



## The 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians for Sustainable Development (COMPSUD 7)

Cairo, 1 November 2009

The 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians for Sustainable Development (COMPSUD) took place in Cairo, Egypt on November 1<sup>st</sup> 2009.

It involved the participation of 17 Members of the Circle from 10 different countries.

As it is the common practice with COMPSUD Meetings, the event included two parts: The Civil Society Dialogue between Parliamentarians, NGOs and media which was attended by approximately 140 participants from almost all Mediterranean countries as well as a closed session among Parliamentarians.

COMPSUD 7 was organised by the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE) and the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med), which jointly facilitate the COMPSUD Secretariat and was supported by the Swedish Presidency of the EU, the European Commission and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the 'Petersberg Africa' Programme. The events also contributed directly to the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI) and the GEF Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystems (GEF SPM). The meeting was hosted at the Premises of the League of Arab States. Local logistical support has been provided by the Cairo based Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED) and the Arab Office for Youth and Environment (AOYE), member of both MIO-ECSDE and GWP-Med.

### The Civil Society Dialogue (1<sup>st</sup> November 2009, Cairo - Egypt)

The 1<sup>st</sup> part of the Meeting (Civil Society Dialogue) provided a platform for a coordinated input of civil society actors (Parliamentarians, NGOs, media etc) in four specific current processes of high importance for the sustainable development of the Mediterranean region:

- i. The 16<sup>th</sup> Ordinary meeting of the Contracting parties of the Barcelona Convention which took place in Marrakesh, Morocco on 3-5 November 2009.



- ii. the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Ministerial Conference on the Environment which was scheduled to take place in Dubrovnik, Croatia on 26-27 November 2009 but is postponed to a later date,
- iii. the preparations towards the Climate Change COP in Copenhagen (7-18 December 2009) and
- iv. the developments of a Long-Term Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean in the framework of the UfM.

Opening remarks were made by Dr. Emad Adly (Chairman of RAED) and Prof. Michael Scoullou (Chairman of MIO-ECSDE and GWP-Med). Introductory presentations addressed the process towards the elaboration of the new Strategy on Water in the Mediterranean ([http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt\\_data/files/Tomassini\\_En.pdf](http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt_data/files/Tomassini_En.pdf)); the Marrakesh 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the COP of the Barcelona Convention; the challenges of COP 15 particularly in relation to climate change, water and development ([http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt\\_data/files/VanSchaik\\_En.pdf](http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt_data/files/VanSchaik_En.pdf)); and the UfM Ministerial on the Environment with emphasis on the implementation of the Horizon 2020 Initiative that will be one of the central topics addressed by this Ministerial Conference.

More than 140 representatives of Mediterranean civil society active in issues linked with environment and sustainable development worked together and compiled their views, opinions and concerns in three separate documents:

- 1) Input of the Mediterranean Environmental Civil Society on the Long-Term Strategy on Water for the Mediterranean (SWM) ([http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt\\_data/files/Draft\\_Input\\_Med\\_Water\\_Strategy\\_3\\_Nov-En.pdf](http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt_data/files/Draft_Input_Med_Water_Strategy_3_Nov-En.pdf));
- 2) Mediterranean Environment Civil Society input on Climate Change to regional fora, COP 15 (Copenhagen 2009) negotiators and decision makers at all levels ([http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt\\_data/files/Proposed\\_CC\\_measures\\_and\\_messages\\_3\\_Nov-En.pdf](http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt_data/files/Proposed_CC_measures_and_messages_3_Nov-En.pdf));
- 3) Input of Mediterranean Environmental Civil Society to the UfM Ministerial Conference on Environment (Dubrovnik 26-27 November 2009) ([http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt\\_data/files/Draft\\_Input\\_UfM\\_ENV\\_Ministerial\\_3\\_Nov-En.pdf](http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt_data/files/Draft_Input_UfM_ENV_Ministerial_3_Nov-En.pdf)).

