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**INTEGRATED ECOTOURISM MANAGEMENT IN INDONESIA (INTEM)**

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Ref.: INTEM Project Information Sheet No. 4

Dear INTEM Project Partners,

Following our pleasant and successful ‘Second INTEM Meeting’ in Chania, held from 30 September - 7 October 2019 and kindly hosted by our partner institution the *Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chana* (MAICH), Greece, I am pleased to send you herewith the INTEM Project Information Sheet No. 4, in which I would like to provide you with up-to-date information on the follow-up activities after the ‘Second Meeting’, the critical current state of the progress of our joint Project, and its implications for the next envisaged activities of the time schedule of our INTEM project in the forthcoming Phase II “Development”, as follows:

‘Second INTEM Meeting’ at MAICH

The participation of participants in the ‘second meeting’ in Chania, well prepared during the preceding months since April 2019, showed again the joint enthusiasm and generally well-prepared presentations of representatives from the partners/beneficiaries of the INTEM Project Consortium, who were joining the meetings.

As indicated in the Programme of the ‘Second Meeting’, the partner institution/host in Chania – MAICH – has made every effort to provide the INTEM Project with excellent meeting facilities and stylish opening- and conclusion ceremonies, all pertaining to an enthusiastic spirit of cooperation to reach the objectives of the meeting as planned.

Similarly, the accommodation in the stone villa’s on the campus, including the breakfast and dinner facilities were excellent, as well as the outstanding transport arrangements for the fieldwork trips to Samaria Gorge and the Botanical Garden of Crete contributed to the very positive and inspiring atmosphere of the overall successful meeting. In conclusion of the ‘second INTEM meeting’, it has to be noted that a few unexpected disappointments with related problems emerged from the meeting, such as:

- the partly or full absence or early departure of some participants from the meeting creating unforeseen problems of reduced input from the participating institution concerned.

Ultimatum Letter to Prof. Stolker (cf. 3 convocations)

An important task of the meeting referred to the way in which the Consortium decided how to cope with the growing lack of organisational, administrative and financial support from Leiden University as the Coordinating Institution for the proper implementation of the project as contractually has been agreed upon in the *Grant Agreement* of 17.1.2019 and the *Multilateral Partnership Agreement,* for which preparation so much input has been given from all of us, while so far, unfortunately, Prof. Stolker refused to undersign this already overdue document, important for the further implementation of the Project (*cf.* Annex 1).

The joint partners coming together at MAICH, strengthened by the visit on their own initiative of 3 high university authorities from the 2 Indonesian partners UNPAD and UPI, eventually decided to provide a well-documented complaint and pose an ultimatum to the Legal Representative Prof. Stolker in an attempt to redress the situation at Leiden University and safeguard the project from premature abortion, and as such submit a claim of 8 points by their joint letter of 30.9.2019 in order to facilitate the restoration of the initially acknowledged support of Leiden University.

Unfortunately, after initial ignorance of our ultimatum, a belated letter and an email on resp. 30.10.019 and 20.11.2019 were sent directly to some participants, in which only the complaints were denied and the facts twisted in an effort to escape from gross negligence and breach of obligations by Prof. Stolker as the Legal Representative of Leiden University being the Coordinating Institution.

In reaction to such reprehensible response from Prof. Stolker, the partners alerted the Agency by a wll-documented letter from the Project Manager of 12.12.2019, undersigned by the partners, in which the misrepresentations of the untruth and false accusations of Prof. Stolker could be easily disproved.

In the meantime, the Agency of the EU in Brussels had eventually been convinced that the lack of support in many respects would threaten the proper progress of the Project, and therefore invited Prof. Stolker to come to Brussels in order to account for his responsibility of the mismanagement of the INTEM Project which invitations have completely been ignored (cf. Annexes 2, 3 & 4).

In the convocations, the Agency warned Prof. Stolker that in case no response was given and no solution was found, the coordinating position of Leiden University would be taken away, or the project could even be discontinued because of the lack of his support with all the negative international implications for all stakeholders.

