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CHARTER Risk Management plan

Version 2.0 (revised after the review)

CHARTER Deliverable 7.6

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Draft	
Final	x

Type		
R	Document, report	x
DEM	Demonstrator, pilot, prototype	
DEC	Websites, patent fillings, videos, etc.	
OTHER		

Dissemination level		
PU	Public	x
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (incl. the Commission services)	

Revision history

Date	Lead author(s)	Comments
10.10.2020	Sirpa Rasmus	1 st draft version
21.1.2021	CHARTER coordination team	2 nd draft version, circulated for comments within the CHARTER consortium
2.2.2021	CHARTER coordination team	Final version 1.0, submitted
17.3.2022	CHARTER coordination team	Updated version 1.1
28.8.2023	CHARTER coordination team	Updated version 1.2
29.11.2023	CHARTER coordination team	Final version (v2), revised according the comments given during the 36-month review, submitted

1 Introduction

Risk management is a continuous process throughout the lifetime of a project and addresses the planning of risk management, identification, analysis, monitoring and control. This document outlines policies and procedures for identifying and handling uncommon causes of project deviations that may compromise objectives, i.e. risks. Risk assessment will be updated throughout the project lifecycle as unexpected sources of risk can be identified at any time. It is the objective of the risk management plan to decrease the probability and impact of events adverse to the project. In contrast, any event that could have a positive impact should be exploited.

CHARTER (Drivers and Feedbacks of Changes in Arctic Terrestrial Biodiversity) is a research project aiming at advancing the adaptive capacity of Arctic communities to climatic and biodiversity changes through state-of-the-art synthesis based on thorough data collection, analysis and modelling of Arctic change with major socio-economic implications and feedbacks. The consortium involves 21 research institutions across 9 countries. The 4 year, 5.9M Euro project is managed by the Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland, Finland and is funded by the EU Horizon 2020 Research and Innovations Programme (Grant #869471).



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Transparency and a good communication between the Coordination Team (CT), Work Package (WP) leaders and the project members are key to avoiding problems and conflicts before they arise. A good communication strategy will favor the cohesion among the participants, while giving a positive image of the project to the outside. About internal communication, please see the CHARTER Communication plan, and the CHARTER Management Handbook.

Some of the major perceived risks related to the project work plan are listed in section 4.1., including a classification of their probability and a description of contingency measures envisaged by the consortium.

The goal of this document is to allow the Coordination Team to accurately and timely try to avoid unwanted risks and, as necessary, take action in mitigating or applying corrective measures to control potential negative effects to the project.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

This section explains what are the roles of people within the project regarding risk management.

2.1 Coordination Team (CT)

The CT is responsible for handling the organizational, legal and financial management of the project and to ensure that obligations and responsibilities towards the European Commission are met by the Consortium.

The CT is composed of:

- Bruce Forbes (leader, principal investigator, EC contact point)
- Sirpa Rasmus (project management)
- Kirsi Hannula (financial issues)
- Karol Kowalski (legal issues)
- Markku Heikkilä (communications)
- Petra Falin (ethics)

- Hannu Mikkola (data management/legal aspects)
- Riitta Aikio and Tuija Katermaa (LAY internal management)
- Leena Leppänen and Teresa Komu (supporting the project management when needed)

The CT will endorse the risks management of the project and is responsible of the risk management process, assuring the monitoring and control of risks of all project activities. The project risk management plan is the responsibility of the CT, but the all the partners should be involved in it, and in particular, the WP leaders regarding the risks within the tasks of their WP.

2.2 Work Package Leaders

The WP Leaders are responsible of the implementation of the work within their own WP, so they have to bear the specific risks for the deliverables and milestones within the WP they are leading. Each WP leader is responsible for identifying risks as early as possible, updating the risk management plan, reporting them to the Coordination Team and activating mitigating actions. If new risks are identified, they should be reported to the CT who will update the risk management table (see section 4).

2.3 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee (SC) of the project consists of one representative of each partner. In collaboration with the CT, they will monitor the project and prepare the decisions to be taken by the General Assembly (CHARTER annual meeting). Concerning the risk management plan, the SC should advice the CT and the partners if problems cannot be easily resolved.

2.4 Expert Advisory Group

The Expert Advisory Group (EAG) is responsible for providing advice and strategic inputs. The EAG members should follow the assessment of risks by the Consortium and the resolution actions, if needed.

