

SUSTAINABLE MEDITERRANEAN

MEDITERRANEE DURABLE • ΒΙΩΣΙΜΗ ΜΕΣΟΓΕΙΟΣ • MEDITERRANEO SOSTENIBILE

المتوسطة المستدامة

EMPOWERING YOUTH TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN



LE RENFORCEMENT DES CAPACITÉS DES JEUNES DE LA MÉDITERRANÉE EN MATIÈRE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE.

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EDITORIAL

Youth comprises approximately 30% of the world population and represents a very critical age group capable of mature choices and actions. Its involvement in environment and development decision-making is therefore critical for the long-term success of sustainable development as it is also reiterated in Chapter 25 of Agenda 21, the comprehensive plan of action to be taken globally, nationally and locally in every area in which humans impact on the environment. It calls for the active participation of youth in all relevant levels of decision-making processes because it affects their lives today and has implications for their futures. In addition to their intellectual contribution and their ability to mobilize support, they bring unique perspectives that need to be taken into account.

Education (formal, non-formal and informal), capacity building and Youth empowerment are essential in contributing advancing the role of Youth in this direction, while the enhancement of intercultural dialogue and cooperation between young people from different countries and backgrounds can help shaping a world based on mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence.

At international level it is worth citing the work of UNESCO, the Programme on Youth in the Division for Social Policy and Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and of the Global Youth Action Network. In the Mediterranean region, Youth empowerment, capacity building and cooperation are actively promoted, among others, by the EC through its YOUTH Programme, by the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Platform, a network created in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, while it is among the priorities of the newly created Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures.

The relevant work of NGOs and CSOs in this direction is also noteworthy. Many relevant initiatives are undertaken by a variety of organizations, institutions and bodies active at different geographic levels and in different thematic areas.

This issue highlights various initiatives, programmes, etc. that are implemented in the Mediterranean region including the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Exchange of MIO-ECSDE entitled "Cultural Recycling: Re-Orienting Cultures Towards Sustainability".

Les Jeunes constituent à peu près le 30% de la population mondiale et représentent un group d'âge doué d'esprit critique, capable d'accomplir des choix et des actions responsables. Leur participation active dans la prise de décisions relatives à l'environnement et au développement est

donc essentielle pour réaliser la durabilité à long terme, comme cela a été aussi confirmé dans le Chapitre 25 de l'Agenda 21, le plan comprenant les actions à adopter au niveau global, national et local dans tous les champs où les êtres humains produisent des impacts sur l'environnement. Celui-ci exhorte à la participation active des jeunes dans tous les processus décisionnels fondamentaux qui influent actuellement sur leur vie et qui auront des implications pour leur futur. A part leur contribution intellectuelle et leur capacité de mobiliser du soutien, ils sont porteurs de perspectives uniques qui devraient être prises en considération.

L'éducation (formelle, non formelle et informelle), le développement et le renforcement des capacités des jeunes sont donc des outils essentiels pour développer leur rôle dans cette direction, tandis que la promotion du dialogue interculturel et de la coopération entre jeunes de pays et contextes différents pourraient contribuer à la création d'un monde fondé sur la compréhension mutuelle et sur la coexistence pacifique.

Au niveau international, il vaut la peine de citer le travail de l'UNESCO, du Programme de la Jeunesse de la Division des Politiques Sociales et du Développement (Nations Unies, Département des Affaires Economiques et Sociales) et du Réseau Global Action Jeunesse. Dans la région méditerranéenne le développement et renforcement des capacités des jeunes et leur coopération sont activement promus, entre autres, par la Commission Européenne à travers son Programme JEUNESSE, par la Plateforme Euro-Med Jeunesse - un Réseau créé dans le cadre du Partenariat Euro-Méditerranéen - par le Centre Nord-Sud du Conseil de l'Europe, et ils sont parmi les priorités de la Fondation Euro-méditerranéenne Anna Lindh, récemment créée, pour le Dialogue entre les Cultures.

Il faut aussi noter le travail des ONG et des OCS dans cette direction. Beaucoup d'importantes initiatives sont actuellement entreprises par une variété d'organisations et d'institutions actives à des niveaux géographiques et dans des aires thématiques différentes.

Cette édition présente plusieurs initiatives, programmes, etc. réalisés dans la région méditerranéenne, y compris l'Echange Euro-Méditerranéen de Jeunes du MIO-ECSDE intitulé «Recyclage Culturel: Réorientation des Cultures vers la Durabilité».

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YOUTH AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In September 2000, at the United Nations Millennium Summit, world leaders agreed to a set of timebound and measurable goals and targets for combating poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women, the so-called Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Convinced about the necessity of involving youth in the process towards the implementation of MDGs a partnership was recently started among the Global Youth Action Network – GYAN (www.youthlink.org/gyanv3/home.html), the United Nations Millennium Campaign (www.millenniumcampaign.org/) and TakingITGlobal (<http://www.takingitglobal.org/>) on the launch of an MDG Youth Campaign Kit to engage young people and youth organizations in MDG-related projects, campaigns and advocacy efforts, including the support for launching the National MDG Youth Campaigns in 30 priority countries in 2005.

One useful resource developed in the framework of this cooperation is the *MDG Youth Action Guide* that can be downloaded at the UN Millennium campaign site and is directed to provide anyone who wants to make the world a better place everything they need to start a campaign, or link up with movements already happening in their country. Other interesting initiatives relevant to Youth and the MDGs can be found at:

- GYAN, (www.youthlink.org/ and www.youthlink.org/gyanv3/home.html),
- TakingITGlobal (www.takingitglobal.org/themes/mdg/index.html),
- UN Youth and the MDGs site (<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/mdgs/index.asp>, and
- at the focal point within the United Nations system on matters relating to Youth (www.un.org/youth and www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/mdgs.htm).

UNESCO and YOUTH

Since its creation UNESCO has given a great importance on youth empowerment and participation in society as equal and valuable partners.

Programmes regarding youth are integrated in all of UNESCO's sectors, including Education, Natural Sciences, Social and Human Sciences, Culture, Communication and Information.

The section for Youth (http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=20994&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html), created in the framework of the organization, provides young people with information, technical help, advice, intellectual contributions, etc. through four functions:

- Increased presence and participation of young women and men in UNESCO's bodies, events and activities

and in partner organizations, to open up opportunities for all to listen to and engage in dialogue with them (governance function).

- Partnerships between UNESCO and young people, to solicit and integrate their views and priorities and collaborate with them in setting up projects and programmes in the areas of the Organization's competence (programming function).
- Assistance to Member States of the Organization in mainstreaming youth concerns and issues into their policies and programmes in order to create spaces and opportunities for empowering young people and giving recognition, visibility and credibility to their contributions (policy development function).
- Act as a clearing house of information concerning youth and sustain campaigns; prepare and disseminate publications and information material, accessible also through our dedicated website (advocacy function).

