




# Report of activities 2022



Protecting our Natural Environment and  
Cultural Heritage and promoting Sustainable  
Development for a peaceful Mediterranean.

[www.mio-ecsde.org](http://www.mio-ecsde.org)

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# 1. Institutional Developments of MIO-ECSDE

## 1.1. Executive Bureau

The MIO-ECSDE Executive Bureau (EB) was structured as follows in 2022 up till the 27<sup>th</sup> AGM:

**Chair:** Prof. Michael Scoullas (Elliniki Etairia)

**Co-Chair:** Prof. Mohammed Ftouhi (Morocco)

**Members:** Ms Anna Heslop (EEB) (till July). Ms Anaïs Berthier was appointed in November  
Ms Ghada Ahmadein (RAED)  
Mr. Giorgos Sampson (Greece)  
Mr. Vjeran Pircic (Croatia)  
Ms Antonia Theodosiou (Cyprus)  
Mr. Jean-Valère Jeronimi and Ms Celine Labbe (France)  
Ms Patrizia Bonelli and Ms Romina Bicocchi (Italy)  
Mr. Ziyad Alawneh (Jordan)  
Ms Marie Therese Seif (Lebanon)  
Mr. Vincent Attard (Malta)  
Mr. Imad Attrash (Palestine)  
Mr. Mario Alves (Portugal)  
Mr. Milan Vogrin (Slovenia)  
Mr. Angel Huarez and Mr. Jeremie Fosse (Spain)  
Ms Suheir Raies (Syria)  
Mr. Habib Ben Boubaker (Tunisia)  
Ms Burcu Genç (Turkey)

## 1.2. Membership issues

One application was received by the Secretariat during 2022 from Marine Educational Center Pula – MEC Pula. It is an international NGO operating in Croatia, Slovenia and Italy and it requested full membership. It was unanimously accepted by the 27<sup>th</sup> AGM in December 2022 as a Full Member Organisation.

## 1.3. MIO-ECSDE Secretariat

During 2022 the status of the Secretariat was as follows:

Ms Anastasia Roniotes continued working, full-time, with main fields of responsibility: administrative matters relevant to the overall work programme and MIO-ECSDE governance (Executive Bureau and AGM), quality assurance, policy formulation and monitoring, representation, running of specific projects, submission of project proposals, co-ordination of the edition of the Bulletin and newsletter Sustainable Mediterranean, etc.

Ms Bessie Mantzara worked full time at the MIO-ECSDE Secretariat, mainly responsible for

financial/administrative matters and *ad hoc* contributions in projects, submissions, etc.

Ms Thomais Vlachogianni is handling many thematic and horizontal tasks in the Secretariat mainly on policy areas and project basis. She also oversees ICT issues, including the MIO-ECSDE web-sites, workshop and conference support, etc.

Mr. Haris Paliogiannis is a full-time policy officer covering various thematics and engaged in various projects. He also supports communication and outreach actions.

Ms Iro Alampeï continued as full-time member of the staff supporting also the educational projects of MIO-ECSDE through the MEDIES Secretariat.

Ms Vicky Malotidi continued as full-time member of the staff supporting also the educational projects of MIO-ECSDE through the MEDIES Secretariat.

Ms Sevasti Vamvakopoulou also supported the MEDIES Secretariat.

Mr. Vassilis Psallidas continued as ESD advisor supporting mainly the educational projects of MIO-ECSDE through the MEDIES Secretariat.

Ms Eftychia Korkidi, as a Junior Education Officer, supported mainly the educational projects of MIO-ECSDE through the MEDIES Secretariat.

Ms Danai Amlianiti assisted in specific projects and tasks, as did Ms Alaa Abou Daher, who also assists in Membership issues.

Ms Olga Papathanasopoulou provided the overall secretarial support.

Mr. George Paneris works as the in-house accountant while Mr. Kostas Drakopoulos continued as part-time Official Accountant of MIO-ECSDE.

Ms Angela Klauschen was a part-time recruit till June, on Gender and Youth mainstreaming.

With partial teleworking of most of the staff being a legacy of the pandemic, mid-year, it was decided that the additional working space that MIO-ECSDE rented very close to the Kyrristou 12 premises, was taken up by GWP-Med.

The Chairperson, Prof. M. Scoullou, is responsible for the supervision of the work and the management, the development, direction of policies and projects and a large part of the representations of the MIO-ECSDE organisation. The Secretariat is supported by various experts on an *ad hoc* basis. During 2022 a number of initiatives and representations of the organisation were carried out also by the Co-Chair Prof. Ftouhi, as well as by other members of the Executive Bureau.

