

Minutes of the 1st Black Sea Argo Society (BSAS) Meeting

Date: 16 April 2026, 15-16 EEST

Format: Online meeting

Presenter: Atanas Palazov, Institute of Oceanology- Bulgaria Academy of Sciences (IO-BAS)

Rapporteur: Violeta Slabakova, Institute of Oceanology- Bulgaria Academy of Science (IO-BAS)

Participants:

Bulgaria:

Elisaveta Peneva, Sofia University

Ivelin Petkov, Institute of Oceanology- Bulgaria Academy of Sciences (IO-BAS)

Georgia:

Mamuka Gvilava - GIS and RS Consulting Centre “GeoGraphic”

Turkey:

Tülay Çokacar- Istanbul University

Ukraine

Yuriy Ilyin - Ukrainian Hydrometeorological Center

Myroslava Kryzhanivska- Ukrainian Hydrometeorological Center

Vyatcheslav Lodyzhko- Hydrometeorological Center of the Black and Azov seas

Vlad Ponomarenko- Hydrometeorological Center of the Black and Azov seas

Yevgen Gazyetov- Hydrometeorological Center of the Black and Azov seas

Yuriy Dihanov- Hydrometeorological Center of the Black and Azov seas

Copernicus Marine Service (BLK-MFS)

Ali Aydogdu – Fondazione Centro Euro-Mediterraneo sui Cambiamenti Climatici, CMCC, Italy

Black Sea Commission- Permanent Secretariat

Iryna Makarenko

Euro-Argo ERIC

Yann-Hervé De Roeck

Agenda

1. Welcome and Tour de Table
2. Introduction
3. Scope and Objectives of the Black Sea Argo Society
4. Terms of Reference (ToR) Presentation and Discussion
5. Election of Chair and Co-Chair
6. Next Steps and Future Activities
7. Closing and any other business

1. Welcome and Tour de Table

The meeting was opened by Atanas Palazov from IO-BAS, who welcomed participants and outlined the purpose of the meeting which aims to initiate the establishment of the Black Sea Argo Society.

Participants agreed to record the meeting to support the preparation of minutes and reporting.

The participants were invited to introduce themselves and to highlight their interest in the Argo programme and establishing a Black Sea society.

2. Introduction

Atanas Palazov highlighted the scientific importance of Argo observations in the Black Sea:

- Argo provides the majority of deep temperature, salinity, and dissolved oxygen profiles in the Black Sea in recent years. Since 2002 more than 50 Argo floats have been deployed in the Black Sea, collecting about 11 000 T/S and 3800 DO profiles
- It complements traditional ship-based CTD measurements
- The number of scientific publications using Argo data in the Black Sea increases each year

He highlighted that the aim of the 1st meeting is to approve the Terms of Reference (ToR) and to elect the Chair and Co-Chair of the BSAS.

3. Scope and Objectives of the Black Sea Argo Society

Atanas Palazov presented the background and rationale for establishing the Black Sea Argo Society, emphasizing the need for:

- coordination of Argo activities in the Black Sea
- alignment with the objectives of Euro-Argo ONE and OneArgo
- regional cooperation and knowledge transfer.

4. Terms of Reference (ToR) Presentation and Discussion

The proposed Terms of Reference were presented and discussed.

Key elements:

- Open, voluntary membership (institutional and individual)
- No membership fees
- Governance through a General Assembly
- Election of Chair and Co-Chair for two-year terms

Discussion points included:

- Clarification of the term “ERICs”
- Removal or clarification of a proposed Steering Committee

- Definition of responsibilities between the General Assembly and Steering Committee

It was agreed that:

- The General Assembly is responsible for strategic planning and establishing working groups
- External representation is the responsibility of the Chair/Co-Chair

The group resolved wording issues and moved to vote. The revised version of the ToR was approved by 10 votes. It was agreed that the ToR can be amended in the future if needed.

Yann-Hervé De Roeck didn't vote, as he participated in his capacity as Director General of Euro-Argo ERIC and not as a member of BSAS.

5. Election of Chair and Co-chair of the BSAS

Atanas Palazov offered to serve as Chair of the BSAS for the first term and proposed Tülay Çokacar as co-chair. She accepted. There were no other proposals and following the vote, both were elected.

6. Next steps and Future Activities

Atanas Palazov announced a Black Sea Argo workshop and training during the MARBLUE 2026 Conference in Constanta in October 2026 under the Euro-Argo ONE project. He suggested further meetings could be organized by year-end to advance BSAS activities.

Mamuka Gvilava requested materials to develop curricula on responding to Black Sea pollution and introducing Argo to educators and students. This action is part of the RESPONSE project.

Violeta Slabakova promised to share Euro-Argo's educational and technical materials with Mamuka in order to support the development of the curriculum.

7. Closing and any other business

The meeting concluded with congratulations from the Yann-Hervé De Roeck, Director General of the Euro-Argo ERIC and Coordinator of the EAONE project.

Action list:

- Revise and circulate the final Terms of Reference
- Share presentation materials with members
- Prepare and circulate meeting minutes
- Share Black Sea Argo workshop agenda (Constanta, October 2026)