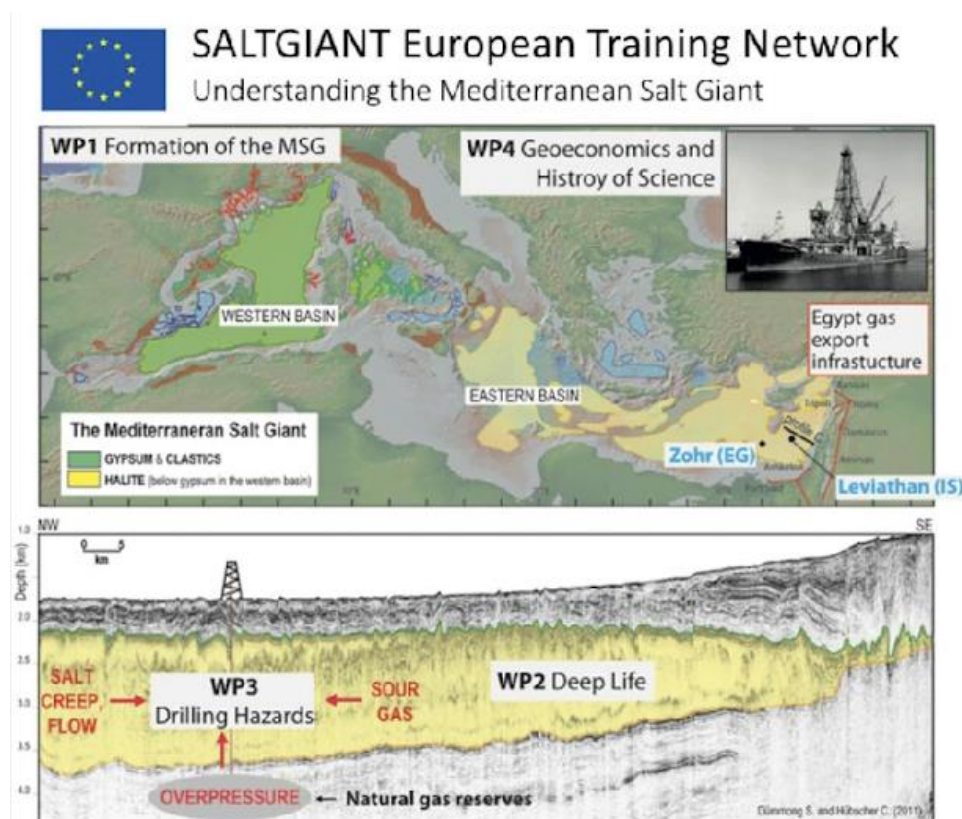




SALTGIANT Newsletter #July2020

by Athina Tzevahirtzian, Jimmy Moneron and the collaboration of the ESRs

SALTGIANT is a rare cross-disciplinary network of natural and social scientists dedicated to understanding the formation of the Mediterranean Salt Giant, one of the largest salt deposits on Earth, and its implications for sub-seafloor microbial life, risk assessment in the oil industry, geo-economics of the Mediterranean region and the history of oceanography.



ABOUT SALTGIANT

SALTGIANT contributes to respond to the growing demand for a new generation of scientists working in the interface between the natural and social sciences.

SALTGIANT brings together 24 academic organizations (13 beneficiaries, 11 partners), 6 private sector Oil&Gas companies, 2 mining sector companies, 1 biotechnology company, 1 geopolitics think tank, 1 museum and 1 specialist in transferable skills training from 11 countries to stimulate interdisciplinary and

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intersectorial knowledge exchange between geologists, geophysicists, geochemists, microbiologist, geographers and historians in a network with PhD students at its core.

SALTGIANT is developed within the EU MEDSALT COST action: <https://medsalt.eu/the-project/>

NEWSLETTER

Spring semester 2020
Covid19 experience
Upcoming events

1.Spring semester 2020

1. Final Medsalt Symposium – Piran, Slovenia (25-27 February 2020)

From the 25th to February 27, 2020, the Final MEDSALT Symposium was the occasion to celebrate the end of the COST Action CA15103 Uncovering the Mediterranean Salt Giant (MEDSALT) project. It was organized by Angelo Camerlenghi (Istituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e di Geofisica Sperimentale, OGS) and Abakkum, the Institute for Landscape, Culture and Art - the Local Organizer. It was held in the symbolic village of Piran, a town with long history of salt production and trade located on the Adriatic Sea, in the northernmost part of the Mediterranean. MEDSALT and SALTGIANT members and other scientists from all over the world, who work every day on bringing new insights on the salt deposits, were invited. These 3 days were dedicated to oral presentations, posters and other activities (including art and culture). The MEDSALT contributors were able to review the activity performed in the last 4 years, review the scientific achievements and convey



Check out also the video and article describing this event: https://youtu.be/Fwu_YiTZirs,
<https://thesaltgiantfellowship.wordpress.com/2020/03/30/final-medsalt-symposium-2020-piran-slovenia/>

2. EGU

Because of the recent Coronavirus outbreak, the EGU conference - that was supposed to be held in Vienna - was transformed into an online talk. Notwithstanding the difficulties encountered to organize such a big event online, it can be said that it was a quite huge success, where scientists from diverse disciplinary could exchange ideas and discuss controversies in a good atmosphere.

