

# SUSTAINABLE MEDITERRANEAN

MEDITERRANEE DURABLE • ΒΙΩΣΙΜΗ ΜΕΣΟΓΕΙΟΣ • MEDITERRANEO SOSTENIBILE المتوسطة المستدامة



## MIO-ECSDE Mediterranean Action Day 2009

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"Rainwater harvesting & other traditional water collection and storage systems, with emphasis on the role of women"

"La récolte des eaux de pluie et autres systèmes traditionnels de collection et de stockage des eaux, en mettant l'accent sur le rôle des femmes"

Quarterly newsletter produced by the **Mediterranean Information Office** for the **Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development**, in collaboration with the **European Environmental Bureau** and the **Arab NGO Network for Environment and Development**

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This issue of Sustainable Mediterranean is dedicated to the 2009 MEDITERRANEAN ACTION DAY campaign of MIO-ECSDE.

The MEDITERRANEAN ACTION DAY (MAD) is an annual initiative of MIO-ECSDE, funded in part by the European Commission (through its annual activity funding of MIO-ECSDE), for its member organisations. It is a joint, small/medium-scale action conducted in many Mediterranean countries during the last four months of the year. The objective of the activity is to give the opportunity to the MIO-ECSDE member organisations to take action in the field, locally or nationally and be more visible to their target populations while tackling a “hot” environmental issue of their municipality, region or country.

The Annual General Assembly of the Federation decides on the theme of each year’s Mediterranean Action Day. For the year 2009, it was dedicated to the theme: *Rainwater harvesting & other traditional water collection and storage systems, with emphasis on the role of women*. The MAD 2009 activities were directly linked with the global effort to address climate change (in view of the Copenhagen COP in December 2009) and also emphasis was given to link these activities to the GEWAMED project (Mainstreaming the Gender Dimension into Water Resources Development and Management in the Mediterranean Region, <http://www.gewamed.net>). In addition, there is relevance also with the MIO-ECSDE ‘Hydria’ project: Collection, Storage & Distribution of Water in Antiquity - Linking Ancient Wisdom to Modern Needs (<http://www.hydroproject.net/>).

The ten (10) Mediterranean Action Day events for 2009 took place in six (6) different Mediterranean countries (Egypt, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia), by ten (10) Member NGOs of MIO-ECSDE. The Jordan Environment Society held their event in early January 2010 but it is included in this issue anyway.

This issue of *Sustainable Mediterranean* provides a brief description of these events based on the reports and materials sent by the organising NGOs. It is a small tribute to the efforts of these NGOs and their capability and creativity in taking a small amount of *seed* money and organising events with a significant impact on their target groups.

Cette publication de “Méditerranée Durable” est dédiée à la campagne “JOUR D’ACTION POUR LA MEDITERRANEE” de MIO-ECSDE.

La Journée d’Action Méditerranéenne est une initiative annuelle de MIO-ECSDE pour ses organisations-membres, financée d’une partie par la Commission européenne (par l’entremise de son financement annuel des activités de MIO-ECSDE). Il s’agit d’une action commune à petite-moyenne échelle, effectuée dans de nombreux pays méditerranéens pendant les quatre derniers mois de l’année. L’objectif de l’activité est de donner la possibilité aux organisations membres de MIO-ECSDE de se mobiliser localement ou nationalement dans un terrain relatif, et devenir plus visibles à leur population cible, tout en envisageant un sujet environnemental à chaud de leur municipalité, région ou pays.

L’Assemblée Générale Annuelle de la Fédération (AGA) décide le thème pour la journée d’action méditerranéenne de chaque année. Pour l’année 2009 la journée a été consacrée au sujet : *la récolte des eaux de pluie et autres systèmes traditionnels de collection et de stockage des eaux, en mettant l’accent sur le rôle des femmes*. Les activités de MAD 2009 ont été liées directement à l’effort mondial concernant la lutte contre le changement climatique (en vue de Copenhagen COP en Décembre de 2009), et en plus, l’accent a été aussi donné à la liaison entre ces activités et le projet GEWAMED (Mainstreaming the Gender Dimension into Water Resources Development and Management in the Mediterranean Region, <http://www.gewamed.net>). En outre, il y a un rapport entre cette journée et le projet HYDRIA de MIO-ECSDE : collection, stockage et distribution de l’eau dans l’antiquité-Raccorder la sagesse ancienne aux besoins contemporains (<http://www.hydroproject.net/>).

Les dix événements de la journée MAD de 2009 ont été effectués dans six pays méditerranéens différents (Égypte, Grèce, Italie, Jordanie, Maroc, Tunisie), par dix ONG membres de MIO-ECSDE. “Jordan Environment Society” a effectué son événement au début de Janvier de 2010 mais de toute façon son action est incluse dans la publication.

La publication “Méditerranée Durable” donne une brève description de ces événements, à la base des mémoires et des documents envoyés par chaque ONG organisatrice. Il s’agit d’un petit hommage aux efforts de ces ONG, ainsi qu’à leur capacité et leur créativité, en prenant une toute petite quantité d’argent et organiser quand-même d’événements ayant un impact significatif sur leur groupes cibles.