3 CHARTER risk management action plan

3.1 Risk identification and assessment

Risk identification is analysed throughout the life-cycle of the CHARTER project. The following issues shall be considered as tools and techniques for risk identification:

- Analysis of deliverable status
- Analysis of WP schedules and scopes
- Regular communication of the Coordination Team with the WP leaders

A four-step risk management process conforming to the ISO 31000 standard [ISO, 2018] will be employed:

- 1 Risk identification.** The main goal of this step is to uncover the risks before they actually realize.
- 2 Assessment.** The level of the risks identified in the previous step are assessed with respect to the probability of occurrence and the severity.
- 3 Risk treatments.** For each identified and assessed risk, appropriate control and mitigation measures are planned. For example, the risk can be eliminated, mitigated or even accepted and budgeted.
- 4 Continuous evaluation of the risk management plan** during the entire course of the project.

The risks will be written down in the risk management table by the Coordination Team (see section 4). This table will be accessible to all members through the CHARTER internal platform. The risk management table contains the following information: Risk Number, Description, concerned WP and Proposed risk-mitigation measures. The exposure to a given risk is estimated using the risk matrix in Figure 1. Concerning each of the risks, the CT, in collaboration with the WP leaders, will define magnitude and acceptability (Low/Medium/High/Critical) by estimating probability and impact of the risks.

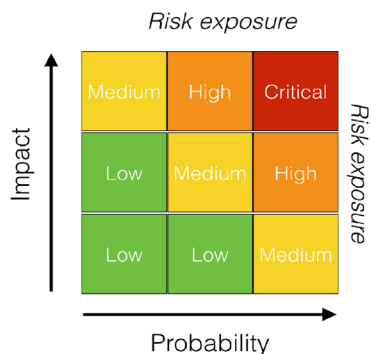


Figure 1. Risk matrix

3.2 Risk monitoring

It is the responsibility of all CHARTER partners to communicate to the CT about the status and effectiveness of each risk and mitigation plan in order to update the risk management table and assess the relevance of the tools. Risk exposure will be continuously re-evaluated and modified accordingly. Risk management is an agenda item in regular meetings among the WP-leaders and the Coordination Team as well as in CHARTER annual meetings and Steering Committee annual meetings.

If any new risks are identified by a partner, they will be analysed as those on the original risk list and then added in the register.

3.3 Risk-mitigation measures

Each partner is responsible for executing the risk mitigation activities which relate to the WP they lead. If a mitigation action cannot be effectively carried out or does not solve the risk, the risk exposure is likely become more important. In this case, visibility of the risk has to be highlighted by the Coordination Team and the mitigation measure modified in an efficient way.

An item can be considered closed when the following criteria are brought together: the risk-mitigation measures have been implemented and a new exposure risk is estimated as “low”.

4 The Risk Management table

CHARTER risks are registered within the risk management table presented below. The tables will be available in a shared document, with a link in the CHARTER internal webpage and updated by the Coordination team. Risk management and updating and checking the risk management plan when needed is an agenda item in regular meetings among the WP-leaders and the Coordination Team. The table contains three different sections. Section 4.1 is dedicated to the foreseen risks i.e., those risks, which have been identified at the proposal stage. Section 4.2 lists the unforeseen risks, which have been identified since the beginning of the project. Section 4.3 presents the risk mitigating measures that have been taken during the project.

4.1 Foreseen risks

The following table lists the Risks which have been foreseen by the Consortium before the beginning of the project.

Risk Number	Description of risk (level of likelihood: Low/Medium/High)	WP(s) involved	Proposed risk-mitigation measures
R1	Partner exits from the consortium / Prolonged sickness (Low risk)	All	Task reallocation within the consortium is evaluated. Consortium is of sufficient strength and diversity for other partners to replace if required, or recruit new partner
R2	Low performance by individual member or institution; (Medium risk)	All	Redistribution of tasks and resources amongst consortium members (PMG proposes, SC makes decision);
R3	Insufficient collaboration and communication between different WPs, partners and disciplines in inter-disciplinary consortium; problems caused by different interpretative cultures and perspectives in analysis of data (Low risk)	All	While WP collaboration is central, and the cross-cutting themes are designed to ensure collaboration, the tasks of each WP can be accomplished fairly independently. We will reassess the situation at meetings and will have milestones where the necessary efforts can be made for better integration. Establishing a robust theoretical-methodological approach. Holding regular virtual meetings to foster communication, collecting joint meeting notes open for all, developing common