THE ANNA LINDH EURO-MEDITERRANEAN FOUNDATION FOR THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN CULTURES AND ITS FOCUS ON YOUTH

Established in the framework of the Barcelona Declaration and named after the late Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh, who promoted the idea of creating a Euro-Mediterranean Foundation but unfortunately could not live to see the realization of her idea, the Foun-

dation's main objective is to bring people and organizations from both shores of the Mediterranean closer to each other and to help bridging the gap between them. Particular importance is given to the development of human resources, while youth is the main target group.

The Foundation aims at promoting a dynamic concept of dialogue between cultures through co-operation between civil society partners in education, culture, science and communication, at strengthening intellectual co-operation and capacity-building in fields such as human rights, democratic citizenship, sustainable development, learning, knowledge and information society, gender and youth and at contributing to shaping the Euro-Mediterranean space as an area of co-operation, exchange, mobility, mutual understanding and peace.

Based in the ancient Egyptian seaport city of Alexandria and co-hosted by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the Swedish Institute, the Foundation's activities are a joint endeavor of combined efforts of its 35 national networks and the Secretariat. In the initial phase the Foundation, which was created very recently, it is expected to launch several programmes and projects involving youth, including the establishment of a network of Euro-Mediterranean schools and the introduction of a scheme of cooperation for young journalists writing for school magazines in co-operation with partners from another part of the region.

The Anna Lindh Award for Educational and Cultural journalism will also be created while a Euro-Mediterranean music project will be launched, aimed at compiling and distributing CDs and cassettes of popular music widely listened to by the young in the region.

Among the activities relevant to Youth that are planned to be implemented in the biennium 2005-2007 by the 35 national networks and the Foundation's Secretariat in conjunction with various partners are included:

- The programme “**Our Common Future**” that contains several projects and aims at reaching out to the largest possible number of young people, inviting them to share experiences and work together without frontiers. The programme is designed to add value to existing programmes and structures involving youth in the Euro-Mediterranean space such as EuroMed Youth, international school networks and Internet fora.
- The **Euro-Mediterranean Popular Music** or Discotheque Project aiming at collecting popular music titles and includes the acquisition of rights for dissemination via Internet/MP3 and CDs or cassette tapes.
- The **Euro-Mediterranean school magazines project** that focuses on matching two schools having school magazines or yearbooks with the aim of co-production of articles on selected themes such as sustainable development, cultural diversity, heritage, etc. The project is intended to train young journalists in secondary schools as well as their teachers.
- The **Euro-Mediterranean schools network**, which will operate as an inter-regional structure integrating

existing international school networks such as UNESCO Associated Schools, Globe Schools, Global Environmental Youth Initiative, and others. Projects such as Mondialogo, Join Multimedia, NetD@ys, e-schola, etc. are invited to participate.

- The **Euromed Teacher-Training Programme** is a capacity-building component that supports and complements EuroMed youth programmes. Arrangements within the new co-operation scheme between the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization ALECSO and the Council of Europe will be prepared.
- The programme “**Opportunities for Multiperspectivity**” and its components invite the young generation to learn together throughout life. It focuses on translating universal values, such as non-discrimination, justice and tolerance as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, into attractive learning and teaching resources.
- The **Multilingual Education Server** will offer educational material in the fields of human rights, democratic citizenship and sustainable development in the languages English, French, and Arabic. It will cooperate with existing projects under supervision of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network and competent environmental NGO networks such as Friends of the Earth - Middle East.
- The **Culture of Religions Programme** will provide a survey of existing curricula and textbooks on education about religious pluralism, a publication of a good practice manual, as well as pilot projects in religious (Christian, Islamic and Jewish) schools willing to co-operate.
- The programme “**Our Creative Diversity**” aims at translating benefits deriving from the emerging international consensus on the concept of cultural diversity into concrete proposals for Euro-Mediterranean co-operation.
- The Programme **Contemporary Creation** aims at introducing a Euro-Mediterranean component in selected workshops on artistic creation in fields such as theatre, music, modern dance and arts; identification of mobility schemes and travel grants for young performing artists and creators.
- The Programme **EuroMed Heritage in Young Hands** implies preparation of educational materials that make results of the EuroMed Heritage programme accessible to formal as well as out-of school education.
- The Programme **Dialogue between Cultures in the Classroom** aims at the preparation of educational tools on contemporary Euro-Mediterranean dialogue fora and on international and regional normative instruments on cultural diversity.
- The **Educational and Cultural Journalism Programme** aims at linking the Euro-Mediterranean

school magazines network with media partners and journalist schools; the Anna Lindh Award for educational and cultural journalism will be established together with media partners, a Euro-Mediterranean training programme for young journalists will be launched as a component of existing journalism schools

together with the information and communication programme of the European Commission.

More information can be downloaded at the Foundation's website: www.euromedalex.org/

YOUTH INITIATIVES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S NORTH-SOUTH CENTRE

The European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity, better known as the North-South Centre (http://www.coe.int/T/E/North-South_Centre/), was established in 1989 by the Council of Europe to encourage North-South co-operation and solidarity and to improve education and information on the ties of interdependence that bind the world's inhabitants. Often presented as being the Council of Europe's window on the whole of the world, it asserts the values defended by the Council – respect for human rights, democracy and social cohesion – beyond the European continent.

Youth and young people are recognised as a privileged partner and target group for the action of the North-South Centre directed to promote, improve and give visibility to the role of youth and their organisations as actors of development as well as to ensure the awareness of young people of the global and interdependent nature of their society and empower them to fully participate in all policies of global development.

One of the main purposes is to promote an integrated and horizontal approach to youth policy and follow the values and principles of the Children and Youth Rights agenda. This is achieved on the basis of a permanent dialogue in partnership with the relevant European, international and regional youth platforms.

Among the Centre's activities addressed to youth and youth organizations are included: a Summer University on Youth and Development; Global and interregional training courses for youth organisations (North-South TC, Euro-Mediterranean TC, Euro-African TC and Euro-Asian TC); Facilitation of interregional processes at youth level; Seminars and workshops on youth participation in development; Pool of trainers and training development on North-South and global youth work; Research and exchange of best practices.

Over the years the North-South Centre has worked on Mediterranean projects in close partnership with other Council of Europe services, based in Strasbourg, and other partners in the areas of political affairs, youth and so-

cial cohesion, global education and human rights education. It is within this framework that the North-South Centre cooperated in a joint project of the Council of Europe and the European Commission on Euro-Mediterranean youth training (May 2003 – May 2005). The aim of this partnership was to provide further quality training and learning opportunities for youth workers and youth leaders active in Euro-Mediterranean youth projects.