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## 'Save water to save your life'

**Organising NGO:** Balady Port Said Society for protection of the environment and consumer

**Country:** Egypt

**Contact:** zemo3000@yahoo.com

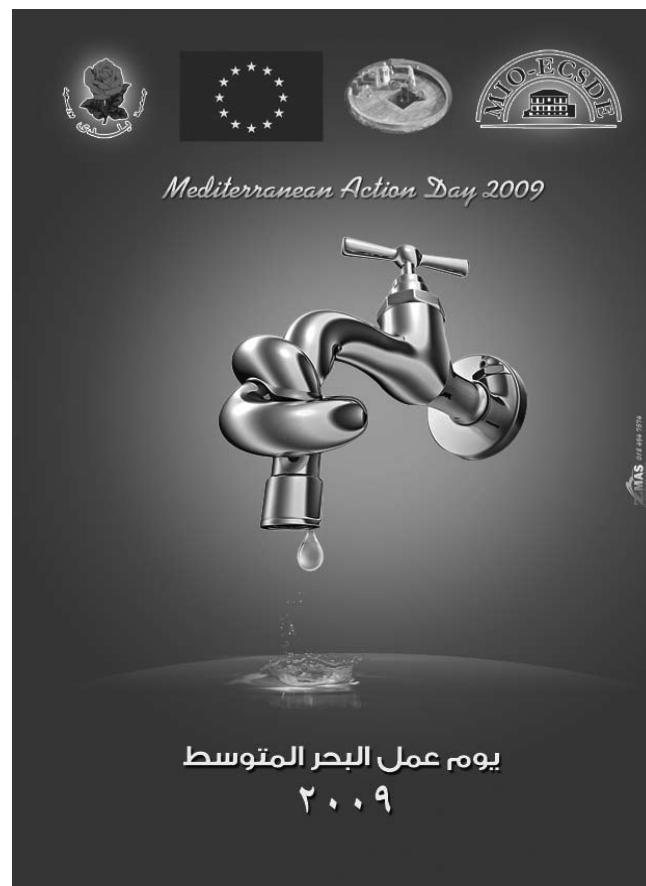
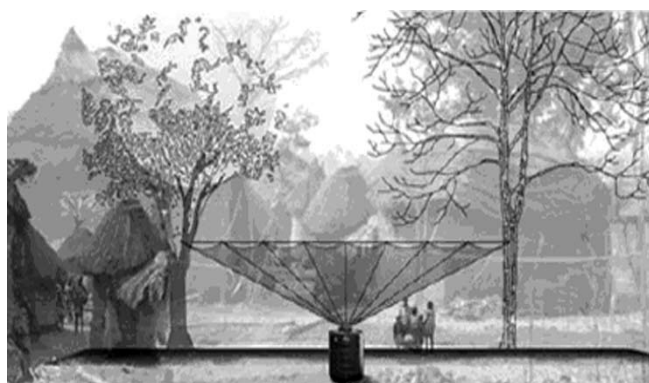


On the occasion of the Mediterranean Action Day 2009 of MIO-ECSDE dedicated to Rainwater harvesting & other traditional water collection and storage systems, with emphasis on the role of women Balady Port Said Society for protection of the environment and consumer organized an awareness raising event at the Ashtoum El-Gamil Protectorate, which is located in the western north corner of Lake Manzala, in northeastern Egypt on the Nile Delta near Port Said.

The event was targeted to school and university students, teachers, NGOs, governmental organizations and decision makers and aimed at raising awareness on the problem of water scarcity in Egypt which coupled with the looming negative impact of climate change needs to be urgently addressed through the promotion of alternative innovative approaches that will ensure water availability. The event emphasized the adapted century old traditional techniques of rainwater harvesting and the vapor condensation from humid air, which are both low cost techniques, in comparison with desalination.

The activities of the event included a field visit to the Ashtoum El-Gamil Protectorate on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> of December, 2009 and a series of presentations on water resources management in the area, on the impacts of desalination on the environment and on the benefits of the 'condensed air' technique.

Extraction of water from the atmosphere is considered to be one of the important methods of producing fresh water. The ubiquitous nature of water in its vapor phase makes it possible to set up a sustainable system which harvests water from air and provides drinking water in any location.



At the end of the event, a discussion among the 46 attendees followed and the final conclusion and key message to be further disseminated was that there is an urgent need for Egyptians to realize that the irrational use of water resources has to be reduced, while at the same time adapted century old techniques such as rainwater and water harvesting are attractive alternatives to ensure water availability.

## 'Rainwater harvesting-Journalists replicating the wisdom of our ancestors'

**Organising NGO:** Land and Human to Advocate Progress (LHAP)

**Country:** Jordan

**Contact:** Lhap@cyberia.jo



### BACKGROUND

Jordan and in general the Mediterranean region are characterized by a wealth of archeological water collection systems. It is widely known that Jordan and the Mediterranean face water scarcity problems. Rainwater harvesting has been used by our ancestors as a mean to survive, but unfortunately nowadays this traditional technique has been overlooked in favor of modern technologies. Therefore, the MIO-ECSDE Mediterranean Action Day 2009 in Jordan aimed at highlighting some well preserved examples/case studies of water collection systems in Jordan, such as the 'Qataneh Castle'. The main objective was to raise awareness and sensitize the wider public to reconsider and renovate existing rainwater harvesting systems and reintroduce and promote the idea of rainwater harvesting. The event was directly linked with the related example/case study included in the Hydria project website (<http://www.hydriaproject.net/>).

