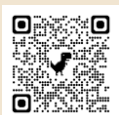


VIMAS – A HORIZON EUROPE MSCA DOCTORAL NETWORK PROJECT

*Visitor monitoring and management in protected
and recreational areas: new challenges,
novel solutions for the Anthropocene*

Presentation at MONA workshop

Øystein Aas & Coen van Bendegom,
Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU)
Mid Sweden University (MIUN)



29 October 2025

VIMAS OBJECTIVES

TRAIN AND QUALIFY THE NEXT GENERATION OF **VISITOR MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT EXPERTS**

MSCA WITH STRONG EMPHASIS ON “**TRANSFERABLE SKILLS**” PREPARING PHD CANDIDATES FOR FUTURE JOBS IN BUSINESS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (AS WELL AS IN ACADEMIA)

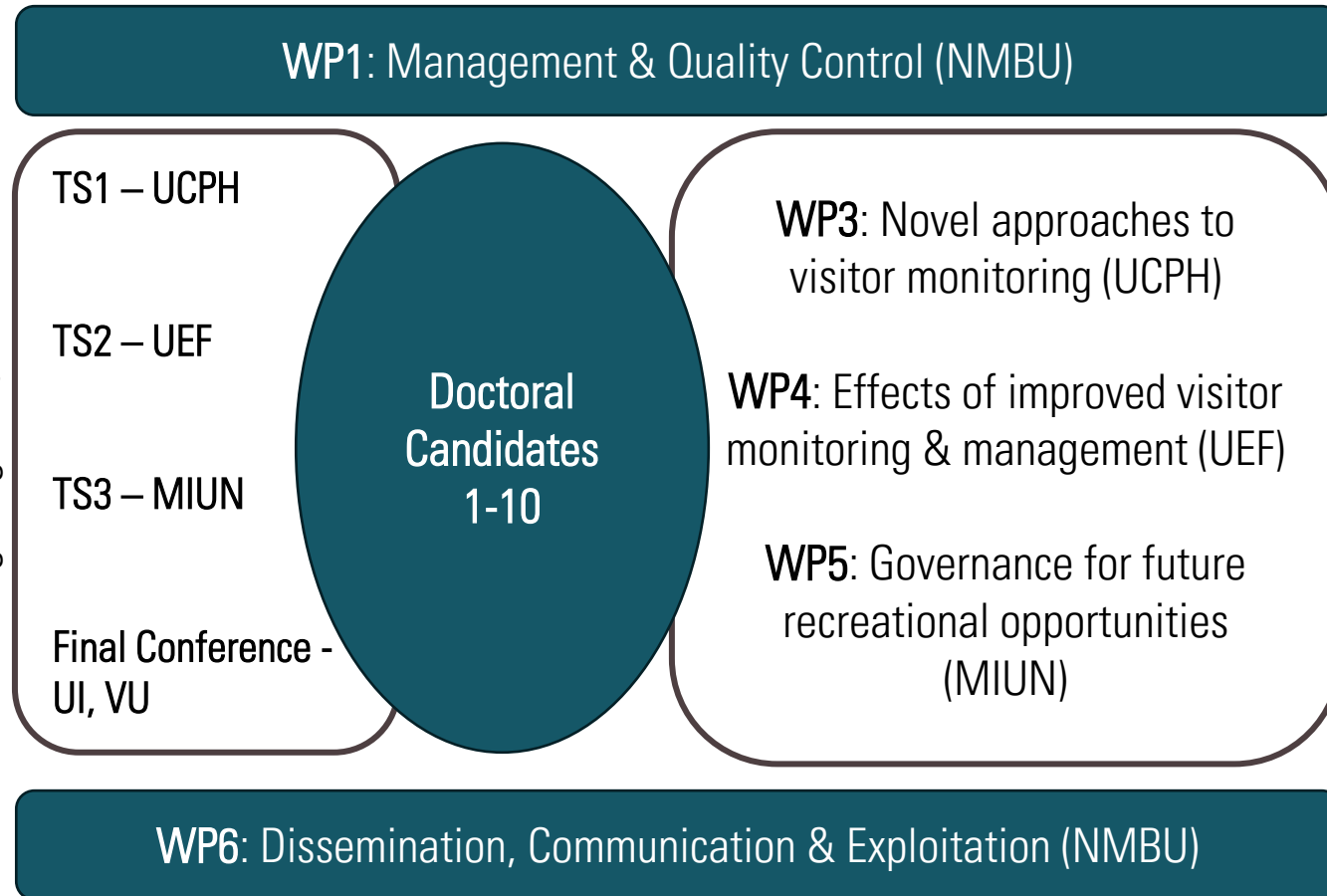
VIMAS HAS DEFINED **RESEARCH, TRAINING AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**, INCLUDING IMPROVED **COOPERATION** AMONG STAKEHOLDERS FROM ACADEMIA, BUSINESS, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND NGOS

BESIDES COOPERATION ON TRAINING THE **10 DOCTORAL CANDIDATES**, VIMAS AIMS TO STRENGTHEN EXISTING NETWORKS AND COOPERATIONS, AND ESTABLISH NEW



VIMAS – PROJECT STRUCTURE

WP2: Training Program (VU, MIUN, NMBU)



TIMELINE VIMAS

Spring 2022:
Proposal prep

Autumn 2022:
Proposal writing

Spring 2023:
Approval
from HE!

