



Autumn School “Protection of The Sea: Adopting Co-Created Methods Of (Public) Participation”

September 21-25 2024 Location: Università di Bari – Sede di Taranto

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Septentrio Reports 1, 2024



Figure 1 The Autumn School participants at the University of Bari – Sede di Taranto. Picture: Igor Peftiyev.



2021
2030 United Nations Decade
of Ocean Science
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<https://doi.org/7557/7.7859> Poto et al: Autumn School “Protection of The Sea: Adopting Co-Created Methods Of (Public) Participation”. Septentrio Reports 1 (2024).

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Summary

This report details a 4-day Autumn School held at the University of Bari, Sede di Taranto, a joint project endorsed by the UN Ocean Decade and funded by DAAD. The event involved academic collaborations with the University of Bayreuth and the University of Turin (Department of Management). The school's focus was on the protection of human rights at sea, sea rights, and living by the sea. It included an experiential learning day in partnership with the Jonian Dolphin Conservation in Taranto, followed by a three-day workshop. During these sessions, students from Germany and Italy engaged in building co-created projects that addressed challenges connected to Agenda 2030 and SDG 14 (and 3, 5, 15, 16, 17).

Acknowledgments

We extend our heartfelt thanks to DAAD for their generous funding, as well as to UiT The Arctic University of Norway for co-funding this initiative (The Ocean Incubator Network UArctic 580512124). Our gratitude also goes to the University of Bari - Sede di Taranto for their warm hospitality in hosting us. A special acknowledgment is due to the wonderful team at the Jonian Dolphin Conservation, particularly Vittorio, Lia, and Clara, for providing an unforgettable experience at sea with the dolphins. Additionally, we are grateful to Laura Vita, Melina Lang, Marcelle Dabbah, Rada Pandeva, Dana Ahmed and the staff from the organizing institutions for their invaluable support throughout the entire workshop.

Structure and content of the Autumn School

Co-creation to Protect Human and Sea Rights and to Sustainable Living by the Sea

From September 21st to 25th, 2024, Eva Lohse, Annamaria Bonomo, Margherita Paola Poto, and Laura Vita led the Autumn School on the Protection of the Sea and Human Rights at Sea, hosted at the University of Bari, Sede di Taranto (Italy). This educational event, funded by DAAD and endorsed by the UN Ocean Decade for Sustainable Development, involved academic institutions including the University of Bayreuth, the University of Turin Department of Management Valter Cantino, and UiT The Arctic University of Norway. Additionally, the Jonian Dolphin Conservation in Taranto played a significant non-academic role organizing the first day of experiential activity at sea. The program attracted over 30 participants, ranging from Master's and Bachelor's students in law, biochemistry, geography, education, and management. The four-day experience included an experiential learning activity with dolphins at sea and a three-day workshop. During the workshop, students engaged in co-creating projects that leveraged knowledge from keynote speeches covering sea rights, extreme environments, and human rights at sea. They were divided into groups and tackled sea-related challenges connected to SDG 14 (Life Below Water), SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), and other relevant SDGs (3, 5, 15, 16), fostering a comprehensive and collaborative learning environment.



Figure 3 Dolphins in the Gulf of Taranto. Photo: Igor Peftiyev.



Figure 4 Searching for dolphins at sea, Jonian Dolphin Conservation. Photo: Igor Peftiyev



*Figure 5 From left: Eva Lohse, Giuliana Panieri, Annamaria Bonomo, Laura Vita, Margherita Paola Poto.
Photo: Igor Peftiyev.*



Figure 6 The Project organizers welcoming the participants. Photo: Igor Peftiyev.

Day 1: Day at Sea

The Autumn School kicked off with an experiential learning activity organized in collaboration with the [Jonian Dolphin Conservation](#) (JDC). Participants embarked on a catamaran journey through the Gulf of Taranto, navigating the mare piccolo (small sea) and mare grande (big sea), guided by marine biologists from JDC. The day was filled with dolphin watching and insightful discussions about cetaceans and their living conditions. The activity concluded at the JDC center with a documentary screening and a tour of the lab and facilities, providing a comprehensive understanding of marine biology and marine life protection in the Gulf of Taranto.

Day 2: Keynote Speakers and Group Work Kick-off

The second day began with keynote speeches from experts including Annamaria Bonomo (University of Bari, Sede di Taranto), Valeria Berros (Universidad Nacional del Litoral and CONICET researcher in Argentina; UPO and Speak4Nature), Violeta Radovich (University of Kiel/formerly Bayreuth), Thoko Kaimé and Isabel Zundel (University of Bayreuth), Giuliana Panieri (UiT The Arctic University of Norway and University of Turin), Eva Lohse and Irina Lawrenz (University of Bayreuth Margherita Paola Poto and Laura Vita (University of Turin and UiT The Arctic University of Norway), and Stephanie Heckman

(visual facilitator). These presentations covered the Autumn School's overarching themes: protection of the sea, human rights at sea, and living by the sea.



Figure 7 From left: Annamaria Bonomo, Eva Lohse, Margherita Paola Poto, Laura Vita. Photo: Igor Peftiyev.

In the afternoon, participants gathered in the Community Lab at the University of Bari – Sede di Taranto to start brainstorming and developing their group projects. The day concluded with a sharing of preliminary results and collection of feedback.



Figure 8 Group work and reporting. Photo: Igor Peftiyev.



Figure 9 Group work at the Community Hub. Photo: Igor Peftiyev.

Day 3: Group Work Continuation

Dedicated entirely to group work, the third day saw participants deeply engaged in developing their projects. Four groups tackled different sea-related challenges, integrating their newfound knowledge into co-created projects. Progress was documented in booklets designed and created by Laura Vita and co-developed by

Marcelle Dabbah. The day ended with a session to collect further feedback and ideas, enriching the collaborative process.



Figure 10 Booklet cover. Created by Laura Vita and Marcelle Dabbah. Illustrations: Valentina Russo

Day 4: Project Presentations

The final day was highlighted by the presentation of group projects. Each presentation showcased creative ways to interlink SDG 14 with other SDGs such as SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 15 (Life on Land), and SDG 16 (Peace,

Justice, and Strong Institutions). This culminating event underscored the co-creative spirit of the workshop, emphasizing mutual care for each other and for the ocean.



Figure 11 Final presentations. Photo: Annamaria Bonomo.

Participants

Key participants included Bachelor, Master's and PhD Students from the University of Bayreuth, the University of Bari and University of Turin. Keynote speakers affiliated with the partner institutions were invited to give their insights to the workshop (on sea protection, extreme environments, human rights protection and visual co-creation). The team of the Jonian Dolphin Conservation contributed to the insights of the first day of experiential learning.

Workshops Outcomes

- Strengthened collaboration between German academic institutions and Italian academic and research institutions
- Commitment to finding common solutions to protect human rights, sea rights and sustainable living by the sea
- Commitment to strengthen existing collaborative networks.
- Enhancement of staff and student exchanges.

Ways forward and the next steps

Following the productive Autumn School, the team members agreed to publish the project results on the e-learning platform created at the University of Bayreuth, as well as to publish blogposts on the section of the University of Bayreuth. Senior academics also agreed to develop a co-authored open access book on the theme of co-creation and protection of the sea, sea rights and sustainable marine living.

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Websites

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[The ECO CARE Project](#)

[ECO CARE Instagram profile](#)

[Foraminifera Activity Box](#)

[Department of Geosciences, UiT The Arctic University of Norway](#)

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[Ocean Incubator Network](#)