### ACTIVITIES PERFORMED

Within the framework of the MAD 2009 a field visit to Qataneh Site (80 km south of Amman) was organized on Saturday December 12, 2009 by LHAP. The activity targeted in principle Journalists but also the wider public. Before the field visit, each participant received a brochure (1000 copies were printed for circulation), a bag

and a flash memory drive which contained all relevant materials and pictures collected from the Qataneh Site.

The aim of the visit was to provide to Journalists the opportunity to see and explore a water collection system, constructed 2000 years ago and which is considered of great importance with political, economic, social, religious and environmental aspects. Journalists were introduced to a very well preserved water harvesting system that demonstrates the wisdom of our ancestors in realizing the importance of water collection when living in a dry and arid land.

The ultimate goal of this field visit was to target indirectly the wider public and decision makers through the MEDIA and promote awareness raising on the specific rainwater harvesting technique and demonstrate how this could contribute to tackling the water shortage problem in Jordan. After the field visit, discussions on the topic followed and as a reaction to that, most of the Journalists published articles in the local press. The organizers hope that these articles will contribute into placing the issue of water collection on the agenda of decision makers and/or will raise awareness on the protection of these sites which could be used for educational activities. In addition, LHAP sent the published articles to Dr. Mohammad Waheeb, Al-Hashymia University, in order to further promote the above mentioned messages.





## 'Récupération et valorisation des eaux pluviales dans le milieu scolaire'

**Organising NGO:** Association pour la Sauvegarde de la Médina de Gafsa  
**Country:** Tunisia  
**Contact:** asm.gafsa@planet.tn



Préparation des plantations



Dans le cadre de l'initiative annuelle de MIO-ECSDE « Mediterranean Action Day », l'activité choisie par l'Association pour la Sauvegarde de la Médina de Gafsa, concernait tout d'abord la sensibilisation des élèves des écoles primaires autour des sujets environnementales et plus spécifiquement de la gestion des eaux pluviales perdues. L'objectif principal constituait un effort de récupérer et valoriser les eaux pluviales et perdues, afin d'offrir un exemple d'une gestion convenable et rationnelle des eaux. L'action a été effectuée à l'Ecole Primaire Oued Lasfar.

Cinq activités distinctes ont été réalisées, chaque une portant sa propre importance didactique pour les élèves qui participaient aux actions.

- Journées consacrées à l'information des élèves ainsi que des instituteurs de l'école, sur la préservation durable de la biodiversité et son rapport avec la gestion appropriée des ressources en eaux.
- La mise en œuvre de l'action a commencé par l'aménagement du jardin de l'école d'une façon qui a permis l'installation des systèmes utilisés au rattrapage de l'eau.
- En suite, les élèves du club scolaire d'environnement, ont installé les équipements nécessaires pour le rattrapage des eaux perdues, et leur distribution aux fruitières qui ont été déjà plantées au jardin de l'école.
- La richesse en matière de biodiversité de Gafsa était représentée par la plantation d'une grande quantité des espèces fruitières.

- L'ASF Gafsa et le club scolaire d'environnement sont de ce moment-là les responsables de la maintenance des systèmes établis.

Après la réalisation de ces activités, il est devenu évident que la participation active des élèves leur a donné la possibilité de sentir partie d'un effort environnemental global, ainsi que l'occasion unique d'utiliser des eaux perdues afin de créer un jardin de biodiversité dans leur propre école.

## 'L'eau de "pluie une" ressource intarissable'

**Organising NGO:** Development and Protection Environment Association (ADPE)  
**Country:** Tunisia  
**Contact:** adpe@hexabyte.tn



Dans le cadre de la journée d'action méditerranéenne « MED ACTION DAY » de sensibilisation pour la protection de l'environnement, l'ADPE a organisé le 23 octobre, une journée d'action sur le thème « L'eau de pluie une ressource intarissable » pour sensibiliser les jeunes à l'économie de l'eau, et à l'usage de l'eau de pluie qui est gratuite, inépuisable et renouvelable. Une fois tombée



sur les toitures, nous la rejetons de manière impropre vers les égouts ce qui représente un gâchis énorme. L'eau de pluie est précieuse face à la raréfaction des ressources en eaux. Sa récupération est une pratique ancestrale

et bénéficie aujourd'hui de nombreuses applications et d'innovations techniques éprouvées.

L'ADPE uvre par cette action à un comportement « éco-responsable » qui allie récupération, action, sensibilisation et communication. De ce fait, l'éco-citoyen, fera de lui-même l'économie de l'eau.