			terminology using online shared documents.
R4	Sustainability, justice or ethical issues, human and environmental risks identified (Low risk)	All	Risk assessment tasks are started at the beginning of the project to enable early detection and recovery actions to be taken. Research setting is transparent, inclusive, and independent.
R5	Great Britain leaving the European Union without a deal / Hard Brexit (Medium risk)	All, esp. WP4	Universities of UK and the UK Research Office in Brussels have procedures ready regardless of the form that Brexit takes. If a Brexit deal is reached and the transition agreement comes into force funding will continue from the EC to the end of the project. Under no deal, the Government has committed to provide the funding required for UK institutions to participate in Horizon 2020 collaborative projects should the EC cease funding UK participants.
R6	Problems in gaining access to research data and on-time delivery of theoretical background for the study; problems in processing and storing of data (Medium risk)	WPs 1-6	Existing data and observational networks utilized as much as possible; long term connections to local communities of lead scientists of CHARTER enable the participatory work in Northern Scandinavia and NW Russia. Data management well

			planned; existing data storage services of partners utilized.
R7	Insufficient interest from stakeholders and co-design and dissemination approaches (Medium risk)	WP3, WP6, WP7	Addressing the needs for participation and unidentified obstacles of participation; coordinating the co-design / workshops with other major Arctic research projects with participatory approach whenever possible.
R8	Problems in integrating all CHARTER aspects to a common ESM (High risk)	WP5	This is a high-risk/high-gain opportunity: if successful, CHARTER will produce crucial new information about feedbacks and processes in the Arctic. If not, then individual model components can be run separately in offline (uncoupled) versions that will ensure state-of-the-art results.
R9	Geopolitical changes affecting the relations between Russia and other countries; Russia denying access for foreigners to remote tundra sites (considered strategically important) for field work / participatory research (Low risk)	WP1, WP2, WP3, WP4, WP6	Lead scientists of CHARTER have long-term experience on and connections to work in Russia. PI LAY has never been refused permits to closed 'border' zones in more than two decades of research on highly sensitive topics. We are working with a core team of Russian citizens (sub-contracting some parts of the work in Russia), with whom we have long-term work relationships.

4.2 Unforeseen risks

The following table lists new risks arisen after the project start (updated as needed).

Risk Number	Description of Risk	Work Package Concerned	Proposed risk-mitigation measures
R10	-COVID prevents interviews, fieldwork and participatory workshops (High risk)	All	While new data cannot be collected, focus could be on re-use of data sets collected in the past. Upcoming fieldwork can be planned considering quarantines and additional expenses. Interviews and participatory workshops could be partly made remotely (phone interviews / remote meetings).
R11	COVID-19 creates difficulties in working conditions: -Not able to meet in person -No working possible due to parenting etc. during lockdowns (High risk)	All	CHARTER can organize remote project meetings when meetings in person are not possible. With difficult family/health situations flexible working time/person month allocations can be negotiated with the employer and the EC.
R12	Problems after UK leave the European Union: -Research visits to partners in UK -International researchers working at UK (Low risk)	WP1, WP2, WP3, WP4, WP6	CHARTER will be flexible related to timing of research visits. Brexit deal of last December facilitates UK-EU joint research.
R13	Outreach activities are overshadowed by the COVID-19 crisis (Medium risk)	All	Suitable channels for outreach are planned while taking COVID-19 into account and the fact that the global pandemic may take some attention away from the project during the first year is accepted.

R14	The attack of Russia against Ukraine may cause sanctions that affect project work: abstain all new cooperation with Russian actors, no funding to Russian actors, no visitors from Russia and no travel to Russia. (High risk)	All	Postponing field work in Russia or relocating field work when possible if postponing is not possible. Concentrating to areas outside of Russia if possible. Using existing data when possible. Securing contract and salary to Russian project employees. All effects can't be mitigated in which case project work will be adapted.
R15	The attack of Russia against Ukraine may cause further sanctions that affect project work: no communication with Russian actors, no joint publications with Russian actors and no permit to use data from Russian actors. (High risk)	All	Concentrating on areas outside of Russia or making do with existing data when possible. Try to publish without Russian co-authors if necessary. All effects can't be mitigated in which case project work will be adapted.
R16	War expanding wider to Europe (Low risk)	All	All effects can't be mitigated in which case project work might be adapted.
R17	Not enough working hours for amendment period (Medium risk)	All	Careful planning of working hours

4.3 State of the Play for Risk Mitigation (updated as needed)

Risk Number	Month	Did you apply risk mitigation measures? YES/NO	Did your risk materialise ? YES/NO	Comments [Insert comment if needed; mandatory if the risk mitigation have NOT been applied.]
R9			YES	Researchers have found new fieldwork sites outside Russia when necessary
R10		YES	YES	Workshops could not be organized as planned
R11	M1	YES	YES	
R14	M18	YES	YES	Project is currently adapting changes in geopolitical situation