Meanwhile, as the Agency at last also recognised the breach of obligations from Leiden University, it decided to delegate one of the Project Officers Mrs. G. Bruno to organise a Monitoring Meeting with the Indonesian counterparts and the Project Manager in Jakarta on 25 November 2019 in order to assess the situation in Indonesia being the target country of the Project.

During the meeting, kindly hosted by our partner Trisakti School of Tourism (TST), not only the lack of support was further substantiated, but also the determination of the partners was expressed to continue the project with all possible means and not let Prof. Stolker prematurely abort the project for no valid reason whatsoever.

When eventually Prof. Stolker realised the seriousness of his problem, he made a last-minute direct attempt to our partners to safe his face by seeking a deal with any partner to take over the position of Coordinating Institution. Apart from the fact that the decision of such transfer is to be taken by the Agency with the unanimous agreement of all partners/beneficiaries, Leiden University would have to pay from its own funds the costs of such transfer, as neither the project budget nor the Agency would have the funds for such transaction.

As such deal, proposed by Prof. Stolker to MAICH was not realised because of Leiden University’s refusal to pay such overhead costs by itself, while payment from the project budget would be misuse of public funds, Prof. Stolker ignored the convocation and sent out a team of his ‘representatives’ to the meeting in Brussels, comprising the temporary Dean of the Faculty of Science, supported by 3 lawyers to defend their case of lack of support against the Project Manager, who was only accompanied by his wife.

Prof. Slikkerveer noted that he had expected a discussion of the current problem at the usual academic level with Prof. Stolker which he has sought to take place in his repeated letters to Prof. Stolker, but instead he was now confronted with a temporary Dean and three lawyers looking for judicial arguments to escape from the lack of support from Leiden University being the ultimate reason for the actual critical meeting at the Agency.

During the meeting, chaired by Mr. R. Rahders, Head of Unit 4 of the Agency, the Project Manager got the opportunity to disprove the blunt untruths and misrepresentations, repeated in front of the Chairman and the Project Officers of the Agency.

Following the fundamental question of the Chairman to the Dean, as how it was possible that Leiden University refused to pay the Project Manager and the Project-Assistant from the earmarked funds from the Project budget, as has been agreed upon in the Grant Agreement, while these two project staff have been working for the Project for almost one year, Prof. Slikkerveer added that he had requested these payments already before the start of the project, and that also other payments for the project have been delayed or refused, including the payment of the costs of the accommodation of participants at the Second Meeting at MAICH (Euro 12.400), the payment of the costs for the transport and accommodation of the Indonesian partners and the Project Manager for the EU Monitoring Meeting in Jakarta (Euro 3.850), and the costs of educational equipment (3 x Euro 65.000), all underscoring the incompetence of IBL to provide proper financial management to international cooperation projects.

Prof. Slikkerveer added that such mismanagement of the project finances by IBL as the unforseen institute which had taken the project and its funds away from the LEAD Programme being the contractually agreed Executing Organsation, only undermined his position, and that he had to write several letters of apology to third parties on behalf of Leiden University to save the growing embarrassment.

Prof. Slikkerveer repeated the demand of the Consortium that Leiden University should comply with the regulations clearly formulated and contractually agreed upon with the Agency in the *Grant Agreement* and its Annexes of 17.1.2019, in terms of the LEAD Programme being the Executing Agency of the Project (and not the Institute of Biology which had taken the project and its funds away from the LEAD Programme), the establishment of the realisation of the required economic affiliation of agreed project staff, proper financial management of the budget and its earmarked funds for specific activities in terms of staff costs, travel and accommodation costs, and funds for educational equipment for Indonesian partners UNPAD, UPI and TST.