Ateliers : Plusieurs ateliers de préparation se sont tenus depuis la mi-novembre pour présenter le thème aux élèves, organiser et préparer la journée du MED ACTION DAY, et tenir des ateliers de travaux manuels et de peinture. Sensibilisation aux problèmes de la rareté de l'eau en méditerranée, dans les pays arabes et en Tunisie. Education environnementale, et sensibilisation à la pénibilité du travail quotidien de l'eau pour la femme rurale qui doit transporter des kilogrammes d'eau sur des kilomètres de trajet, de la source à son domicile.





## Women for water

**Organising NGO:** Circolo Festambiente/ Legambiente  
**Country:** Italy  
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## INTRODUCTION

Water resources vary in space and time and water supply is strongly dependent on external conditions such as climate, available water-related technologies and management practices. Water demand and use continue to increase due to population growth, economic development, unsustainable agricultural practices, as well as governmental, socioeconomic, and developmental policies. The reality of growing needs and demand for this limited resource is driving the efforts towards water conservation and alternative water resources.

The wider public and especially women can play a key role in promoting the sustainable use of the most precious natural resource on this planet. Awareness raising campaigns on proper water consumption and the revival of traditional water harvesting and management techniques, such as water harvesting systems can be a move to the right direction.



## ACTIVITIES

Within the framework of MAD 2009 Circolo Festambiente/ Legambiente organized on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December a half day workshop in the venue of the Fondazione Il Sole association in Grosseto.

The aim of the seminar was to raise awareness of local communities on the importance of alternative, traditional and low cost techniques such as rainwater harvesting and to demonstrate how rainwater harvesting systems could be easily installed in public buildings and used for the watering of plants, etc. Furthermore, the activity's objective was to sensitize and encourage people towards more sustainable patterns of water consumption.

During the workshop after a brief introduction of the Mediterranean Action Day and the 'Women for Water' activity, a video was projected entitled "Una goccia tira l'altra". The video was developed within the framework of the PORTATORIDACQUA campaign in which Legambiente participates in and presents information on the management and the overexploitation of water resources in the world, with special emphasis given to Italy in comparison to African countries.

After the video projection a questionnaire related to the sustainable use of water was distributed and a discussion/debate between the educator and the students, as well as among them followed. In the workshop ten students with disabilities also participated and through different activities it was demonstrated how dirty water can be purified with the use of simple methods, such as the phyto-depuration technique.

The activity was promoted through the website of Circolo Festambiente and other websites and through a leaflet (printed in 700 copies) focusing on how to build a small phyto-depuration plant (a technique used to clean used water or rainwater). The leaflet illustrates how the phyto-depuration technique which involves the use of aquatic and land plants as well as time, can be used for water purification instead of strong chemicals. The leaflet was further distributed to secondary schools (sent by post). The activity gained high visibility also through references at the local and regional media.

## 'Lutter contre le gaspillage de l'eau pluviale: Les femmes et les enfants acteurs créateurs'

**Organising NGO:** Association de Sauvegarde de la Medina et du Patrimoine de Kélibia (ASM Kelibia)  
**Country:** Tunisia  
**Contact:** hboubaker@yahoo.fr



Dans le cadre de l'action MAD 2009, l'Association de Sauvegarde de la Médina de Kélibia à Tunis, a organisé une journée pleine d'activités concernant l'information et la sensibilisation sur le gaspillage de l'eau en collaboration avec les élèves de l'école primaire Sidi Ahmed de la ville de Kélibia.

Le but principal de cette journée était la sensibilisation de la population locale, et plus spécifiquement des femmes et des enfants de la ville sur la nécessité de protéger les ressources en eau, en économisant l'eau pluviale. De cette façon, ça aide à la résolution du problème de gaspillage, problème qui est devenu actuellement urgent.

Les actions organisées comprenaient tout d'abord des visites à domicile par les membres de l'Association, afin d'informer les citoyens de Kélibia sur le sujet. Avec l'aide des élèves, l'Association a pu répertorier les citernes de collecte des eaux pluviales qui existaient déjà à la ville. Les visites ont aussi sensibilisé les femmes sur le sujet du gaspillage de l'eau, par un point de vue économique concernant l'usage domestique de l'eau.

L'imagination des élèves a été transformée en documents de sensibilisation, comme de photographies, d'essais et de dessins, qui ont finalement pris partie à un concours organisé dans l'école. En plus, les meilleures contributions à ce concours, ont gagné des prix offerts par l'ASM.

Cependant, les actions effectuées par ASM comprenaient aussi l'accomplissement des opérations pilotes, l'une desquelles concernait la collection des conduites d'eaux pluviales qui descendent les toits des bâtiments de l'école. L'eau collectée était utilisée pour le nettoyage des salles de classes et d'autres zones de l'école.



Aux activités organisées, il y avait la participation des élus locaux de la ville, un représentant de la Société Nationale d'Exploitation et de Distribution des Eaux (SONEDE), des parents des élèves ainsi que des journalistes de Radio-jeunes de Tunis. Par conséquent, la journée avait la couverture par Radio, et tous les participants, et spécialement les élèves, ont contribué à la rédaction d'un rapport sur l'ensemble des activités qui disposait, en plus, une copie des travaux lauréats.