The activities organised in the framework of the partnership have been open to multipliers involved in youth policies and programmes at European level and on the southern shore of the Mediterranean Basin, and particularly those concerned with the Euro-Med Youth programme. This target public comprises professional and voluntary youth workers, members of youth organisations, youth information officers, youth officers from local and regional authorities and trainers.

The main activities included a Seminar on "Youth policy here and now", with the view to exchange experiences and current practices in Europe and Middle East countries in the field of Youth Policy and Youth participation; an inter-regional training course on "Intercultural learning and human rights education in the Mediterranean" to share good practice and develop the skills and competences of youth workers in the fields of intercultural learning and human rights education; a training course on "Citizenship matters: the participation of women and minorities in Euro-Med youth projects" addressing thematic issues related to the Euro-Med programme, which are equally relevant to the culture of human rights, namely women's rights, minority rights and approaches for citizenship and participation of young people; a long-term training course (in three phases) on "Youth participation and intercultural learning through Euro-Med youth work" aiming at developing the capacity of youth workers to plan, manage and evaluate sustainable youth projects and also to initiate a series of local youth pilot projects addressing the priority issues in Euro-Med co-operation (such as citizenship, environmental protection, women's rights, human rights); a "Training for active Trainers in Euro-Mediterranean youth work", implemented in co-operation with the SALTO Euro-Med re-

source Centre to develop and consolidate the skills and competence of 30 trainers active with projects in the region with the view of improving the quality of training and the existing informal pool of trainers; the production of a train-

ing and education material (T-Kit) on Euro-Med youth work, bringing together educational experiences and methods used in the programme of activities for future users of the programme.

THE EUROPEAN "YOUTH PROGRAMME"

The YOUTH programme is the EC's mobility and non-formal education programme targeting young people aged between 15 and 25 years.

It offers possibilities to young people residing in 31 European countries (the so-called Programme countries, including the 25 EU Member States, EFTA/EEA countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and pre-accession countries, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey) in the form of group exchanges, individual voluntary work and support activities. A youth exchange brings together groups of young people from different backgrounds from two or more countries, providing them with an opportunity to discuss and confront various themes, whilst learning about each other's countries and cultures. Exchanges between Programme countries can be bilateral, trilateral or multilateral. In some cases multilateral exchanges can be itinerant, i.e. the entire exchange group moves through several countries during the activity.

The European Voluntary Service (EVS) is one of the opportunities for young people to get actively involved as volunteers in European project work. An EVS project gains from intercultural experience, it builds on a transnational partnership between youth organisations and the volunteer.

Support Measures are instruments aimed at helping all those involved in youth activities or interested in youth matters to prepare and develop projects and initiatives within the context of the YOUTH programme.

In order to guarantee the smooth coordination of youth activities National Agencies for Youth have been established in all 31 programme countries and act as a link between the European Commission, project promoters at national, regional and local level, and the young people themselves, and are a key contact point. The Agencies are responsible for disseminating general information about the YOUTH programme as well as encouraging and facilitating the establishing of partnerships. They are also responsible for the selection of projects according to the criteria set by the European Commission. They advise project promoters and organise different kinds of training activities. The National Agencies are the primary sources of information for the users of the programme.

Since 1992 the dialogue between young people and youth exchanges all over the Mediterranean has been supported within the framework of the Community programme "Youth for Europe" and since 1996 through the "European Voluntary Service" programme. The Barcelona Process (Euro-Mediterranean Partnership) launched in 1995 stressed on the need to establish a Euro-Mediterranean youth exchange cooperation programme in order to contribute preparing future generations of the Euro-Med partners for a closer collaboration through enhanced possibilities for a permanent dialogue, for fostering mutual understanding, integrating young people into social and professional life and contributing to the democratization of the civil society.

The Euro-Med Youth programme I (1999-2001) adopted by the European Commission and the Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona Process in 1998 and followed by a second phase (Euro-Med Youth programme II, 2002-2004) provided for the extension of the Youth programme's activities to the Mediterranean partner countries. It involved three actions of the Youth programme: Youth Exchanges, Voluntary Service and Support Measures open to young people (aged between 15 and 25), youth associations and local NGOs, resident/based in one of the 10 Mediterranean partner countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey) and in the 25 Member States of the European Union.

The programme has been so far implemented locally by a National Coordinator having a good knowledge of local non-profit associative life as well as the needs and realities of youth work which has been designated by the competent national authorities in each Mediterranean partner country upon request from the European Commission.

Euro-Med Youth III, featuring the decentralized management in the Mediterranean Partner countries by means of new structures to be identified by the authorities of the relevant countries, will be operational as soon as these structures become operational. This means that, for the time being, applications can be submitted only by organisations based in EU Member States. The applicant submits the application on behalf of all partners to the relevant Youth National Agency which organizes selec-

tions at national level. For more information on the Euro-Med Youth Programme please refer to http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/priorities/euromed_en.html

The YOUTH programme also supports international cooperation projects with other Partner Countries in South East Europe (SEE), the Eastern Europe and the Caucasus (former CIS – Commonwealth of Independent States) and Latin America (LA).

Moreover, the Commission has created eight Resource

Centers within the Youth National Agencies called SALTO-YOUTH. Their role is to provide support to improve the quality of Youth projects in priority areas. The SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centers provide training courses and tools, information on good practices, networks and partnerships development, partner finding etc. They work in close cooperation with the National Agencies and the National Coordinators to reach the users of the Youth programme. For further information, please consult: www.salto-youth.net while Euro-Med stakeholders can consult www.salto-youth.net/euromed.

THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN YOUTH PLATFORM

by **Giovanni Buttigieg**

The Euro-Mediterranean Youth Platform aims at facilitating networking between all those involved in the youth sector in the Mediterranean and Europe.

We provide **networking services** for youth initiatives in the region by assisting in the search for partners for their projects, facilitating the creation of networks of youth groups that have similar objectives, publishing a magazine in 3 languages, organising meetings, providing an on-line FORUM for discussion, researching the situation on young people in each country, and assisting youth groups in getting financing for their initiatives.

Over **3100 organisations** from all European and Mediterranean countries have joined the Platform to date. The widest utilised tool developed by the Platform is the Partner Search facility. It has become a standard utility for anyone needing partners. This is probably one of the **largest lists of youth organisations** in the region in existence.

The **FORUM** is another on-line facility for discussing ideas, developing proposals and following-up projects, as well as a place for thematic discussions on anything from hooliganism in sport to xenophobia. It is also used as a notice board for those looking for partners and participants for their projects. For some of its users this is the only space for **free expression**.

The Platform embarked also on researching the **situation of young people** in each country. The uniqueness of this study is that it is not a treaty by academics, but the situation of young people as seen by young people themselves. This should be a good reference tool for those working with a country for the first time.