In reaction to the Dean who tried to downgrade the LEAD Programme as a *quantité négligeable*, Prof. Slikkerveer responded that the LEAD Programme is a Spearpoint Programme of Leiden University since 1987, working in the newly-developing field of applied ethnoscience with excellent scientific and financial results of international publications, international Master Courses (3), international cooperation projects (5) and an extended network of scientists and institutions in Southeast Asia, East Africa and the Mediterranean Region, and 24 PhD Fellows, rendering LEAD most qualified to coordinate the INTEM Project, as it has successfully implemented the previous projects over the past decades.

In case that Leiden University remains as a project partner in the INTEM Consortium – as is suggested in writing by Prof. Stolker - the Project Coordinator and the partners will hold on to the position of the Project manager, the project-Assistant and the LEAD Programme as the executing organisation of project activities at Leiden University with its expertise in the field of *integrated ecotourism management* as has contractually been agreed upon in the *Grant Agreement* of 17.1.2019, and which is not available at IBL or elsewhere in the Faculty or University.

Agreement reached at the Meeting at the Agency

After a lot of discussions and exchange of opinions, eventually, the following agreements have been reached, as summarised by the Chairman

1. Leiden University will pay the still unpaid costs of the salaries of the Project Manager (Prof. Slikkerveer) and the Project-Assitant (Dr. Saefullah), the costs of MAICH regarding the accommodation of participants at the Second INTEM Meeting at MAICH of September/October 2019, and the travel & accommodation costs for the time being made by Prof. Slikkerveer out of his own pocket for the joint Monitoring Meeting in Jakarta;
2. Leiden University will make an effort to convince MAICH to take over the Coordinating Responsibility of the Project Consortium, which is taken away from Leiden University because of its lack of support through the intervention of the Agency by the end of January 2020, without payment for the transfer to MAICH of ‘overhead costs’ from the project funds or from any other funds from the Agency;
3. If such transfer of Coordination would be reached, Leiden University will finalise its account of all financial obligations as provide for in the Project budget for the first year of the Project, *i.e*. from 15.1.2019 – 15.1.2020.
4. If such transfer as expected would not be realised, another eligible partner in- or outside the Project Consortium would not be found with the approval of the Agency and the Partners/Beneficiaries of the INTEM Project Consortium on short notice, there is a chance that the project will be stopped altogether by the Agency;
5. The Project Manager remarked that in such case the partners will not accept that their funds are taken away as the result of the mismanagement of their project by Leiden University, and that in that case the partners will file a claim for the entire subsidy and extra costs against Leiden University up until a formal international judicial case in court, as is provided for in the *Grant Agreement.*in case no amicable solution is found;
6. As regards the running project activities, being completed so far as the result of the extra input of the (unpaid) Project Manager and the (unpaid) Project-Assistant with the full support and input of the partners, and the envisaged activities of the next Phase of the Tutor Training in Leiden and Chania from 20 January forthcoming onwards, for which already many preparations in The Netherlands, Greece and Indonesia have been underway, the Chairman advised that these activities should be postponed until a solution of the problem of the position of the Coordinating Institution of the Project would be found, which should be reached before the end of January forthcoming.

The implications of the outcome of the meeting at the Agency include the unfortunate postponement of the execution of the envisaged Third Project Meeting in Leiden and the start of the Tutor Training Programme in Leiden and in Chania, scheduled to begin on 20 January forthcoming.

Notwithstanding, the strong determination of the partners beneficiaries of the IMTEM Project Consortium to continue the Project as agreed upon in the *Grant Agreement* and the *Multilateral Partnership Agreement*, as yet uncompleted by Prof. Stolker, provides the spirit to continue, and not allow Prof Stolker to abort our project out of personal jealousy and animosity, and as such blocking the scientific inter-university cooopeation between HEI’s in The Netherlands, Greece and Indonesia.

While I hope to keep you informed about the further development of the envisaged transfer of coordination of our INTEM Project Consortium, and the related activities, I thank you for your attention and unflagging

support of our project for the benefit of Indonesia.

 With kind regards,

 Prof.Dr. L. Jan Slikkerveer

 INTEM Project Manager

 **L. Jan Slikkerveer**

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Annexes: 4