## 'Water harvesting and conservation techniques'

**Organising NGO:** Jordan Environment Society

**Country:** Jordan

**Contact:** [jes@jes.org.jo](mailto:jes@jes.org.jo)



In the framework of the MIO-ECSDE Mediterranean Action Day activities of 2009 the Jordan Environment Society organized on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January 2010 a training seminar targeted to women of different ages. Women are considered to be a key actor in water resources management and play a vital role as they are the “managers” at home. Furthermore, women can be the driving force of influencing the family’s water related habits and promote a sustainable water resources management.

The goal of the training seminar was to raise women awareness among women on their vital role in water resources management and also promote the rainwater harvesting technique as a simple and low cost technique that can contribute to the enhancement of water efficiency and ensure water availability. Also, the seminar highlighted how the wisdom of century old traditions related to water can be utilised and adapted in view of our current and future water challenges including those linked with climate change.

In the seminar approximately 30 women of different ages participated, as well as students and educators. In the beginning of the seminar a video was projected



focusing on the critical problem of water scarcity in Jordan and the urgent need for alternative water resources. Also, a power point presentation was presented explaining and elaborating on the «do it yourself» approach which encourages women to change their water related habits towards more sustainable ones and also to use the rainwater harvesting technique to cover some household needs such as for house cleaning or watering the plants. For the wider dissemination of the activity some brochures and t-shirts were printed and also some articles were published and/or uploaded to websites.



## 'Rainwater harvesting and storage: Ancient and modern cultures'

**Organising NGO:** MAREVIVO

**Country:** Italy

**Contact:** [gianni.guerrieri@marevivo.it](mailto:gianni.guerrieri@marevivo.it)



On the occasion of the Mediterranean Action Day 2009, an initiative of MIO-ECSDE for its member organisations dedicated this year to “Rainwater harvesting & other traditional water collection and storage systems, with emphasis on the role of women” MAREVIVO organized and implemented educational activities targeted to schoolchildren of the secondary level of education.

The educational activities focused on RECUPERO, UTILIZZO E TRASFERIMENTO DELLE ACQUE PIOVANE ACCUMULATE (Harvesting, Use and Transfer of collected rainwater) and were implemented successfully at high schools in the province of Rome. In addition, several neighbouring high schools from the Lazio Region were contacted and invited to include the proposed educational intervention into their class activities. As a result the activity was implemented in 7 different classes.

In each educational intervention a power point presentation was made containing images, descriptions, concepts, and quotations in order to provide adequate

information on the vulnerability of water resources, and the need for sustainable water resources management. It was demonstrated through many examples how the wisdom of our ancestors could be used to address the needs of today through the revival of traditional water harvesting and management techniques. After the presentation a discussion followed.

In one case (school complex Borgo – Cesano), one of the educators suggested the idea of forming small groups in several classes and create (in each involved class) nuclei in charge of transmitting the acquired knowledge to the rest of the school.

Also, in four schools, for demonstration purposes a simple rainwater harvesting system was made out of recycled plastic material and then it was connected to a gutter-pipe to collect the rainwater. The system will be used for educational purposes in springtime, when an organic garden will be planted.

Also, for the purposes of the educational activity a series of posters was developed.



## The island of Amorgos – Trails of Water: traditional management of water sources and its sustainable perspective'

**Organising NGO:** ELLINIKI ETAIRIA  
**Country:** Greece  
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Within the framework of MAD 2009, a two day event was held on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 2009, on the island of Amorgos, as the final stage of the programme “Water routes: traditional water resources management and its sustainable perspective”, which was carried out on Amorgos between the months of March and December 2009, by the Sustainable Aegean Programme of ELLINIKI ETAIRIA. The event’s purpose was to disseminate the information produced by the programme to the local authorities and citizens.

The programme dealt with sustainable water resources management and had two parts: the restoration of traditional water monuments, such as wells, cisterns, etc., and an awareness raising campaign regarding the significance of sustainable water resource management, targeted to the local population (adults and pupils).

The event included, on the first day, a visit to three restored water monuments, and was attended by a large group of people in addition to the speakers and ELLINIKI ETAIRIA staff members present in Amorgos.

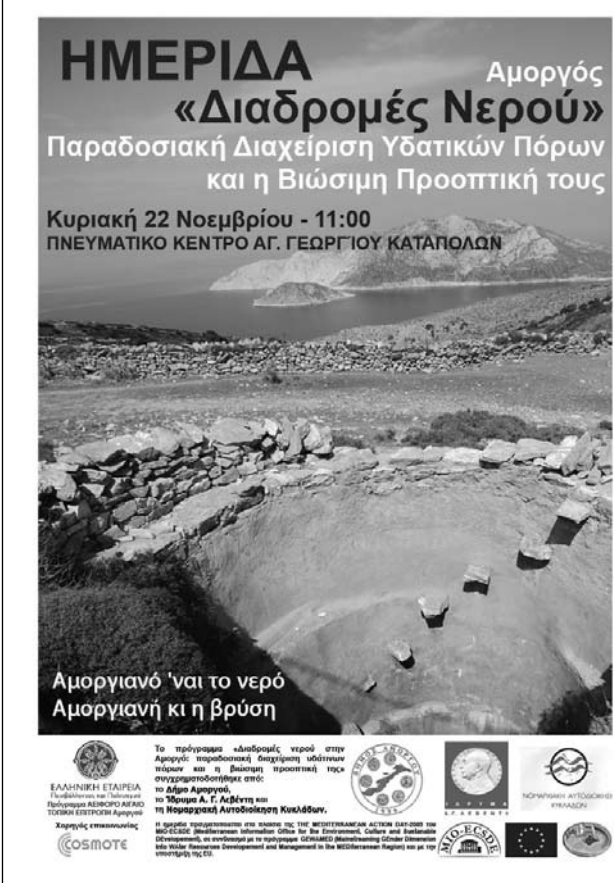
On the second day, a conference was held with two main subjects on the agenda: a) “water and local community-traditional water management in Amorgos”, b) “sustainable water management perspective-proposals”. The speeches in the first part presented the outcomes of the overall project. In the second part, scientists and experts specialized on water management issues discussed the existing water resources of Amorgos, the current water needs of the island and the future perspectives in making it autonomous in terms of this vital natural resource.