The "Input of the Mediterranean Environmental Civil Society on the Long-Term Strategy on Water for the Mediterranean (SWM)" was presented to the participants of the Joint Egyptian-Dutch Water Conference "Towards the new Long-Term Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean" that took place on 2-3 November 2009 in Cairo as well as to the 2nd Water Expert Group (WEG) that guides the elaboration of the SWM and which took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> of November 2009 again in Cairo. The WEG took positive note of the document and made specific reference to it in its final Conclusions. The Conclusions of the WEG Meeting is attached herewith. The document will be further used to present civil society positions in related fora in preparation of the UfM



Ministerial Conference on Water, 12-14 April 2010, in Barcelona. All COMPSUD members are encouraged to do so, on their part as well.

The "Mediterranean Environment Civil Society input on Climate Change to regional fora, COP 15 (Copenhagen 2009) negotiators and decision makers at all levels" was presented at the 16<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols that took place in Marrakech on 3-5 November 2009. The document will be further used to present civil society positions in all pertinent fora, including, of course, the COP 15 meeting. All COMPSUD members are encouraged to do so on their part as well.

The "Input of Mediterranean Environmental Civil Society to the UfM Ministerial Conference on Environment (Dubrovnik 26-27 November 2009)" will be finalized in the following days at regional level through further deliberation as the preparation for the Ministerial Meeting is progressing. The final document will then be presented and submitted to the Ministerial Conference on Environment. It has been confirmed that the agenda of the Ministerial Meeting foresees the presentation of this document.

**Meeting on Internal issues of COMPSUD**  
1<sup>st</sup> November 2009, Cairo - Egypt

A meeting dedicated to COMPSUD's internal issues was also hosted in a different meeting room of the League of Arab States in the second part of the day. It involved the participation of the Circle's Members invited to Cairo and of some representatives of the Executive Bureau of the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE) who closely follow the developments of COMPSUD particularly at the national level. MIO-ECSDE has been facilitating the COMPSUD's Secretariat together with the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med) since 2002.

After an opening speech by the Chairman of COMPSUD, Mr. Nikos Georgiadis, the COMPSUD's Secretariat presented the activities undertaken in the last two years (2007-2009), i.e. since the last Meeting of the Circle in Corfu, Greece (May 2007).

(<http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt/visit.php?lid=415> )

Particular mention was made to the involvement of COMPSUD in the Horizon 2020 Initiative as well as to the GEF 'Petersberg Africa' Project supporting dialogue activities of Parliamentarians in priority regional and sub-regional policy processes for integrated water resources management. Activities to encourage the interlinks between COMPSUD and other Parliamentary bodies were also highlighted as well as efforts to make the intervention of the Circle more effective and sustainable.



A session was then dedicated to highlight the possible future role of COMPSUD at the regional and national levels.

Prof. Scoullos, the General Secretary of COMPSUD who facilitated this session, provided information on the potential direct and indirect involvement of the Circle in the upcoming Project 'Environmental Integration and Capacity Building under H2020' that is supported by the European Commission related to enhancing the capacity building of national and regional stakeholders on the Horizon 2020 Initiative. The Project, in whose implementation MIO-ECSDE plays a central role, is expected to start very soon.

Prof. Scoullos reiterated the commitment of MIO-ECSDE and GWP-Med to keep Members of the Parliaments of the Mediterranean countries well informed about the on-going processes and initiatives influencing the protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development in the region and also to facilitate their involvement, whenever this is possible.

He also highlighted the important role Members have in transferring the relevant knowledge and information they gather through COMPSUD's activities to their Parliaments and individual Parliamentarians so that legislators can become better aware of urgent issues and dispose of additional know-how and means to undertake action. This is the role COMPSUD should play and one of the main responsibilities of its members.

