

## **Project Update: March 2022**

From October 2021 to February 2022, 19 land and boat surveys were carried out in the Montenegrin territorial waters, due to the bad weather conditions, whereas the bottlenose dolphins were sighted for 12 days. Therefore, in this period we were more focused on public awareness and education, with overall 11 public outreach activities. We were invited by NGO Our Action to hold a presentation for their project “Youth for a clean Adriatic” in Boka Bay in October 2021. Our presentation “Blue Engineers of Montenegro” was focused on economic and ecological importance of marine top predators, the dolphins, and the impact of plastic pollution on the entire marine ecosystem. We held few more presentations about cetacean species and threats they are facing in Montenegro and why our research is important as well as the importance of the local community in the conservation of marine ecosystem. Our second presentation took place in Dukley Academy in Budva in February 2022, after which one we spoke about collaboration in our future public awareness activities. Also, we held three presentations, in three different classes in the Primary School in Bar in February 2022. Pupils from that age started to learn about mammals, thus the topic of our presentation was connected with the biology lessons they currently have in the school. Due to our previous collaboration with the primary school, we spoke about our future collaboration, not only in giving educational presentations, with which ones they were very satisfied, but also in other public outreach activities. Besides Montenegro, we visited international schools in Turkey on two different dates, where we held a presentation to the first and second year pupils about the cetacean species which are present in Montenegro and the Mediterranean, as well as about the threats they are facing and how we can help them, as well as in Science Club from Turkey. In collaboration with a manager of Ecolabel Crna Gora doo, based in Utjeha, Bar, we organised a meeting with German community in Bar, where we spoke about our long – term research, main problems for the marine ecosystem and how to help its conservation in Montenegro.

Apart from it, the project leader was invited by IPC Tehnopolis to participate in BioTours Youth Camp “Researcher for a Day” organised under Interreg IPA CBC between 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021 in Kotor. The project leader presented results of our research since 2016, where The Rufford Foundation was mentioned, since they supported not only our current but also our previous projects as well, for what we are immensely grateful. Further, the project leader was invited by Women of Impact which publish stories of women from western Balkans and portal Dnevno, based in Podgorica, to give interviews about her work on marine mammals in Montenegro in January and February, where The Rufford Foundation was mentioned too. The interview with Women of Impact is already published and the other one will be published very soon. Additionally, we have arranged a meeting with Environmental Agency in March.