These presentations were preceded by introductory speeches by representatives of local or national authorities such as Mr. Ioannis Vroutsis (member of the Greek Parliament- representing the Cyclades), Mr. Bailas (Prefect of the Cyclades), Mr. Fostieris (Mayor of Amorgos) as well as members of the Board of ELLINIKI ETAIRIA, Mr. Michail (President), Mr. Carras (President of the Sustainable Aegean Programme Committee). There were also speeches sent to us in order to be read to the public by two people who could not attend: Mr. Kriton Arsenis (Member of the European Parliament) and Mrs. Alexandra Tiligada (representative of the Levendis Foundation who was the private sponsor of the programme).

The conference was attended by a large number of people who took an active part in the discussion that followed. The event ended with a preview of the documentary ‘Water in Amorgos’, produced especially for the purposes of the programme.

The event will be followed up by three additional presentations addressed to the local community that will take place in three different villages of the island. The local committee of ELLINIKI ETAIRIA in Amorgos is preparing a report with suggestions on the continuation of the programme. The local authorities committed themselves to take the conclusions of the event fully into account in their future planning for Amorgos.





## 'Gestion de l'eau au Maroc entre le passé et le présent : Quel est le rôle pour la femme ?'



**Organising NGO:** CMEPE  
**Country:** Morocco  
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Le club Marocain de l'éducation en matière de population et de l'environnement (CMEPE), a organisé le 5 décembre de 2009 une journée scientifique à la ville de Ouazzane du Maroc, dont les invités ont participé aux plusieurs discours et discussions concernant la gestion de l'eau au Maroc et son changement pendant les années, et en plus, le rôle temporel de la femme à sa collection et au savoir-faire relatif.

Aux activités organisées, qui ont fait partie de l'action « Mediterranean Action Day 2009 » de MIO-ECSDE, s'y comprenaient aussi de visites informatives, une exposition photographique et la projection d'un film documentaire.

Les sujets des discours étaient divers, mais tous orientés à la gestion de l'eau par rapport aux changements environnementales pendant les années, ainsi qu'au rôle de la femme. Il semble que les spécificités du climat marocain et leurs effets, comme la sécheresse, la désertification ou les catastrophes naturelles, influencent d'une façon directe et réciproque le déficit d'eau au Maroc. En plus, des autres facteurs environnementaux contemporains, comme la hausse de la température provoquent des impacts négatifs sur autres domaines naturels comme l'agriculture, une activité bien connectée à la gestion de l'eau.

La présence des femmes à la journée organisée par CMEPE était significative, et comme indiqué dans une des interventions, le rôle de la femme à la gestion de l'eau au niveau domestique, à toujours été de grande importance.

Un des points communs de tous les discours, était la combinaison de la tradition et de la modernité et leur application aux méthodes différents pour la protection des ressources en eau. Plus précisément, il semble qu'il n'y existe aucune raison de «choisir» entre les méthodes traditionnelles et les méthodes modernes de la collection de l'eau, du moment où elles se complètent parfaitement, en combinant le savoir-faire des années passées et l'expertise des années contemporaines.

L'intervention du Président de la municipalité de la ville d'Ouazzane a sous-ligné l'importance de la protection des ressources en eau du Maroc, ainsi que de l'environnement naturel. En outre, il a enchéri sur les campagnes d'information nécessaires et aussi, la participation active du monde et de la femme spécifiquement à la propagation et la transmission de la sensibilité concernant les ressources naturelles d'eau.

## MISCELLANEOUS MEDITERRANEAN NEWS

### Rainwater Harvesting: A Multi-Stakeholder Pilot Project in the Cyclades Islands, Greece



At a time of increasing water demand and the grim prospect of climate change, the problem of water scarcity in the Mediterranean region and in particular the Greek islands deepens and becomes more critical. Hence, there is an urgent need to enhance water efficiency and to further explore alternatives to ensure water availability using innovative approaches. The revival of traditional water harvesting and management techniques, which have been overlooked in favor of modern technologies, sometimes less sustainable, appear to be very promising alternatives for supplying freshwater.

