



ReedBASE

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

**Between the
Parties of the ReedBASE Innovation Cluster
about cooperation in the field of**

**Innovative Utilisation
of
Renewable Biomass
from
Ecologically Sustainable
Reedbed Management**

October 2017

Article 1

FOUNDING PARTIES

The founding Parties to this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) are:

Institute for Market Problems and Economic and Ecological Research (IMPEER), Odesa, Ukraine

The Institute addresses topical issues of deepening market reforms in the national economy, as well as elaborating the strategy and tactics for sustainable, balanced socio-economic, bio-energetics and economic and ecological development of the Ukrainian Black-Sea coastal zone.

Michael Succow Foundation for the Protection of Nature (MSF), Greifswald, Germany.

is a partner in the Greifswald Mire Centre (GMC), an internationally renowned centre for peatland research and restoration. MSF has been involved in several projects of German and international cooperation in the field of peatland re-wetting, restoration, and paludiculture in the context of greenhouse gas emissions reduction and sustainable peatland management with on the ground experience in Germany, Ukraine, Belarus and Russian Federation.

Agricola, Reni, Odesa Oblast, Ukraine.

Since 2011, Agricola has promoted the development of reed harvesting from dense reedbeds to improve biodiversity, especially around Lake Kagul (Reni raion). It has facilitated cooperation between foreign investors and local companies, and carried out biodiversity monitoring work on the ecological results of reed harvesting.

Agency of European Innovations (AEI), Lviv, Ukraine.

The NGO Agency of European Innovations (AEI - www.aei.org.ua) is one of the leading research and innovation intermediary organisations of Ukraine with great experience in reasearch and development, management and consultancy activities in various projects under EU scientific framework programmes and cross-border cooperation programmes.

Cross-border Cooperation and European Integration Agency (ACTIE), Cahul, Moldova

ACTIE plays an important role in the Lower Danube Euro-region and has excellent relations and a well-established network in the area. ACTIE enjoys the full support of the local administration, with which it has cooperated to implement various environmental improvement projects.

Danube Region Centre for Sustainable Development and Ecological Research, Kilia, Ukraine

The Centre was established as an autonomous non-governmental body in 2017 by Odesa Oblast Council to carry out environmental monitoring and implement projects for sustainable development in the Lower Danube region.

BioTop Ltd

BioTop is a Ukrainian-British joint venture company located in Reni that carries out commercial reed harvesting and processing for roofing thatch, insulation mats and biomass pellets.

Article 2

Contributions of Founding Parties to ReedBASE

Within the framework of this MoU, for the successful and fruitful development and implementation of the cooperation, each Founding Party offers the following support:

1. Institute for Market Problems and Economic and Ecological Research (IMPEER):
 - a. Will take the role of Lead Partner and formally host the ReedBASE innovation cluster at its facilities within the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
 - b. Will be responsible for organising meetings. At least one meeting of the Parties will be held each year, within one month of the anniversary of the commencement of this MoU
 - c. Contribute expertise on technology and markets relevant for the harvest of biomass and marketing of biomass products within ReedBASE implementation projects.
2. Michael Succow Foundation for the Protection of Nature, Germany (MSF):
 - a. Will support the development and implementation of ReedBASE projects, especially on sustainable wet- and peat-land management (paludiculture),
 - b. Will support the development of transboundary biosphere reserve concepts that include sustainable management of reedbeds and wetlands in the ReedBASE project region.
 - c. Will provide access to international peatland and paludiculture networks via the Greifswald Mire Centre (GMC).
 - d. Will promote the publication of joint results arising from ReedBASE project implementation.
3. Agricola
 - a. Will promote the continuous dialogue between and foster the network of relevant stakeholders for future ReedBASE innovation project implementation
 - b. Contribute with expertise on sustainable reedbed management
 - c. Promote on national and international levels the results of the ReedBASE cluster
 - d. Will provide information and expertise for regional biodiversity and nature conservation issues.
4. Agency of European Innovations (AEI):
 - a. Will contribute to the ReedBASE cluster expertise on biomass technologies and management schemes of reedbeds from western Ukraine, e.g. Tisza River catchment
 - b. Will facilitate contact with relevant stakeholders for future project development
 - c. Will provide information and expertise on international innovation and development funding e.g. via Interreg or Horizon 2020 programmes
 - d. Will promote the ReedBASE cluster's activities and opportunities for collaboration via its dissemination tools, including social media
 - e. Will raise the awareness of the topic at different events.
5. Cross-border Cooperation and European Integration Agency (ACTIE):
 - a. Will facilitate contact with relevant initiatives and stakeholders in Moldova
 - b. Will promote synergies for transboundary project implementation between Moldova, Romania and Ukraine
 - c. Will support the creation of the biosphere reserve in the Lower Prut region
 - d. Will support the development and implementation of various actions and projects aiming to achieve ReedBASE objectives
6. Danube Region Centre for Sustainable Development and Ecological Research:
 - a. Will facilitate contact with relevant initiatives and stakeholders in Odesa oblast

- b. Will promote synergies for transboundary project implementation between Ukraine, Moldova and Romania
 - c. Will support the development and implementation of ReedBASE projects
 - d. Will provide information and expertise for regional biodiversity and nature conservation issues.
7. BioTop Ltd:
- a. Will facilitate contact with relevant commercial initiatives and stakeholders in Odesa oblast
 - b. Will support the development and implementation of ReedBASE projects
 - c. Will provide information and expertise relating to business and biodiversity issues.