This year, several SaltGiant ESR's were involved in two different sessions within the "EGUsphere". Gaia Travan (ESR 13, Lille University) was a co-convener for a session in **"Salt Basins: from deposition to**

deformation” and another session in **“Salt Giants: formation, deformation, and resource potential”** was organized by Hanneke Heida (convener, ESR 2, ICTJA-CSIC), Laetitia Guibourdenche (co-convener, ESR 6, IPGP); Jimmy Moneron (co-convener, ESR 11, HUJI-GSI) and others.

These sessions were particularly challenging to organize since everything had to be adjusted to fit in a specific online platform!

3. 3rd online Saltgiant Workshop (2nd-4th June 2020)

The workshop should have been hosted by IPGP but the Covid19 pandemic did not give other alternative than switching to an online event, organized by Julia Champagnac, the Saltgiant Project Manager and Vanni Aloisi, SaltGiant scientific coordinator. This two-day event was focused on scientific talks with sessions dedicated to introduce the ESRs results halfway to the end of their project. Some exciting new results were presented, rising scientific interest and sometimes even discussions within the participants of the online chat. These presentations were interspersed with small conferences performed by external invited guests; most of them were about new results regarding salt-related topics within-and-around the Mediterranean Sea. A third day was also dedicated to the annual supervisory board meeting of the Saltgiant Project, where the coronavirus outbreak impact on the ESR's research, has been discussed.

2.Covid19 experience

The Covid19 pandemic was unpredictable and obliged to cancel or postpone all kinds of events such as conferences, workshops, training schools and the ESR's secondments, as well as the field - and laboratory - works planned for 2020. The lockdown was a complicated period, affecting any research-related progress for the PhD students and researchers. The majority of ESR's found themselves isolated at home in a foreign country, but in order to keep faith and strength, a weekly Skype meeting was organized!



Here is a compilation of our SaltGiant ESR's best reflections about the pandemic!

«It didn't matter where I set my working desk, the fridge was always too close»

"Bye, bye Turin, quiet Paris with a nice balcony"

«Finally time for baking»

"Relaxed but in lack of nature"

"Time to concentrate on my wellness and the artistic part of myself"

"No furniture has been harmed during the numerous yoga practices..."

"I think the real consequences of the pandemic will get back to us in the future, but I don't think are all bad..."

"During the pandemic I was reminded daily of the importance of proper data analysis, reliable data acquisition"

3.Upcoming events : 2021 events

Some of the SaltGiant upcoming events could be open to external participants, stay tuned in your website for more information: <https://www.saltgiant-etn.com/training/>

Field course 3 (Israel, 14-18 February 2021): Dead Sea hypersaline environments

"From Evaporation to Evaporite". Organized by the GSI, this trip will last 5 days and will deal with various topics related to the Dead Sea, considered to be a modern analogue to a Messinian salt basin. Some visits will be done to the Dead Sea Observatory and the GSI labs. Field trips are planned around the Dead Sea and the Negev Desert, with the objective to illustrate and understand the mechanisms related to salt accumulation and deformation within a recently formed salt basin. Some conferences - from the organizers and the guests (PI and sometimes ESRs) - will be held in between the field trips.



A scientific crew performing analyses on salt - Dead Sea

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Field course 2 (Sorbas - Spain, 8-14 March 2021): Drilling Training School

The SaltGiant Field Course Drilling Training School organized by the CNRS Montpellier, will last 7 days and has been postponed to March 2021. The purpose of this field course will be to convey basic knowledge on borehole drilling/coring and downhole logging methods to the ESRs and provide hands-on experience on core data description and logging data acquisition, processing and interpretation. It will be an occasion to generate the first continuous record across the MSC deposits in the Sorbas basin and try to solve still open questions regarding the MSC in this important marginal basin.