The Rainwater Harvesting project aimed at revitalising and reintroducing traditional rainwater harvesting combined and improved with innovative techniques and methods in the Greek islands. This project is essentially a "demonstration case" aiming at educating people of all ages towards a "new" (eventually not so new) "water culture" necessary for addressing the current water needs.

The 9-month project was initiated by the Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean (GWP-Med) in collaboration with the Municipalities of Naxos, Poseidonia in Syros, Exomvourgou in Tinos, as well as with the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE). The project also had the financial support of the «Mission Water» corporate responsibility program of Coca-Cola HBC Greece & Coca-Cola.

Figure 1. Aluminum water tank at the Neoclassic Town Hall of Xinara.





The activities conducted within the framework of the project included:

(1) Installation of water harvesting systems in 5 selected public buildings in the following municipalities:

- *Municipality of Exomvourgo, Tinos*  
The Neoclassic Town Hall of Xinara and a primary school of Skalados: use of **modern aluminium water tanks** and very strong resistant plastic membranes. These are easily transferred and installed within few hours, separately, in such a way so as to not intrude upon the aesthetic of the building (figure 1).
- *Municipality of Poseidonia, Syros*  
(a) **Kindergarden:** refurbishment of an old underground storage tank with “porcelain mortar” and the use of **modern resin based insulation materials** (figure 2).  
  
(b) **Primary school:** refurbishment of a very large existing tank fitted in the place of an old fountain-head in a central square of an old neighbourhood which was used for centuries to provide potable water. The project attempts to revive it by making the harvested rain-

Figure 2. (a) Kindergarden underground storage tank and (b) reverse-osmosis unit at the Municipality of Poseidonia, Syros



water potable by employing a small **reverse-osmosis unit**. **The inhabitants will have the chance to “buy” with very low cost, good quality water.** The fees will be collected by the municipality for maintenance costs and an eventual revolving fund.

- *Municipality of Naxos, Naxos*  
**High school of Vivlos:** installation of underground **modern hard plastic rain tank modules** manufactured using recycled materials and resistant membrane.  
  
(2) Enhancement of related technical skills of local workers and technical services of local authorities, through 3 educational seminars (30 participants) drawing on traditional know-how as well as on modern technologies, and revitalising and adapting wherever possible existing rainwater harvesting schemes (i.e. retrofitting and improving insulation of old cisterns, etc.).  
  
(3) Development of the educational material «The gift of rain» (in Greek) by the MEDIES secretariat aiming at raising awareness and educating students of late middle and secondary level (10-16 years old) towards the sustainable management of water. More specifically the material aims to cultivate in students the necessary skills to address the old, partly abandoned practices of rainwater collection, that have been traditionally applied in the Cyclades islands over the centuries, as well as the mod-



ern techniques that can be applied today in homes, hotels, etc. in order to collect, economise, or recycle water (through grey water reuse).

(4) Implementation of related education activities in 6 selected schools (in the islands of Naxos, Syros, Tinos) using the educational material «The gift of rain». The school activities were coordinated by the MEDIES Secretariat and involved 203 Primary and Secondary school students. The activities lasted approximately one hour (each time) and touched upon topics such as: the distribution of water and the water cycle, the consumption and uses of water, the systems of rainwater collection and the cisterns, the

rainwater harvesting practices and other practices for saving water, through games, presentations and selected activities of the educational material.

(5) Education of local teachers and educators through seminars organized in cooperation with the Heads of Environmental Education of the Prefecture of Cyclades and the local authorities of the islands. Totally, 90 teachers participated in the seminars. The activities conducted in the framework of the project aim to constitute a model/best practice to be replicated in other local communities in Greece and other countries of the Mediterranean.



## HYDRIA project: Collection, Storage & distribution of water in antiquity - Linking ancient wisdom to modern needs

The overall objective of HYDRIA is to unfold and present a small part of the diverse, yet common Mediterranean cultural heritage using as a vehicle selected cases (tangible and intangible) of the most representative ancient water management works, concepts and techniques. The project aims to demonstrate the wisdom of our ancestors, through their wise and respectful water management techniques, to sensitise about the valuable water-related Mediterranean cultural heritage and present ways to protect it. The project is not a mere cultural endeavour, but rather aspires to make the proper links between wise traditional techniques and innovative modern technologies of water management, particularly in light of the added pressure exerted on the scarce water resources of the region by climate change.

The Partners of the project are:

**CYPRUS:** The Municipality of Larnaca

**EGYPT:** Arab Office for Youth and Environment/ AOYE (youth NGO)

**GREECE:** Hellenic Ministry of Culture(Dpt of educational programmes), *monumenta* e-magazine, MIO-ECSDE

**ITALY:** Istituto per l'Ambiente e l'Educazione Scholé Futuro (NGO)

**JORDAN:** Land and Human to Advocate Progress/ LHAP (NGO)

**MOROCCO:** Club Marocain de l'Education en Matière de Population et d'Environnement/ CMEPE (NGO)

Each country participates with at least one representative case study (site) in line with the objectives of the project with emphasis on sites that are not yet well-known and/or promoted as cultural tourism destinations.