Another publication is the **Magazine**. This is one of the very few periodicals published in three languages – Arabic, English and French. The Magazine has two objec-

tives: reaching out to those without easy access to the internet, and also sensitizing authorities on what is going on in the youth sector in the region.

We have also organised a series of three meetings aimed at enabling a more **equitable participation** in Euro-Mediterranean youth cooperation.

We also facilitate the creation of Euro-Mediterranean youth networks. The most advanced of these brings together young people active in trade unions dealing with **young people and work**. It tackles issues such as youth unemployment, exploitation of young people, legal and illegal immigration, child labour, relations between education and the labour market, life long learning, gender equality at the place of work, and the integration of young persons with disabilities into working life. The Platform is also assisting this network in a campaign on youth employment in the Euro-Med region, following a study they conducted on the topic.

We have also assisted in the establishment of a **Euro-Med Student Forum**.

A network in the making is for **youth involved in political parties**. Most of the major political youth groups are involved in this project. The long term effect of such a network can be significant, considering we are bringing together at an early age some of the most likely future leaders in the Euro-Med region.

Other such networks are at different levels of development and include one for officers in **local governments** responsible for youth, and one for those working with **sexual minorities**.

Further information can be obtained from <http://www.euromed.org>

THE MIO-ECSDE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN YOUTH EXCHANGE "CULTURAL RECYCLING: RE-ORIENTING CULTURES TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY"

Karystos & Chalkida • 15-24 July 2005



The major challenge of our century is probably to learn living together and in harmony with our environment on a planet where resources and space are limited. To meet this challenge it is important to adopt a global vision of the world in which we want to live peacefully, thinking in the long-term and acting responsibly.

The Youth exchange programme "Cultural Recycling: Re-orienting Cultures towards Sustainability" is the first of its kind within the activity plan of MIO-ECSDE and is related to three other on-going programmes: supporting the Biological and Cultural Diversity of Mediterranean countries; promoting access to environmental information, awareness and active participation; and expanding Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) within and outside the schooling system (formal, informal, non-formal).

The word 'recycling' can be understood in different ways. In the stricter sense it means giving a new life cycle to something that already exists. This concept is utilized in the environmental context for materials which can be re-used (passing, or not, through a transformation process),

as well as for the reutilization of discarded materials in general so that their life can be extended and the extraction and consumption of natural resources, which are limited, can be reduced. Today the recycling of materials is considered as one of the main solutions for minimizing the environmental impacts caused by the huge quantities of waste produced by humans.

However, as important as the recycling of materials discarded by humans is, the recycling of human behavior itself is also important. Recycling in this wider sense means to change our way of thinking, our attitudes, values and our life models in general. 'Cultural recycling' has to start with deep reflections in relation to our life style - for example about the type of goods we consume - to the thoughts that permeate our minds - whether these thoughts are competitive rather than cooperative - to our attitudes - whether we are individualists or not - to the quality of food that we eat, etc.

Finally, evaluating one's own lifestyle and choosing a more sustainable alternative is also an act of cultural recycling and moreover, an act of responsible citizenship.

Partner organisations:

Egypt : AOYE – Arab Office for Youth and Environment		Slovenia : DPPVN – Society of Bird Research and Nature Protection	
France : Association U Marinu – CPIE Bastia Golo Méditerranée		Spain : MEDITERRANIA, Centre d'Initiatives Ecologiques	
Greece : MIO-ECSDE - Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development		Tunisia : APNEK – Association for the Protection of Nature & Environment, Kairouan	
Greece : Mediterranean SOS Network		Tunisia : ADPE - Association of Development and of the Protection of the Environment	
Italy : ITALIA NOSTRA		Turkey : TEMA – Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats	
Lebanon : AMWAJ of the Environment			
Morocco : CMEPE – Moroccan Club for Population and Environmental Education			
Morocco : SPANA - Société Protectrice des Animaux et de la Nature			

The Main Objectives of the Youth exchange:

- ◆ To approach various issues of environmental, social and cultural importance for young Mediterranean people.
- ◆ To give youth the opportunity to be acquainted with different cultures and traditions.
- ◆ To strengthen the efforts of youth to take control of their own destiny and to build a world together based on the principles of sustainable development, ecology, peace, solidarity and multiculturalism.
- ◆ To develop a model for further expansion of the European Youth Programme for the coming years.

The Youth exchange involved 51 participating young people from 10 different Mediterranean countries i.e. Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey. It focused on issues of common concern for young people and the region, such as *sustainable water and waste management* as well as the *interlinkages existing between Mediterranean cultural and biological diversity*.

The Hosting Place: the beautiful island of Evia

The hosting place of the Youth exchange was Evia (also called Negroponte in Medieval-Renaissance maps), the second biggest island of Greece. The group was given the opportunity to observe Evia's great variety of landscapes, biotopes, cultural and historical features that are part of the valuable Mediterranean cultural and biological diversity.

Being since very ancient times one of the most important passages in the Mediterranean Sea, meaning that anyone from the west wishing to sail safely to the north Aegean and from there on to the Black sea, or the other way around, had and still has to pass through the Evoikos gulf, Evia is a symbol for the meeting point of different cultures and peoples in our common Sea. This fully corresponds with the dynamics of this Youth exchange.

It is noteworthy that the regional and local authorities of Evia (the Prefecture and the Municipalities of Karystos and Chalkida) became keen supporters of the project, enhancing the synergy between young people and the cultural and administrative structures of our society.

The main activities

Communication games (“ice-breaking”, etc.); language lessons; presentations and film showings on particular environmental and cultural features of the countries or on specific projects in which the young participants and their organisations are involved; **follow-up discussions**: all these activities facilitated communication between participants and promoted the exchange of ideas and experience on topics of common interest.

Presentation and discussion on “The EU and the promotion of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation”. Participants were informed about several dimensions of partnership and collaborations that are in place to strengthen the relationships among the countries of the region as well as about on-going projects that help in this direction.

Presentation and discussion on “Monitoring and the measures for protecting the Mediterranean from pollution”. The MEDPOL Programme of UNEP/MAP, implemented by the Mediterranean countries that are partners to the Barcelona Convention in order to protect the marine and coastal environment from pollution, was introduced to participants. In addition, they became “researchers” themselves, conducting basic **water quality tests** on various marine and fresh water samples. By this way, they roughly estimated the impact of human activities on water bodies of the areas they visited and stayed in.

Educational drama on “Responsible behaviour regarding waste management”. Through this experiential, enjoyable method the young participants employed techniques of “acting out” and experiencing life situations referring to consumption habits and waste management. Reflection and discussion helped them to explore the reasons as well as the impact of over-consumption and thoughtless dumping of waste.