Southern Spain landscape, close to Sorbas

Short course 5 (Banja Luka - Bosnia Herzegovina, 17-18 May 2021): Pre-History and history of salt use - restricted to ESRs and Workshop 4 (Banja Luka - Bosnia Herzegovina, 19-20 May 2021)

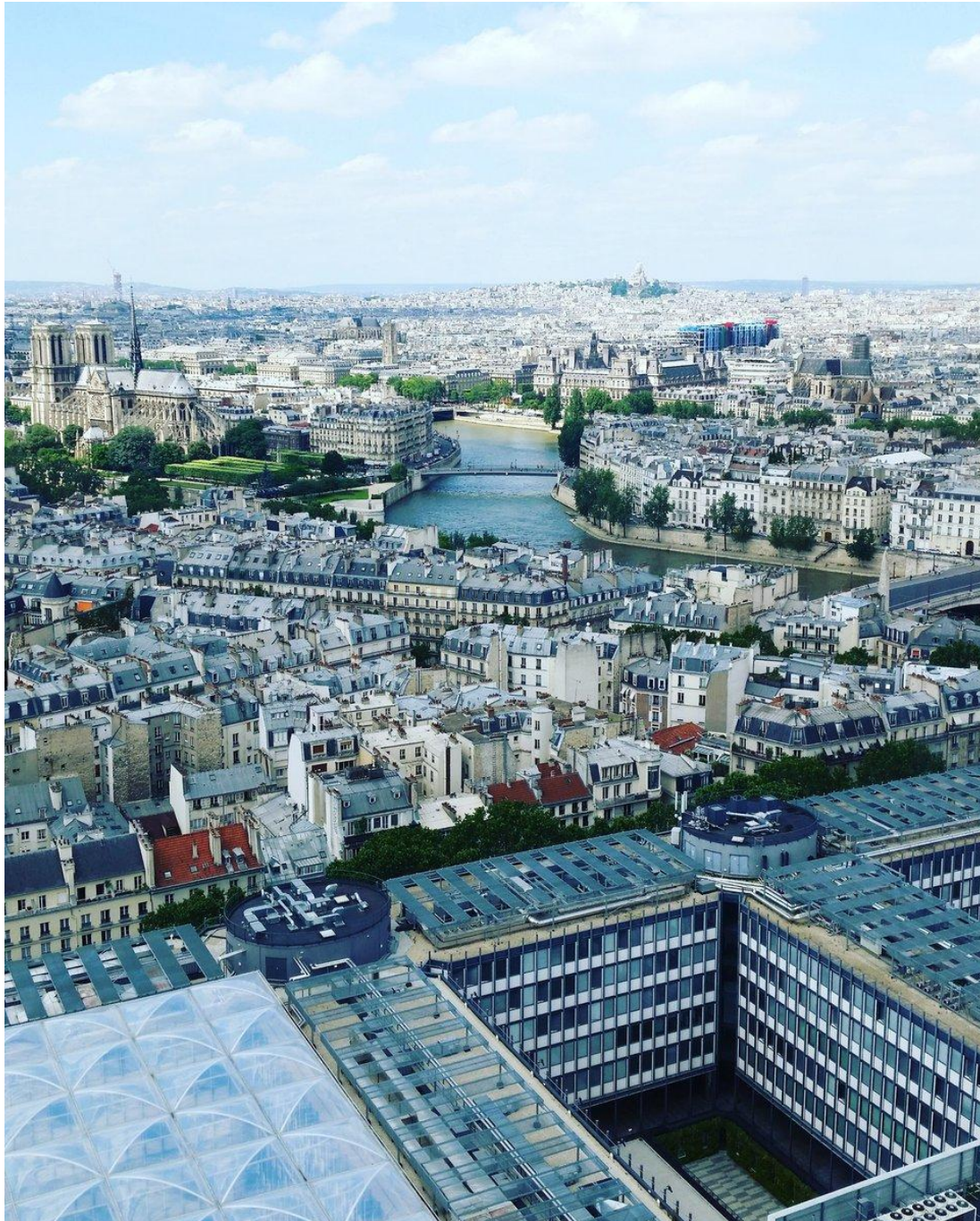
This event will be held in Banja Luka, the second largest city of Bosnia and will last 5 days (2 days of Short course on Salt History + 2,5 days of Workshop + 0,5 Supervisory Board Meeting). The participants will (1) attend a course in "History of Salt" in the Museum of Republic of Srpska and (2) visit the Faculty of Mining, Geology and Civil Engineering (where one or two lectures will be taught), visit to the mines, salt factory (optional) and archaeological sites/museums. A second part of this week will be dedicated to SaltGiant workshops and supervisory board meeting.



Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Short course 4 (Paris, 14-17 June 2021): Social sciences - restricted to ESRs

The Short course organized by Sorbonne Université and Sciences Po has been postponed to June 2021 and will last 4 days. It will focus on economic, social, historical, and philosophical aspects of salt giant science.-



Paris from above

Transferable skills 3 (Paris, 17-18 June 2021): Managing of research - restricted to ESRs

After the 'Social sciences' short course, two last days will be dedicated to a training in 'Managing research', organized by Simona Cerrato from SISSA Medialab. It will provide ESR's knowledge on Marketing (Marketing in Research/Projects, Social Media & Personal Branding, Marketing Strategy, Learning to Interview, Basics of Design Thinking), Leadership development (What is leadership and what is not, Leadership styles, Leadership in scientific environment) and Finance and budget (Accounting basics, Financial statements, Cash flow, Financial plans, Metrics definition, Tips and tricks for practical use).

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