclusions and recommendations arising from the implementation of this project activity:

- Participants in Croatia evaluated positive intersectoral cooperation, professional and educational approach towards nautical tourists, as well as their interest in cooperation. They recommend paying special attention to local factors when organising these actions. Nautical tourism has its daily and weekly dynamics, which should be considered when planning this kind of action on the field (time of the day, day within the week). Including the local community in the planning process is recommended as they can provide information on these trends on the local level.
- Informative, awareness-raising campaigns on the field (going from boat to boat) prove to be effective ways to reduce the impact of anchoring on *Posidonia* meadows. It is important to plan ahead with all involved to agree on the main goal, concept and program, individual roles and the message we want to send as time is very limited during this type of action (boat to boat approach).
- Communication materials (leaflets and dry bags) were well received by tourists during joint actions in Croatia. Leaflets are still very useful tools in communication with nautical tourists, although we would recommend combining them with QR codes to lower environmental impact.
- In addition to informing nautical tourists on the value of *Posidonia* and the impact of anchoring, it is very important to provide information on other options (nearby mooring sites or sand areas where anchors have lower impact). Other communication challenges identified on the field included misunderstanding of nautical tourists on the meaning of the upside-down anchor symbol in the locations and non-compliance with the information provided within nautical charts and apps.
- Having an institution constantly present on the field (local public authorities, concessionaires), aware and oriented towards marine protection is crucial. Then good initiatives that come from the regional or national level will have an accelerating and more positive impact.
- The current capacities of Croatian local port authorities are significantly limited, hindering effective surveillance in the maritime domain. Enhancing these capacities will need to be a future priority to ensure more efficient protection of marine environments.
- Experience gained from these actions shows that one of the possibly most effective strategies to improve protection on the field is local awareness-raising campaigns, implemented through networking and cooperation of responsible institutions. This has proven to be extremely important as a precautionary measure to reduce the negative impact of human activities.



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- These types of actions are well received in media as they represent a concrete action on the field. Involving media before an action or inviting some media representative to join the action can also be a good way to further raise awareness of the public on these issues.
- Proactive and preventive public awareness campaigns and activities should always follow joined actions to engage local communities and tourists, highlighting the importance of environmental protection and the measures being implemented.
- Usage of advanced technology during joined actions, especially drones, proves to be very effective in covering larger areas and identifying high-risk zones quickly.
- Strengthening collaboration and coordination of local authorities, operators, and stakeholders when using advanced technology through regular meetings and clear operational protocols is important to avoid interferences and maximize operational efficiency.
- It is important to continue to enhance operational capacities and invest in the training and equipment of local authorities to increase the efficiency of surveillance and enforcement actions. Advocacy toward regional and national institutions for greater support is important in ensuring adequate resources and greater relevance for protection activities.
- Integrated structured evaluation tools would be useful to measure the effectiveness and impact of activities. This could then assist in identifying best practices that can be replicated in other areas.





## 6. ANNEXES



### Zajedničke akcije na terenu unutar Natura 2000 područja Zlatni rat na Braču – podmorje (HR3000120)

Interreg Italy – Croatia EFFICIENTN2K

19. srpnja 2024.

#### PROGRAM Četvrtak, 18. srpnja 2024.

8:00 – 9:30	Okupljanje na Zenti: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/PtYEcWrb7nFhreMX8">https://maps.app.goo.gl/PtYEcWrb7nFhreMX8</a> Polazak prema Bolu na Braču brodom JU More i krš
9:30 – 10:00	Dolazak u Bol, Brač - kod Lanterne na pristaništu od katamarana <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/RiPui9UwZGR3zqyC7">https://maps.app.goo.gl/RiPui9UwZGR3zqyC7</a> Ukrcaj sudionika iz Bola
10:00 – 13:00	Zajednička akcija na terenu Zlatni rat na Braču – podmorje (HR3000120) Obilazak i informiranje nautičara
13:00 – 16:30	Povratak u Bol Organizirani ručak Sastanak vezano za potencijalnu regulaciju sidrenja
16:30 – 18:00	Polazak prema uvali Blace Obilazak i informiranje nautičara
18:00 – 19:30	Povratak u Split

Ovaj projekt sufinancira Europska unija i Ured za udruge Vlade Republike Hrvatske. Organizacija akcije je isključiva odgovornost partnera na projektu i ne odražavaju nužno stav Europske unije niti Ureda za udruge Vlade Republike Hrvatske.



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Anex 1 Program of direct joint action Zlatni rat, Brač



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Zajedničke akcije na terenu unutar Natura 2000 područja

Zlatni rat na Braču – podmorje (HR3000120)

19.7.2024., Split

Ovaj projekt sufinancira Europska unija i Ured za udruge Vlade Republike Hrvatske. Organizacija akcije je isključiva odgovornost partnera na projektu i ne odražavaju nužno stav Europske unije niti Ureda za udruge Vlade Republike Hrvatske.





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11.					
12.					
13.					
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15.					

Anex 2 List of participants on direct joint action in Zlatni rat, Brac





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**Zajedničke akcije na terenu unutar Natura 2000 područja -  
HR3000119 Šćedro - podmorje**

Interreg Italy – Croatia EFFICIENTN2K

**21. kolovoza 2024.**

**PROGRAM**  
**Srijeda, 21. kolovoza 2024.**

8:00	Okupljanje na Zenti <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/PIYEcWrb7nFhreMX8">https://maps.app.goo.gl/PIYEcWrb7nFhreMX8</a> Polazak prema Šćedru brodom JU More I krš
10:00 – 10:30	Dolazak na otok Šćedro
10:30 – 13:30	Zajednička akcija na terenu HR3000119 Šćedro - podmorje Obilazak i informiranje nautičara
13:30 – 16:00	Organizirani ručak
16:00 – 18:30	Povratak u Split

Ovaj projekt sufinancira Europska unija i Ured za udruge Vlade Republike Hrvatske. Organizacija akcije je isključiva odgovornost partnera na projektu i ne odražavaju nužno stav Europske unije niti Ureda za udruge Vlade Republike Hrvatske.



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Anex 3 Program of joint action on Šćedro