Organisation of three cultural nights: *The “Mediterranean Europe” evening, The Middle East evening and the “Mediterranean Africa” evening*, which included preparation of traditional food, music and dances, wearing traditional costumes, analysing traditions, etc. Participants had the opportunity to travel the Mediterranean through tasting the cuisines, learning local dances and getting acquainted with the different cultures represented in the programme.

Field visits to sites of particular environmental and cultural importance, such as:

The Environmental Centre of Karystos: this visit provided participants with stimuli for discussion on the in-

teraction between the natural environment and human culture and development. Also they were given ideas on how traditional ways of management can still contribute to sustainable management approaches; *Drakospita*: participants were impressed by these unique architectural monuments - dating back to 4th-3rd century B.C. - that are so harmonised with the landscape in which they were built; *the "Fertilina" Compost Unit (Nea Artaki)*: participants were provided information about the production of organic fertilizer from animal waste that they used later in their working groups on the topic of sustainable waste management and composting; *Chiliadou seashore, passing through the mountainous area of Dirfi*: during this visit the participants experienced and observed the different landscapes that Evia offers, coastal and mountainous ones; *Liaskos Museum*: we were informed of the local as well as the overall recent Greek history from the Greek Revolution of 1821 to the end of World War II.

Working groups on topics that reflect the interaction between the human element and the environment such as: sustainable water & waste management also through traditional practices, wetlands conservation, renewable energy resources, ways of interaction between natural environment and biodiversity and cultural diversity, etc. In the working groups participants studied and explored case studies of their countries on such topics, exchanging information and ideas.

Photo-exhibition "Impressions of the Mediterranean diversity through the eyes of youth", Chalkida Town Hall, 19-24 July. The photo exhibition was the joint attempt to capture some of the features of the rich cultural and biological diversity of Mediterranean countries, many of which are expressions of the interactions between humans and the natural environment. Important experience was gained through the interaction with the visitors to the exhibition, the majority of whom were local residents. Thus, the photos were used as another "tool" for raising public awareness on the protection of the environmental and cultural diversity.

Workshop on how to promote a youth initiative through EU Youth Programmes: The participants were acquainted with the prerequisites, benefits and importance of the Youth Programme. Working in groups, they drafted and presented their own ideas for future Euro-Mediterranean Youth projects on topics that are of high importance for them, such as environmental degradation, gender mainstreaming, unemployment, the role of the media and Internet in contributing to sustainable development, intercultural activities, etc.

Cleaning up the coast of "Kalamies-Artakis": a 'tiring' but very important activity, during which participants sorted - into cigarette butts, plastic, glass and tins - and recorded the amount of waste collected. In order to make aware and mobilize the local society they also drew posters entitled: "Enjoy Clean Beaches" and hung them in visible points at the entrance to the beach. The impact of this clean-up was also reflected in the wide coverage by the local media.

Role-playing activity on water management. During the role-playing, by representing all major water user groups, the young participants defended their interests and made arguments on how concrete and realistic changes in water management in all sectors (i.e. agriculture, industry, domestic uses) can have a big positive impact on the conservation of water resources. Through the role-playing exercise they identified and "experienced" the topic of water shortage, a common issue in most Mediterranean countries, through the viewpoint of various actors.

Experiential workshop on "What is our place in this multicultural region?" During the workshop the young participants worked individually as well as in groups and discovered common and different elements of their national cultures that make them proud. Using the "appreciative approach", they found out that values such as freedom, peace, tolerance, friendship, Mediterranean civilisations, environmental protection and respect unite them and contribute to the peaceful co-existence of all Mediterranean people.

Evaluation: The project activities were assessed daily, by means of games and discussions. A questionnaire was also used at the end of the Youth exchange to evaluate the overall programme. Furthermore, a **digital diary** was created by the participants, a short film in which they "concentrated" all activities of the 10-day exchange. The film helped to evaluate the experience gained and to propose follow-up activities, as well as to remember the "multicultural" days spent together...

What was achieved

Through the active involvement in this exchange and the close cooperation of young people from different cultures and countries it became more clear that the sustainable future of the region is in the hands of its people and particularly in the hands of the young that have a great responsibility in contributing to the viable and peaceful development of their societies.

The participants realized, for example, that a simple change in aspects of their daily habits (i.e. domestic water use and waste management) can have an important positive impact on the conservation of the environment and its resources and that present environmental practices can be challenged more effectively if all act together. Keeping harmonious interactions between humans and their environment is not only important for guaranteeing the survival on this planet, but is also the premise to conserve the biological and cultural features of the Mediterranean that make this region so special.

The young participants learned that their diversities and particularities, if properly understood and respected, could be their strength and that the acceptance of 'different' and 'differing' opinions and points of view about life, religion, culture, etc., is a way of enriching experiences and of furthering the fruitful coexistence of different people in the region.

Ideas for future cooperation

"Cultural Recycling" has given a lot of food for thought concerning the future contribution of young people towards the promotion of a sustainable Mediterranean. In fact, the first genuine and unanimous request of the group is for MIO-ECSDE to repeat and, if possible, establish a regular (annual or biannual) Youth exchange activity for its member organizations. This should also be consid-

ered as an investment in capacity building for future environmental leadership in the Mediterranean.

Many ideas for new projects and for strengthening Youth cooperation have arisen throughout the exchange. Culture, environment and sustainable development are among the key topics that everyone wishes to keep focusing on. In order to discuss more about future common initiatives and projects and increase their networking participants will keep in contact through e-mail lists, while the Secretariat and all participants will further research the possibilities offered by the EC Youth Programme and other sources to support the follow-up and continuation of such an endeavor.

As for the present Youth exchange, the group considers it very important to widely disseminate its results, so that other young people can be aware of the principles that have brought them together for these 10 days and which will be the basis of future collaboration. To this purpose, participants will talk with friends about their experience, while member organizations will do their best to cooperate with the media so that the results of this exchange reach a very wide public.

The group has agreed to enrich the joint photo exhibition with new pictures and thematic areas and to present it in other Mediterranean countries since this can become a powerful instrument for multicultural education and for raising awareness about the need to protect our biological and cultural diversity.

PHOTO EXHIBITION

"Impressions of Mediterranean Diversity through the eyes of youth"

The photo exhibition was created in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Exchange 'Cultural Recycling: Re-orienting Cultures towards Sustainability' with pictures from Spain, France (Corsica), Italy, Slovenia, Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco. It attempts to capture some of the features of the rich cultural and biological diversity of the region, many of which are expressions of the interactions between humans and their environment, as they are seen through the eyes of the young people involved in the exchange.

The exhibition comprises of several units focusing on the following issues: the intrinsic value of natural landscapes and biodiversity; nature as a provider of materials and resources vital to humans; the influence of natural landscapes and other natural elements (i.e. availability of water, type of soil and climate, etc.) on human settlements;

nature as a source of food and economic development (i.e. through the support of activities such as agriculture, fishing, livestock breeding, etc.); the natural environment of the Mediterranean, shaping activities, styles, cultural expressions, tastes and mentality of the peoples of the region through its varied elements, colours and patterns.