Article 3 ACCEDING PARTIES

1. Organisations eligible to accede as Parties to this MoU shall meet at least one of the following criteria
 - (a) Be a public authority or agency
 - (b) Be a body involved in academic research and development
 - (c) Be a registered commercial enterprise
 - (d) Be a registered civil society organisation
2. The Organisation must be established in a country that is a member of the Council of Europe.
3. Organisations other than the founding signatories shall submit a written request to IMPEER to accede to the MoU. On receipt of such a request, IMPEER shall promptly inform the other Parties and accession is effective 30 days after the date of circulation, provided no objection is received.
4. If any Party objects to the admission of an applicant, it shall notify IMPEER in writing of the reasons for its objection within 30 days of the application. IMPEER will request the applicant to clarify any objections within 30 days of requesting clarification. In case the matter is not resolved at this stage, IMPEER will convene a panel of three independent Parties to decide whether or not the applicant can be admitted to the MoU.
5. If, in the opinion of IMPEER or a majority of Parties, a Party is considered to have breached the terms of this MoU, their membership of ReedBASE may be suspended until the matter is resolved, or if not resolved within 60 days, a vote held in a general meeting to decide whether or not the Party should be expelled from ReedBASE.
6. All parties will jointly cooperate in innovative project development and implementation in the fields of sustainable management of wetland biomass resources, processing of biomass-based materials, and biomass-based renewable energy use in the transboundary region between Ukraine, Moldova and Romania along the Prut, Dniester and Danube Rivers.

Article 4 PURPOSE

1. All Parties believe that there is much to gain by establishing a working relationship between them in order to enhance their respective interests. The purpose of this MoU is establish a framework within

which the Parties will work in partnership through mutually beneficial cooperation and collaboration in supporting high standards of practice for ecologically sustainable reedbed management.

2. The Parties to this MoU will form a European Knowledge and Innovation Cluster known as “ReedBASE”.
3. The role of ReedBASE is to promote research, management and utilisation of reedbeds as a basis for sustainable eco-economic development, especially for the benefit of local communities and maintaining and/or restoring wetland ecosystem services.
4. The subject of future ReedBASE collaborative projects will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following topics:
 - Sustainable wet management of reedbeds
 - Special adaption of this wet management for reedbeds on peatland (paludiculture)
 - Restoration of hydrological regimes
 - Preservation and restoration of ecosystem services
 - Accordance with statutory nature conservation targets
 - Avoidance of the introduction of foreign species for cultivation

Article 5 PERIOD

This MoU enters into force when at least four parties adhere to it by signature.

Article 6 ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

1. The relationship of the Parties shall be that of an informal collaborative group. Each Party will designate a contact person for coordinating their inputs to the implementation of this MoU.
2. The Institute of Market Problems and Economic-Ecological Research of the National Academy of Science of Ukraine (IMPEER) will take the role of Lead Partner, and will be responsible for organising meetings as required on its own initiative or within three weeks at the request of at least three other Parties. At least one meeting of the Parties will be held each year, within one month of the anniversary of the commencement of this MoU.
3. IMPEER, in consultation with the Parties, may establish a Board, Secretariat or any other body that would serve to administer and implement the MoU more effectively. The establishment of such a body is subject to the agreement of the Parties in a general meeting and its terms of reference shall be attached to the MoU as a Protocol.
4. The specific areas of cooperation and collaboration are set out in the Action Plan to this MoU, which will be reviewed and updated at least annually.
5. Each of the activities listed in the Action Plan shall have a written subject, responsibilities, timetable and resources required. Each Party concerned agrees to provide all required technical information and data for the purpose of facilitating the implementation of the Schedule.

Article 7 FINANCIAL TERMS

This MoU shall be implemented based on the following conditions:

- (a) Parties shall be responsible for their own financial and tax affairs;
- (b) Parties hosting meetings will provide rooms, associated facilities and refreshments free of charge;
- (c) Travel costs to meetings will be borne by the Parties independently;
- (d) The financial arrangements for implementing activities included in the Action Plan to this MoU shall be assessed by each Party concerned and where appropriate agreement shall be reached on sharing income and expenditure between them.

Article 8 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Each Party will notify IMPEER if it has any financial or non-financial interest or involvement in any other Party to this MOU.

Article 9 CONFIDENTIALITY

Each Party agrees to keep confidential all data which are provided by the disclosing Party, to be of a proprietary or confidential nature, and this condition shall remain in force permanently, including after any departure from or ending of this MoU, unless waived by the disclosing Party in writing.

Article 10 LIABILITY

1. No Party has the right to make commitments of any kind on behalf of any other Party.
2. This MoU does not impose any liabilities on the Parties other than those mentioned above, and hereby indemnifies each other against all claims arising from negligence, malpractice, incompetence or any other event.

Article 11 AMENDMENTS

The Parties may amend this MoU in any respect at a meeting and/or electronic poll called by IMPEER provided that at least 60% of the Parties are in favour. Amendments shall be numbered and dated and appended as Annexes to this MoU.

Article 12 INTERPRETATION

This MoU is written in the Ukrainian and English languages both of which are equally authoritative. However, in case of any dispute over interpretation, the English version shall prevail.

Done at Odesa on 25 October 2017

SIGNATURES

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Institute of Market Problems and Economic-
Ecological Research, National Academy of Science
of Ukraine, Odesa, Ukraine

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Michael Succow Foundation for the Protection of
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Volodymyr Poltorak, Director
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