The next session was directed to hearing views and opinions of participants on how to enhance the visibility and credibility of COMPSUD at the national level. Several proposals were made among which the need to link with political groups inside the various Parliaments in order to make the Circle better known and therefore more widely accepted. Also there was a proposal of creating inside each parliament in the region, based on the model of the Tunisian one, an "association" of Parliamentarians that would be specifically addressed by COMPSUD members and eventually secure the continuity of the Circle's intervention after the mandate of members has expired. It was clarified that Members of COMPSUD remain in the Circle even if they are not any longer MPs. However, all newly recruited members should be MPs/MEPs. Moreover it was stressed that the COMPSUD should increase its activities directed to education and facilitate a culture for the environment among the Members of the National Parliaments and the public at large. The COMPSUD Secretariat in cooperation with MEDIES which handles the educational component of MIO-ECSDE and GWP-Med is ready to facilitate this, based on the expression of interest of the Members. Finally, it was reiterated that members of the Circle represent in principle their own opinion, not that of their Parliaments, but that there is no obstacle for making their presence and intervention more official if this is considered useful. On the contrary, the official representation of Parliaments through their members is one of the intents of COMPSUD and also a clear indicator of the visibility and credibility the Circle has in the various countries.



The last session was dedicated to the elections of the new Board of Directors of the Circle. The new Board is as follows:

Mrs. Eleni PANARITIS - Greece (Chair)  
Mr. Taher BESBAS - Algeria (Co-Chair)  
Mr. Ilir BANO - Albania (Member)  
Mr. Mohammed KABBANI - Lebanon (Member)  
Mr. Hamda KENANI - Tunisia (Member)

**COMPSUD contribution in the Joint Egyptian-Dutch Water Conference  
"Towards the new Long-Term Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean"**

2-3 November 2009, Cairo - Egypt

The Meeting of COMPSUD7 was organized back-to-back with the Joint Egyptian-Dutch Water Conference "Towards the new Long-Term Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean" that took place on 2-3 November 2009, in Cairo. ([http://www.gwpmmed.org/files/Draft\\_Agenda.pdf](http://www.gwpmmed.org/files/Draft_Agenda.pdf))

The Conference, an open multi-stakeholder event, offered the opportunity for stakeholders in the region to contribute to the development of the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean as well as to the UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen. The four themes of the Strategy i.e. water governance, water and climate change, water financing, and water demand management, were approached through specific sessions and working groups that provided enough space for discussion on the subjects.

The participation of COMPSUD's members in this key multi-stakeholder regional event offered the opportunity for provision of concrete input on the subjects addressed by the Conference and for exchange of experiences with a wide range of water stakeholders.

Further to the contributions made by individual COMPSUD members to the different Working Groups and Sessions, the following interventions were included in the agenda of the Conference:

- Co-Chairing of Working Group on Water Governance (2/11/09) by Mr. Mohamed Kabbani, Chairman of the Water Committee of the Lebanese Parliament,
- Participation at the Panel on 'Looking to the future: What are the key future water challenges in the Mediterranean that the Strategy should respond to' (2/11/09) by Ms. Anastasia Roniotes, Head Officer, MIO-ECSDE, presenting elements of the COMPSUD "Input of the Mediterranean Environmental Civil Society on the Long-Term Strategy on Water for the Mediterranean (SWM)"
- Participation at the Panel on 'Acting for the future: How we will effectively meet the objectives of the Strategy' (3/11/09) by Ms.



Barbara Tomassini, COMPSUD Secretariat presenting elements of the COMPSUD "Input of the Mediterranean Environmental Civil Society on the Long-Term Strategy on Water for the Mediterranean (SWM)".

- Participation at the Panel on 'Acting for the future: How we will effectively meet the objectives of the Strategy' (3/11/09) by Ms. Salwa Bayoumi, Head of Agriculture and Irrigation Political Committee, National Democratic Party, Member of the Egyptian Parliament.
- The interventions and presentations were well received and in fact throughout the 2-day meeting it was repeatedly mentioned that the active participation of Parliamentarians was of great significance for the success of the Conference.

Moreover, the Cairo Message on 'Coping with Climate Change is Managing Water for Life', was agreed by the Conference in a session coordinated by Prof. M. Scoullou, Secretary General of COMPSUD, who also summarized the conclusions of the Conference at the end. The Cairo Message is meant to be a concrete contribution to COP 15 in Copenhagen. The document was also submitted to the Water Expert Group during their 2nd Meeting on November 4th. (<http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt/visit.php?lid=414> )