The photo exhibition shall be enriched with more, relevant photos from all the countries of the region through the active involvement of MIO-ECSDE members in this initiative and it is expected to serve as an itinerant "tool" for raising public awareness on the protection of Cultural and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean. MIO-ECSDE organisations involved in the Youth exchange are already looking for possibilities to present the exhibition in their countries and we hope that other MIO-ECSDE members might make good use of it as well.





Mer en Fête

«Unir les rives de la Méditerranée sous l'angle de l'éducation à l'environnement en vue du développement durable»

Chaque année, l'association bastiaise *U Marinu*, labellisée Centre Permanent d'Initiatives pour l'Environnement, convie **les enfants du pourtour méditerranéen** et les acteurs de l'éducation à l'environnement à participer à «La Mer en Fête», à bord d'un navire.

Un des engagements de l'association U Marinu, CPIE Bastia Golo Méditerranée, est de privilégier l'acte éducatif pour protéger l'environnement et plus particulièrement l'environnement marin et côtier. L'environnement est devenu une préoccupation majeure au niveau mondial. L'actualité nous le rappelle sans cesse.

Pour que toute action, pour que tout effort de protection, du local au planétaire soit couronné de succès, il faut qu'il soit soutenu par une action éducative conséquente et rigoureuse. Le meilleur investissement reste **la sensibilisation, l'éducation des jeunes, futurs citoyens responsables**. La mer n'est qu'une, personne ne peut prétendre la connaître, la protéger et la gérer seul. C'est ensemble que nous parviendrons à des résultats positifs.

C'est pourquoi cette manifestation «**La Mer en Fête**» a pour objectifs de:

- Privilégier l'acte éducatif pour protéger la Mer Méditerranée;
- Promouvoir la Mer Méditerranée comme une aire écoculturelle;
- Unir les rives de la Méditerranée sous l'angle de l'éducation à l'environnement et au développement durable.

La **Mer en Fête** réunit de nombreux acteurs du milieu marin au service de l'éducation. Depuis 11 ans, nous avons le privilège d'accueillir à la fois des scientifiques, des universitaires mais aussi un grand nombre d'anima-

teurs spécialisés dans l'éducation à l'environnement marin issus du milieu associatif et institutionnel, des sportifs et différents corps de métiers ayant un rapport avec la mer.

Pas moins de 200 personnes se mobilisent chaque année pour sensibiliser les jeunes générations à l'environnement, et plus particulièrement l'environnement marin.

Une manifestation qui se développe sur le pourtour méditerranéen!

L'objectif principal de la manifestation étant «d'unir les rives de la Méditerranée sous l'angle de l'éducation à l'environnement», des rapprochements avec des associations oeuvrant pour l'éducation à l'environnement et la jeunesse dans les différents pays du pourtour méditerranéens ont été engagés depuis plusieurs années.

Ainsi en 2004, l'ATPNE en Tunisie et l'AEB en Algérie ont organisé leur 1^{ère} édition de «Mer en Fête». Puis en 2005, les 2^{èmes} éditions de «Mer en Fête» en Tunisie et en Algérie se sont déroulées; et l'association AFAK Tanger a organisé sa 1^{ère} édition de Mer en Fête au Maroc. Des projets de «Mer en Fête» sont également en projet pour 2005 en Italie, en Roumanie, en Grèce et au Liban.

Le 07mars 2005, la manifestation «Mer en Fête» a été présentée, avec l'ensemble des ses partenaires associatifs et institutionnels, à l'UNESCO, à Paris, dans le cadre de la **Décennie des Nations Unies pour l'Education en vue du Développement Durable**. Ce jour a été décidée la création du Réseau Méditerranéen des Mer en Fête (ReMMEF).

Ainsi, en 2005, nous avons accueillis près de 10 000 enfants de Méditerranée, autour d'objectifs communs, dans 4 pays: France, Maroc, Tunisie et Algérie

MISCELLANEOUS MEDITERRANEAN NEWS

ADOPTION OF THE UNECE STRATEGY FOR EDUCATION FOR SD (17-18 MARCH 2005, VILNIUS).

In the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, on 18 March 2005, the UNECE Ministers, vice-ministers and other high-level representatives of Environment and Education Ministries adopted the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development, a practical instrument to promote sustainable development through education. The Meeting debated the progress in implementing ESD, good practices in the region and identified key challenges that

lie ahead. The role of the UNECE in implementing ESD Strategy at global context, and its cooperation with UNESCO was discussed. During the meeting the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005-2014) for the UNECE region was officially launched. During the Vilnius meeting, Greece reaffirmed officially the intention to continue its support to MEDIES!

PROTECTING THE MEDITERRANEAN BIO-CULTURAL DIVERSITY: MIO-ECSDE concerns about the impacts of Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTs)

In line with its efforts to preserve Mediterranean Bio-Cultural Diversity MIO-ECSDE has recently submitted to the Secretariat of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UN CBD Secretariat), upon its request, a set of written comments on the potential impacts of Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (also called 'Terminator technologies') on indigenous people, local communities, smallholder farmers etc.

Terminator technologies refer to plants that have been genetically modified to render sterile seeds at harvest. Although Terminator seeds are not available yet, the seed industry is developing the technology and pushing hard to commercialize it arguing on the biosafety benefits it offers since it

prevents unwanted contamination of local wild crops through gene flow from genetically modified (GM) crops.

MIO-ECSDE believes that the harmful impacts of these technologies in the Mediterranean region and beyond might be manifold, including the disruption of existing social and cultural practices and the jeopardy of food security and sovereignty. This point of view is reflected in the comments sent to the UN CBD Secretariat which are listed below.

For further information please consult: www.etcgroup.org, www.banterminator.org, <http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/socio-eco/traditional/akwe.asp>

Comments on the potential impacts of GURTs on Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities, Peasants and Small-Scale Farmers.

The Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE) would like to express its high concerns regarding the application of Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTs) and submit to your attention a list of negative impacts they might produce on indigenous people, local communities, smallholder farmers, etc. in the Mediterranean as well as worldwide.

Biosafety Hazards

The seed industry is promoting GURTs as a mechanism for containing unwanted gene flow and genetic contamination from genetically modified plants (GM plants) in response to increased concerns (supported

by scientific findings and case-studies) that escaped genes from GM plants are posing threats to agricultural biodiversity, especially in centers of crop genetic diversity.

The industry argues that engineered sterility of seeds offers a built-in safety feature for GM plants because seeds produced from unwanted pollination will be completely sterile. Saying so, it assumes that the specific trait is secured for each single seed in the second generation, i.e. that the applied technique has 100% of success.