HYDRIA targets citizens of the Mediterranean countries, particularly young people and the formal and non formal educational community. Through the description of the case studies the project highlights the role of young citizens today, as water consumers and makes them reflect and, why not, adjust the way they use water to more sustainable patterns. Where relevant and appropriate the case studies incorporate also ideas on how to make meaningful educational and awareness raising projects for the case studies, aiming to support the educational community of the Mediterranean region. Also material for interested readers and visitors to the sites is included, giving emphasis on sites that are less known or whose value is not valued.

The output of the project will be a bilingual website ([www.hydriaproject.net](http://www.hydriaproject.net)) where all material will be uploaded. In order to maximise effectiveness on its target group, the HYDRIA webpage will be in ENGLISH and ARABIC.



## UNEP/MAP GEF Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem

MIO-ECSDE is a Partner of the UNEP/MAP GEF Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem. In the framework of the Mediterranean Action Plan, the countries of the Mediterranean have joined forces with the World Bank, regional and international organizations, as well as nongovernmental organizations to create a Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem. This Partnership enables a coordinated and strategic approach to catalyze the policy, legal and institutional reforms, and the investments necessary to reverse the degradation trends affecting this unique large marine ecosystem, including its coastal habitats and biodiversity.

The Strategic Partnership is the largest project in the history of the Mediterranean, with funding of over

100 million US\$ including investments and co-financing, and is the first project to bring together some of the main partners working in the Mediterranean for joint implementation of actions.

Within the framework of the project MIO-ECSDE will strengthen public awareness (with particular emphasis on NGO networks) and support public participation in the implementation of the project. More, specifically it will ensure effective NGO involvement in the project and feed into and complement the Communication Strategy.

For a more detailed description of the project click: <http://www.medpartnership.org>

### MIO-ECSDE Member of the Drin Core Group

The Drin Dialogue which aims to establish a Shared Vision for the management of the extended Drin River Basin was launched on December 1st 2009, at a meeting that took place in Podgorica, Montenegro.

The Meeting was co-organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med), the Government of Montenegro and the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), with the financial support of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.

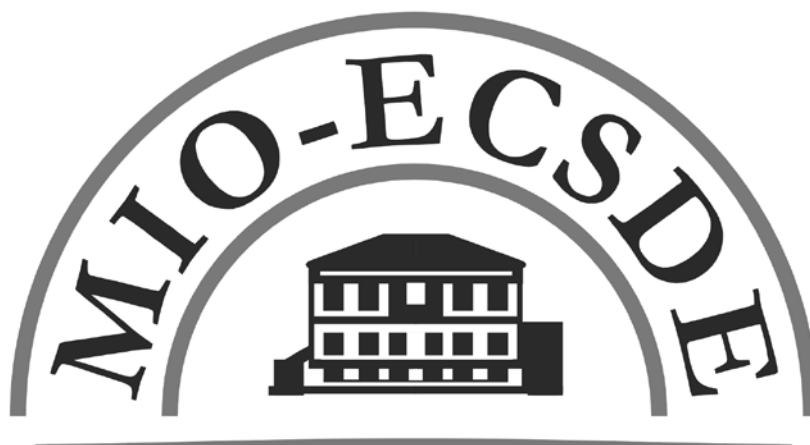
The presentations and discussions focused on: (i) the current and planned management status of the Drin sub-basins, (ii) the context and activities of the Drin Dialogue, (iii) the settings of the Drin Core Group (scope, objectives and structure, basic work-plan), (vi) the Situation Analysis of the Drin Basin, (v) its aim, modalities and eventual synergies for its preparation.

The Meeting established a coordinating body, the Drin Core Group and MIO-ECSDE as a Federation of NGOs was included as member of this group. The Drin Core Group is composed of representatives of the ministries responsible for water management in the riparian countries, as well as formal and informal joint structures established in the shared river basin (the Prespa, Ohrid and Shkoder Lakes), UNECE and GWP-Med.

In the morning session of the meeting an opening brief statement was made by Mr. Milan Vogrin, Member of MIO-ECSDE's Executive Bureau, in which he gave a description of MIO-ECSDE's identity, its goal and objectives. He highlighted the fact that MIO-ECSDE has a number of member organizations, national and local, who have various competences and expertise on water issues, and have followed closely the evolution of civil society involvement and contribution in the Danube, Drin and Sava, river or lake basins. Furthermore, he expressed MIO-ECSDE's commitment to support the Drin Dialogue process by contributing to the establishment of a common understanding and shared vision and enhancing the ability and capacity of NGOs to act in such transboundary initiatives in a constructive way. Later on, in the intervention made by MIO-ECSDE representative Ms. Thomie Vlachogianni, MIO-ECSDE's previous actions and activities addressing issues of transboundary water resources management in South Eastern Europe in the framework of the Petersberg Phase II/Athens Declaration Process and within GEF IW:LEARN, were briefly presented.

MIO-ECSDE as a direct follow up of these previous actions and in the frame of its new role in the Drin Core Group will make the links with other important regional programmes it participates in as a catalyst in mobilizing and involving the civil society in the beneficiary countries of Southeastern Europe, such as the GEF Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem and the Horizon 2020 Initiative to De-pollute the Mediterranean by the year 2020.





## 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 112 NGOs from 26 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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