

CUPAGIS national coordination meeting 02 July 2022

Location: University Oran 1, 09:30–13:00

Participants: All Algerian partners (except for the associated partner – Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Algeria) and the coordinator (Tallinn University of Technology)

Representatives of partners

Prof Abdeddaim Kadoun (Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbès)
Dr Riad Djelloul (Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbès),
Dr Djamel Labdauoui (Université de Mostaganem)
Prof Hadjira Benoudnine (Université de Mostaganem)
Prof Mostafa Merah (Université de Mostaganem)
Prof Abdelkader Dellal (Université de Tiaret)
Dr Bouaicha Mohamed Islam (Université de Tiaret)
Benaissa Nouredine (Université d'Oran 1)
Belkhouja Moulay (Université d'Oran 1)
Miloud Dahane (Université d'Oran 1)
Prof Yahia Lebbah (Université d'Oran 1)
Prof Nadia Iles (Université d'Oran 1)
Ms Halima Mahmoudi (Université d'Oran 1, Erasmus Office)
Mr Habib Moussedek (Université d'Oran 1, responsible for equipment)
Prof Abdelkader LARIBI (Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Agronomie, ENSA)
Prof Reda Delli (Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Agronomie, ENSA)
Tarmo Soomere (Tallinn University of Technology, coordinator)
Guest: Dr Nouredine Aribi (Université d'Oran 2)

Chaired by Prof Kadoun

Agenda:

1. Partners short presentations (5 × 10 min)
2. Discussion of the presentations
3. Next training session (Prague)
4. Additional equipment
5. Final seminar (Tiaret).

1. Presentations of Algerian partners about progress in CUPAGIS/PASENSO

Four partners provided a short overview of progress in CUPAGI and PASENSO. (The partner ENSA has presented a similar overview to the coordinator and to wider audience at the Science Day on Precision Agriculture in ENSA on 29 June 2022). All partners have made considerable progress in accreditation and implementation of new curricula, creation new subjects/courses, installation of the PAGIS, VCR and PASENSO equipment, engagement of teachers, preparation

and peer-review of teaching material, dissemination activities and engaging with stakeholders. The number of already enrolled students to the new curricula varies from 14 to 28 in different universities, with roughly equal share of male and female students over all universities.

It was stressed by all presenters that teaching of precision agriculture very much involves training into professional use of various sensor equipment that is used in contemporary agriculture (some of which were purchased together with PAGIS, VCR and PASENSO items). Several partners have created dedicated field areas to specifically teach the use of such sensor equipment.

Additionally to the report of the progress in UMAB, Prof Hadjira Benoudnine presented an overall picture of the project structure, shortly delineated the quality assurance aspects and highlighted items foreseen in the project proposal but not realized yet.

The slides of the partner's reports with more details will be made available on the CUPAGIS website.

2. Discussion of the presentations

The discussion focused on the ways of making PASENSO structures more sustainable. It was felt that a further cooperation and possibly a network of PASENSO offices would be useful for this. It is not clear whether experience gathered in other regions is transferable to Algeria. The PASENSO offices have, in essence, double task: to be competence centres in precision agriculture and at the same time also marketing units of precision agriculture. It may take several years for them to become strong players in this field.

It was decided that different partners will gather more detailed experience in the use of teaching of different sensors, and shall then share this knowledge and experience.

The coordinator noted that several deviations from the original work plan and from the timetable were caused by external effects, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Some items (one physical training) are replaced by extended set of virtual lectures and master classes as recommended by the external evaluator. Some items (first of all training of presentation capacity of students) are planned for September and October, possibly back-to-back with the final conference.

The Rector of Université d'Oran 1, Prof. Mostefa BELHAKEM came to a short visit to greet the participants of the meeting at 11:40.

The coordinator reminded that participants of coordination meetings that are essential for the goals of the project are entitled travel costs and costs of stay according to the Guidelines of the project. Even though this meeting was not specifically foreseen in the project proposal and was organised in short notice, it was definitely needed to reach maximum outcome of the project in its final stage, so it is likely that the funding agency will accept the relevant costs.

A remark added during preparation of the notes: Travel costs are calculated according to the official distance calculator, the link to which can be found on the template of individual travel reports. The examples of distances according to this calculator are: Oran–Algiers 353 km, Oran–Mostagenem 97.6 km, Oran–Sidi bel Abbès 56.96 km, Oran–Tiaret 182 km. The distance depends to some extent of how the start or end point is inserted. For example, results for simply “Oran, Algeria” differ from

those for “Oran, Oran, Algeria”. The former seems to indicate the geometric centre the city area and the latter the location of the city centre. It is likely that the auditor will use the city centre location when checking the estimates.

For travel distances between 10 and 99 km the reimbursement rate is 20 EUR per participant. For travel distances between 100 and 499 km the rate is 180 EUR per participant. For those who came using a personal car, the guidelines only shortly mention this option by saying: “In the case of travel activities of subcontracted service provider, individual travel reports together with all copies of travel tickets, boarding passes, invoices and receipts, or for car travel, *a copy of the internal regulations on the reimbursement rate per km*. The aim of the supporting documentation is to demonstrate the actual cost of the travel and the fact that the trip actually took place.” It is likely that the same principles are applied to project partners who come using a personal car.

3. Next training in Prague

With the help of colleagues from Czech University of Life Sciences CULS, the embassy of Czech Republic has allocated visiting times for all participants for 07 July. The visa invitations have been sent by courier service to Prof Laribi who will distribute them to the participants. The information on the website of the embassy of the Czech Republic says that visa is usually issued within 3–5 working days.

While 3 participants from each Algerian partner university are expected, the training session may possibly accommodate a few more participants. This needs to be coordinated with CULS.

The coordinator will make efforts towards providing prepayments to cover relatively expensive flight tickets and part of costs of stay, and also to apply for the use of the category of exceptional costs if applicable. The participants will be hosted in student dormitory (because of renovation of the originally planned hotel).

It was discussed whether the training could be postponed if, for example, the visa decision will be delayed. The coordinator expressed opinion that this is unlikely because of time constraints.

4. Arrival of equipment

The additional teaching equipment (sensors for agriculture) has arrived Algiers instead of Oran and is currently being customs cleared. It is likely that the partners will have it within 1–2 weeks.

5. Final seminar in Tiaret

Prof Dellal presented invitation to Tiaret for the final conference and gave a short overview of suitable time and organisational aspects.

The partners felt that it would be a good idea to organise this event back-to-back with training of presentation skills of students (as foreseen in WP4.6 of the proposal but not implemented yet) and possibly some selection of master classes. The entire event would then range over 5 days. A suitable slot is on 01–05 October.

According to the proposal, 1 teacher and 2 students from each Algerian partner are entitled to have financial support from CUPAGIS for such training (travel costs and costs of stay). The coordinator will seek for acceptance to increase this number to 4 students per partner. The number of participants supported by their universities is not limited.

According to the proposal, 3 representatives of each Algerian partner are entitled to have financial support from CUPAGIS for the final conference (travel costs and costs of stay). The coordinator will seek for acceptance to increase this number. The number of participants supported by their universities is not limited.

Public transport to Tiaret for the final seminar may not be available and probably private transport is necessary for some participants. The coordinator will consult with EACEA/Brussels office about how to handle this process.

As there are no specific sources in CUPAGIS to finance technical aspects of the final conference, the coordinator called all partners to take over some financial load from their own resources.

6. Any other business

The coordinator informed the partners that it is still possible to use some funds for equipment. The first priority form necessary licences.

Notes taken by Tarmo Soomere
02 July 2022