However, world leading experts and scientists are warning about the inherent instability of GM organisms due to unpredictable consequences resulting from the changes produced in their genome, which can arise suddenly and

even hundreds of generations after the crops are originally modified. In the case of GURTs this could eventually result in the disabling of the mechanism that make seeds sterile and contaminate other crops as well as wild relatives. This would have a serious impact on **food security and food sovereignty** for farmers and communities that unknowingly sow these seeds. Farmers who save their seeds and whose crops have been cross-pollinated by 'sterile' plants in the area may suffer significant yield losses in the following seasons due to a reduced germination of the seeds. The consequences would be particularly harsh for the poorest farm communities and those who depend on humanitarian food aid if they re-plant food aid seeds containing the sterility trait.

Crop genetic diversity losses

Plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) are the biological basis of world food security and, directly or indirectly support the livelihoods of every person on earth. They comprise the diversity of genetic material contained in traditional varieties and modern cultivars, as well as crop wild relatives and other wild plant species that can be used now or in the future for food and agriculture. Broadly defined, plant genetic resources for food and agriculture include resources which contribute to people's livelihoods by providing food, medicine, feed for domestic animals, fibre, clothing, shelter, energy and many other products and services. Throughout history, human beings have used thousands of plant species for food, many of which have also been domesticated. Today only 150 plant species are cultivated, 12 of which provide approximately 75 percent of our food and four of which produce over half of the food we eat. This involution has increased the vulnerability of agriculture and impoverished the human diet. As a result, many local crops that have traditionally been important for feeding the poorest sectors of society are now under-utilized or neglected.

The contamination of crops through traits of seed sterility would even worsen these trends: farmers could lose trust in their own seed stock and, at the same time, if the contamination persists, they could lose their traditional and local varieties and be forced to abandon their own seeds, adapted to local conditions (soil, climate, water availability) and community needs (traditional medicinal system, nutrition values, taste quality, spiritual/religious needs, etc).

Moreover, considering that local varieties are cultivated using techniques that preserve the soil and available natural resources in a broader sense, the entire ecosystem would be negatively affected.

Cultural diversity at risk

The loss of traditional varieties and decline in seed breeding would threaten the practice and retention of traditional and local knowledge including experimenting, developing new, improved strains, exchanging seeds with each other. Farmers would become totally dependent on seed companies, and therefore on whatever money they can borrow from the bank to buy inputs, and their traditional knowledge about seed breeding would be lost, at least for those cultivars which are 'taken over' by terminator seeds.

In addition, rituals and festivities celebrating the fecundity of earth and seeds (often in association with the fecundity of women), also a remarkable cultural trait of numerous indigenous and rural communities, would be lost. In this way unique elements of the tangible and intangible Mediterranean and world cultural heritage are destined to disappear forever.

The risks highlighted above are threatening even more those countries that are not prepared, from a legislative, institutional and administrative point of view, to control the widespreading of GMOs or to challenge consequences that might arise as a consequence of their application. This is the case of several Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries, as well as of many other countries –mainly in the developing world- which are in a particularly vulnerable position vis-à-vis their commercial partners.

In these countries the information on on-going debates around GMOs in general and GURTs in particular are almost inexistent, preventing the public and concerned stakeholders to get sensitized and take position accordingly.

In view of the threats on cultural and biological diversity, indigenous knowledge systems, small-scale farming and global food security that GURTs represent and in line with the precautionary principle, we call for the BCD:

- to strengthen the existing international *de facto* moratorium on GURTs
- to undertake all necessary steps to encourage governments to ban GURTs once and for all, especially in view of their forthcoming meeting (COP8, Brazil, 20-31 March 2006)
- to promote information, awareness raising and sensitization of the public and of all concerned stakeholders on the issue of GURTs so that they might be able to get involved in the relevant discussion and push for stricter regulations.

The Athens-based Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP), which serves as the Secretariat of the Barcelona Convention¹ completes 30 years of existence this year. Initially, the aim of the Convention and its Protocols was to protect the Mediterranean Sea from pollution but later, in 1995, it was expanded to contribute to the sustainable development of the region. The revised Convention entered into force in 2004. UNEP/MAP has established a set of “UNEP/MAP Partners” which comprises of NGOs, the private sector, local authorities, etc. and with which it maintains close ties.

A meeting was organized by the UNEP/MAP NGO Partner organization MIO-ECSDE² and supported by UNEP/MAP and the European Commission on June 19th 2005 in Athens, Greece with participants from several Mediterranean countries. It was an exercise of reflection and assessment and a contribution on the part of the UNEP/MAP NGO Partners to the Contracting Parties (CPs) of the Barcelona Convention in respect to the thirty year anniversary of UNEP/MAP.

At the meeting, the Mediterranean NGO community reaffirmed its view that the Barcelona Convention is a good model of regional partnership between a UN body and regional stakeholders. It has played an important role in promoting a peaceful dialogue among countries on the issue of the environmental protection of the Mediterranean Sea, and progressively also of sustainable development of the region, and indirectly promoting the dialogue among partners and in particular between governments and NGOs on issues of its competence. This was strengthened even more by the creation of the globally unique Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) in 1996, which is an advisory body of MAP. In the MCSD countries, NGOs, local authorities and the private sector participate on equal footing.

As in any intergovernmental organization however, inevitably, there are eventual shortcomings and weaknesses. There is need for improved dissemination of information from UNEP/MAP – an issue that will hopefully be addressed to a certain degree once the UNEP/MAP Center for Communication and Information is established in Italy (today ERS/RAC) by 2006 - and more efficient participation of the UNEP/MAP partners in the work relating to the Pro-



ocols, especially the proposed one on ICAM (Integrated Coastal Zone Management). Overcoming the language barriers in the region is another issue of priority which significantly hinders the speed by which regional and international policies are implemented at national level.

The changing political “framework” conditions were also addressed. Three Mediterranean countries have recently entered the EU and few more are in the process of accession, while the EuroMediterranean Free Trade Area (to be established by 2010) requires further harmonization of the environmental policies of the countries so as to be coherent with those of the EU.

Concerning the future role of the NGO Partners in the framework of the Barcelona Convention, it was agreed that they should:

- act as a catalyst in the communication and implementation of the regional policies to the national level and in their translation into action, all the while aiming to reach the local populations so as to gain their understanding and acceptance
- exert the necessary pressure so as to speed-up the ratification of the amended version of the Barcelona Convention and its new or amended Protocols. This is particularly important as the co-existence of the old and new regimes of the Convention and its Protocols significantly impede the process of implementation and compliance
- assist in the monitoring of the compliance, implementation and effectiveness of the Convention
- facilitate (provided the appropriate means) the translation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable

1. For further information and the full text of the Barcelona Convention visit:
http://www.unepmap.org/Archivio/All_Languages/WebDocs/BC&Protocols/BC76_eng.pdf
http://www.unepmap.org/Archivio/All_Languages/WebDocs/BC&Protocols/BC95_eng.pdf

2. The Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development is a federation of Mediterranean NGOs working on environment and development (www.mio-ecsde.org)

Development into National Strategies for Sustainable Development and their follow-up

- be utilized as technical support and advisors, assisting in training, etc.
- follow the links between the framework of the Barcelona Convention and that of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the European Union and other funding bodies which can support implementation
- promote the bridging with other conventions and instruments e.g. the Aarhus Convention, the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development, etc.

