Project Update: September 2021

After a successful 2021 field season, also the first step in our project plan, we are submitting the first report. During the 1st project year, we have planned field work during the vegetative season June-September, when we would be in the field three times for 7 days (21 day in total) and fulfilled the plan in following order:

- June 2021 field, 7 days,
- August 2021– field, 7 days,
- August September 2021– field, 7 days.

In total, we have processed (completed field protocol) 13 localities. At all localities, charophytes were detected in vegetative state, and in some localities even dominating submerged vegetation. Expansion of *N. obtusa* in this geographical region was the most remarkable observation. After preliminary check of the collected material, these are the results: *Nitella* species weren't detected in vegetative state (sediments are yet to be processed), and four *Chara* species detected are *C. globularis, C. contraria, C. vulgaris* and *C. connivens*. At each locality, sediment samples were collected, water quality parameters were measured in the field and water samples were collected for laboratory analyses, and hydromorphological features of the water bodies were observed and noted in terms of customized lake habitat survey form.

We experienced a slight delay of equipment (boat) acquisition that could not have been avoided. Finally, at the beginning of August 2021, all the planned equipment was purchased, and we could continue with the field activities as planned. With slight extra effort, we managed to complete the field expedition in June 2021 successfully, no matter the equipment delay.

We find this field season very well accomplished and hope the next one to be at least as successful as this one. Sediment samples are drying at the controlled conditions at the moment. Plan for the next period is following:

October 2021 to May 2022 – laboratory work on plant material identification and sediment diaspore bank processing in terms of seeds and oospore identification/categorisation (detailed photographing and measurements) followed by viability estimation using triphenyltetrazolium chloride (TTC) test. Compiling of datasets on recorded plants, oospores morphometry and viability and water chemistry in selected localities. Preparatory work for the next season samplings, localities selection and reviewing historical maps and old findings for targeting the localities where waterbodies used to exist, but currently are vanished.

We are going to provide the next update when the first results on the diaspore bank are availabile.



Preparations for the survey in Karaš-Nera protected area, our new green boat ©



GPS Coordinates notification using the new handheld GPS Navigation



Rainy day in the field, our new chest waders first time used (upper photo) and charophyte carpet in Labudovo okno (below)



LHS protocol data acquisition





Sediment collection





Nitellopsis obtusa



Field team core: Vlada, Vanja and Ivana 😊