



## PRESS RELEASE

Athens, 12 October 2021

### ICBSS Webinar on “Climate crisis: natural hazards, climate change impact and countermeasures in the Black Sea region”

The International Centre for Black Sea Studies ([ICBSS](http://www.icbss.org)) successfully organized the webinar on “**Climate crisis: natural hazards, climate change impact and countermeasures in the Black Sea region**”, on Tuesday 12 October 2021.

The webinar aimed to bring together stakeholders from the Black Sea countries, regional and international organisations, to share the latest data on climate change and natural hazards in the Black Sea countries, as well as, to discuss mitigation measures and a socio-economic response for the region.

Under the moderation of **Mr. Renaud LAYADI**, Senior Adviser, Brittany Region (France), CPMR Climate Task Force Coordination Team, the distinguished panelists, **Dr. Lyudmil IKONOMOV**, Executive Director at the Institute for Ecological Modernisation of Bulgaria, Prof. **Dr. Baris SALIHOGLU**, Director, Institute of Marine Science, Middle East Technical University (METU), **Mr. Irakli MEGRELIDZE**, Deputy Head at the Hydrometeorology Dept. of National Environment Agency of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, **Ms. Diana HARUTYUNYAN**, Climate Change Program Manager at UNDP Armenia, **Dr. Alexandr VOLKOV**, Ph.D. in Technology, Ecology and Engineering Faculty Dean, Sochi State University, **Dr. Tatiana KARMINSKAYA**, Ph.D. in Technology, Science Advisor, Leading Researcher, Sochi State University and **Prof. Dr. Valeriy KHOKHLOV**, Vice Rector of the Odessa State Environmental University, exchanged views on the climate change impact and countermeasures in the Black Sea region from their perspective.

The opening remarks were delivered by the ICBSS Director General, **Mr. Georgios MITRAKOS**, who stressed that “*we have to take into consideration the fact that climate change has a cross-border impact and of course, major socio-economic consequences*”. The ICBSS DG underlined the “*need for a continuous international cooperation as well as a mutual scientific support*”, from which the “*Black Sea Region could not be exception*” as he mentioned. “*Effective measures to mitigate this situation should be taken immediately*” concluded Mr. Mitrakos.

In continuation, **H.E. Ambassador Mr. Lazăr COMĂNESCU**, Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS, upon complimenting ICBSS on the organization of such timely webinar, he briefly described BSEC’s initiatives and actions towards combating the “*three-planetary crises that threaten our future*”, as he characterized *the a) climate crisis, b) biodiversity and nature crisis, c) the pollution and waste crisis*. In addition, he considered the cooperation of the BSEC Member States a matter of utmost importance, that will contribute to the desired level of immediate action in regional level, and finally, he highlighted the added value of the expertise that the ICBSS offers to the BSEC community.

Following the opening remarks, panelists were invited in a constructive exchange with the moderator on the challenges and priorities of their respective countries in relation to climate change and its effect on natural disasters. Among the discussion points were the level of decentralization of mechanisms, i.e. water management, forest management, the role of Regional Authorities in disaster prevention and management, the existence of emergency plans when the situation emerges. Furthermore, the discussants emphasized issues such as the information and data exchange flow, the cooperation among the scientific communities in the Black Sea region and the level of science-policy dialogue and cooperation. Summing up, they expressed their opinions regarding the existence or non-existence of a regional mechanism to support data exchange, cooperation and regional response to the climate change effect.

Closing the online event, **Mr. Georgios MITRAKOS**, ICBSS DG, informed the audience about the organization of a forthcoming webinar on the cooperation in civil protection, as a holistic approach of the thematic topic discussed is among the ICBSS's priorities.

This was the tenth of a [series of webinars](#) planned by the ICBSS on key issues targeting the wider Black Sea region.



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**About the ICBS:** The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBS) was founded in 1998 as a non-profit organisation. It has since fulfilled a dual function. On the one hand, it is an independent research and training institution focusing on the wider Black Sea region. On the other hand, it is a related body of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and serves as its acknowledged think-tank. Thus, the ICBS pursues applied, policy-oriented research, promotes knowledge on the Black Sea region both within and outside its boundaries, and offers policy advice with the aim to foster multilateral cooperation among the BSEC member states as well as with their international partners.