Of particular concern was the admission that the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols is one of the many that countries have to follow and the increasing number of Conventions, instruments, legal frameworks,

partnerships, etc. in the region exerts enormous demands on countries in terms of proper reporting and implementation and on NGOs of limited capacity in terms of proper follow-up. Therefore, unless a sound institutional and financial basis of NGOs is secured (funds, personnel, know-how and expertise, etc.) it is doubtful that civil society will be able to continue to play the catalytic role it has been playing so far.

It was decided that a follow-up meeting of UNEP/MAP Partners will take place on the eve of the 14th Meeting of the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention on 8-11 November 2005 in Portoroz, Slovenia in order to consolidate the above acknowledgements and recommendations which will then be put forward to the Contracting Parties for their consideration.

FINALISATION OF THE MSSD

A *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development* (MSSD) was adopted by the Members of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) and their partners from civil society and International Organizations during their 10th Meeting which took place on 20-22 June 2005 - Athens, Greece. The Strategy will be submitted for adoption to the 14th meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention which will take place in Portoroz, Slovenia, on 8-11 November 2005.

The MCSD also adopted the Athens Charter on the MSSD, which after recalling previous international commitments and agreed principles and guidelines, invited the Con-

tracting Parties, their partners, concerned actors and funding agencies to adopt the MSSD and implement supporting measures and actions at national and regional level.

The Strategy is structured around four objectives and seven interlinked priority fields of action. Thirty-three indicators are annexed to enable to monitor in achieving the Strategy's goals for target dates ranging from 2010 to 2025. The Strategy will be reviewed by MCSD every two years, and revised every five years.

(full text of the MSSD in English and French :

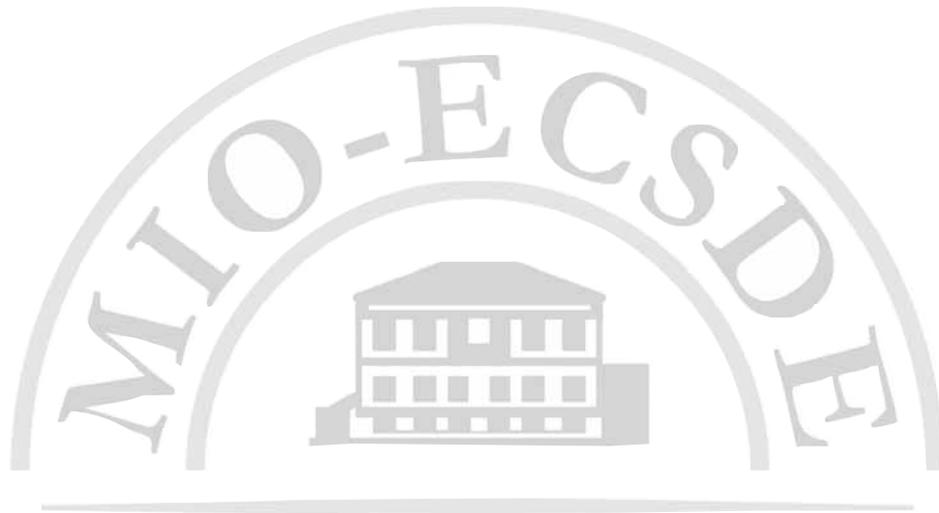
http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt_data/files/MSSDEnglish.pdf

http://www.mio-ecsde.org/filemgmt_data/files/MSSDFrench.pdf)

V MEDITERRANIA HONORIFIC AWARD

The ceremony of the 5th Mediterrània Honorific Award was organised by Mediterrània-CIE and MIO-ECSDE and with the support of the Tarragona Port Authority and was held on the 3rd of June 2005. MIO-ECSDE participated in the Jury Committee of the 5th Mediterrània Honorific Award. On the occasion of the launching year of the UN Decade on ESD (2005-2014) the topic of the Award for this year was Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and it was awarded to *Post Pessimists*, for their project "*Save the species next to us*". "Post Pessimists" is a Croatian organization of young people dealing with environmental protection and public awareness-raising.





MIO-ECSDE Profile

The Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development, is a Federation of Mediterranean Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for the Environment and Development. MIO-ECSDE acts as a technical and political platform for the intervention of NGOs in the Mediterranean scene. In cooperation with Governments, International Organizations and other socio-economic partners, MIO-ECSDE plays an active role for the protection of the environment and the sustainable development of the Mediterranean Region.

Background

MIO-ECSDE became a federation of Mediterranean NGOs in March 1996. Its roots go back to the early 80s, when the expanding Mediterranean membership of the European Community encouraged the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) to form its Mediterranean Committee supported by Elliniki Etairia (The Hellenic Society for the Protection of the Environment and the Cultural Heritage). The Mediterranean Information Office (MIO) was established in 1990 as a network of NGOs, under a joint project of EEB and Elliniki Etairia and in close collaboration with the Arab Network of Environment and Development (RAED). The continuous expansion of MIO-ECSDE's Mediterranean NGO network and the increasing request for their representation in Mediterranean and International Fora, led to the transformation of MIO-ECSDE to its current NGO Federation status. Today it has a membership of 101 NGOs from 24 Mediterranean countries.

Our Mission

Our mission is to protect the Natural Environment (flora and fauna, biotopes, forests, coasts, natural resources, climate) and the Cultural Heritage (archaeological monuments, and traditional settlements, cities, etc.) of the Mediterranean Region. The ultimate goal of MIO-ECSDE is to promote Sustainable Development in a peaceful Mediterranean.

Major tools and methods

Major tools and methods used by MIO-ECSDE in order to achieve its objectives are the following:

- Promotion of the understanding and collaboration among the people of the Mediterranean, especially through their NGOs, between NGOs and Governments, Parliaments, Local Authorities, International Organizations and socio-economic actors of the Mediterranean Region.
- Assistance for the establishment, strengthening, co-operation and co-ordination of Mediterranean NGOs and facilitation of their efforts by ensuring the flow of information among relevant bodies.
- Promotion of education, research and study on Mediterranean issues, by facilitating collaboration between NGOs and Scientific and Academic Institutions.
- Raising of public awareness on crucial Mediterranean environmental issues, through campaigns, publications, exhibitions, public presentations, etc.

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