Nov 2023:
Formal start

Summer 2024:
DC Recruitment
complete

Winter 2025:
Mid-Term

Nov 2027:
End of project

Autumn 2024:
Training School1

Autumn 2025:
Training School2

June 2026:
Training School3

Autumns 2026-27:
Final Conferences



VIMAS RESEARCH PROGRAM

Wp3: Develop novel methodological approaches to visitor monitoring based on triangulation of Big Data and traditional on-site monitoring

Wp4: Increase understanding of how improved visitor monitoring and management contribute to sustainability and competitiveness of nature-based service/tourism business and finding solutions to financing public goods related to outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism

Wp4: Understand conditions for successful visitor communication, behavioural change, and protection of natural soundscapes.

Wp5: Develop indicators and guidelines towards evidence-based, sustainable and efficient visitor governance.



MEET ONE OF OUR DOCTORAL CANDIDATES

- Coen van Bendegom, Doctoral Candidate at Mid Sweden University.
- Bachelor in Sports Management, specialization in outdoor and adventure sports. Master in Leisure Studies.
- Teaching and research positions at Breda University of Applied Sciences (NL) and Vancouver Island University (Canada).
- DC #10 in project VIMAS, WP5 – indicators for sustainable recreation and nature-based tourism (since June 2024).
- Key interest in visitor use and impact in mountain landscapes, working with SEPA



BENEFICIARIES - DOCTORAL CANDIDATES

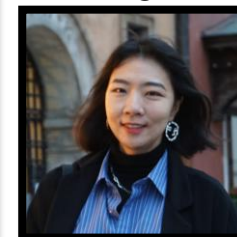


Norwegian
University of
Life Sciences

Ina Hildeman



Meng Xu



Noelien Wilsnach



Saumya Rathnayake



UNIVERSITY OF
COPENHAGEN

Zsolt Kazai

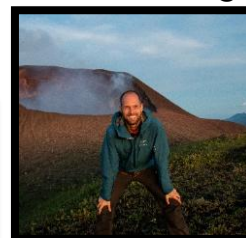


UNIVERSITY OF
EASTERN FINLAND



Mittuniversitetet
MID SWEDEN UNIVERSITY

Coen van Bendegom



Elena Pibernik



Leyi Xu



HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

İlker Gül



Nick Voogt



VIDZEME UNIVERSITY
OF APPLIED SCIENCES



UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

Pls/Main supervisors:

Hans Skov-Petersen (Dk)
Anton Stahl Olafsson (Dk)
Henna Konu (Fi)
Tuuli Toivonen (Fi)
Liisa Tyrväinen (Fi)
Agita Livina (Lv)
Andris Klepers (Lv)
Rannveig Olafsdottir (Is)
Sandra Wall-Reinius (S)
Rose Keller (N)
Peter Fredman (S)
Øystein Aas (N)

VIMAS RESEARCH PROGRAM

Wp3: Develop novel methodological approaches to visitor monitoring based on triangulation of Big Data and traditional on-site monitoring

Meng Xu



Strava data,
Peri-urban nature

Ina Hildeman



PPGIS data,
Tranquility

Leyi Xu



YouTube data,
Influencers

Coen van Bendegom



Passive mobile data,
Mountain landscapes



VIMAS RESEARCH PROGRAM

Wp4: Increase understanding of how improved visitor monitoring and management contribute to sustainability and competitiveness of nature-based service/tourism business and finding solutions to financing public goods related to outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism

Zsolt Kazai



Knowledge systems
in (tourism) businesses

İlker Gül



Financing of
public goods



VIMAS RESEARCH PROGRAM

Wp4: Understand conditions for successful visitor communication, behavioural change, and protection of natural soundscapes.

Noelien Wilsnach



Soundscapes,
Multisensory experiences
and management

Saumya Rathnayake



Communication, nudging,
wild reindeer conservation

Ina Hildeman



Tranquility,
Quiet areas



VIMAS RESEARCH PROGRAM

Wp5: Develop indicators and guidelines towards evidence-based, sustainable and efficient visitor governance.

Elena Pibernik



Collaborative Governance

Coen van Bendegom



Indicators of visitor use

Nick Voogt



Citizen involvement through
citizen science



14 ASSOCIATE PARTNERS IN VIMAS



LUKE (FI)

Danish Nature Agency

SEPA (Sweden)

Norwegian Env. Ag.

Parks & Wildlife Finland

Nat. Cons. Agency Latvia

Aldo Leopold Wild. C. (US)

NINA (N)

Denali NP (US)

Ecocounter (F)

Analyseogtal (DK)

Outdooractive (G/Int)

Maptionnaire (Fi)

Eur. Netw. Outd. Sp. (Int)

VIMAS + MONA

Similarities:

Same visitor theme, with slightly different focus (visitation IN nature areas vs. transportation TO nature areas)

Differences:

Interreg vs MSCA DN, Be-Ne-Ge-Fr vs. Nordic-Baltic, DMO/park mgt. partners vs academic beneficiaries

VIMAS also several business partners from visitor monitoring (Ecocounter, Maptionnaire, Outdooractive ++)

Synergies and collaboration:

Building networks between projects targeting professional practitioners and those targeting academia:

- Exchange of deliverables/discussing concrete findings and recommendations
- Meetings and conferences (e.g. upcoming MMV13 in November 2026, Spain
- (<https://www.ucv.es/oferta-academica/congresos-y-jornadas/congresos-y-jornadas-2026/mmv-conference/presentation/venue>)
- A joint online seminar on sustainable transportation to/from nature areas? E.g. winter 2026





THANK YOU

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Coen van Bendegom, VIMAS DC – coen.vanbendegom@miun.se

[VIMAS - website](http://vimas.org)