## 1.4. Quality management, financial auditing, accountability standards

**A1.** MIO-ECSDE underwent the annual audit for complying with the **ISO 9001:2015** standards in the design, development, management and implementation of international and European projects on environment and sustainable development. The review, which covers all relevant institutional and operational issues, took place remotely on 8 July 2022 with positive results and no “remarks” or suggestions for further improvement of the MIO-ECSDE procedures in place were made.

The 2021 work programme covered by the LIFE Programme Operating Grant was audited (positive) and was submitted with the final report to CINEA at the end of April. The overall audited financial report of MIO-ECSDE for 2021 was completed in July 2022 by PKF Euroauditing SA.

The softone financial management software (including accounting component) is constantly adapted and updated to better address the daily functioning of the MIO-ECSDE Secretariat as well as for its

hosted institute GWP-Med (e.g. it is now uploaded on the cloud and not server-based).

As **full member of “Accountable Now”**, the MIO-ECSDE Secretariat is in the process of prioritizing and addressing the 2021 suggestions of the review panel (see <https://mio-ecsde.org/about-us/our-accountability/>) when the last report of MIO-ECSDE was submitted. The report, along with MIO-ECSDE’s Code of Conduct, all of its Policies, most recent annual Reports of Activities and Financial Statements, are on the “[Our Accountability](#)” section of the webpage.

MIO-ECSDE is participating as a member in the Working Group on reviewing and updating the reporting process. The intention behind the Review is to continuously ensure that Accountable Now’s framework remains cross-cutting, useful and relevant, especially given the new context that the organizations are now operating in. It kicked off on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2022.

To commemorate the World Environment Day, that takes place on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June of every year, MIO-ECSDE developed with Accountable Now a cheat sheet on “How to Maintain “Healthy Planet” as a Cross-Cutting Value in CSOs Work”. It provides tips and advice on how organisations and individuals not directly linked to environmental action can take steps to nevertheless be part of the global solution, at a point when challenges are at a point of no return (<http://bitly.ws/wSI8>).

**A2.** MIO-ECSDE continued hosting GWP-Med based on an agreement with GWP (Stockholm). All involved parties agree to continue this important for the region institutional relationship.

## 1.5. Reacting to COVID-19 impacts

The MIO-ECSDE Secretariat worked remotely at a staff presence percentage ranging from 50-70% at its offices. All staff has been vaccinated, while hygiene protocols, 2-meter distancing of work stations and other provisions, as dictated by the health authorities, remain in place. Travel abroad or big meetings were not encouraged till mobility gradually increased. The Secretariat constantly assesses the global, regional and national state of play.

## 2. Continuation and enhancement of activities related to networking

### 2.1. Networking with the MIO-ECSDE Members and its wider NGO Network

#### *2.1.1. Exchange and dissemination of information*

The dissemination of information was facilitated by:

##### **(i) The 'MIO-ECSDE e-News'**

Three issues of the MIO-ECSDE e-news covering the 2022 highlights (English and French) were prepared and sent out to Member Organisations and the wider MIO-ECSDE database (see Issues #115, #116 and #117, <http://mio-ecsde.org/news/mio-ecsde-e-news/>). A refreshed layout was developed in January 2022 in line with the visual identity of MIO-ECSDE (colour palette, etc.).

##### **(ii) The 'Sustainable Mediterranean' journal**

In 2022 MIO-ECSDE published Sustainable Mediterranean Issue No 79 which was dedicated to the 2021 Mediterranean Action Day of MIO-ECSDE entitled 'Ocean Literacy for All Mediterranean People: The Ocean We Need for the Future We Want', highlighting the work of the 21 Mediterranean NGOs that carried out ocean literacy related activities aiming to reach out to Mediterranean citizens and individuals, inviting them to take effective actions to address ocean-related challenges.

##### **(ii) The MIO-ECSDE webpage and social media**

The **MIO-ECSDE website** (<http://www.mio-ecsde.org>) was regularly updated and populated. In addition, MIO-ECSDE Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter media were updated. The MIO-ECSDE social media statistics have been reporting a stable annual increase in total percentage of engagement and reach across all three platforms (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn). The MIO-ECSDE YouTube channel also plays an important communication role.

##### **(iii) The MEDIES' webpage and e-bulletin**

The MEDIES website [www.medies.net](http://www.medies.net) was regularly updated with ESD news, publications, announcements, etc. of Euro-Mediterranean interest (on average 2-3 posts per week). The social media (fb) page of MEDIES was also regularly updated (on average 1-2 posts per week).

The information bulletin of MEDIES was also circulated on a quarterly basis to its members (<https://medies.net/category/resources/e-bulletins/>).

#### *2.1.2. Surveying the Membership*

In June 2022, the Secretariat sent a short survey to its member organisations and COMPSUD members, among other stakeholders, to grasp their insights, feedback and reactions regarding the drafting of MIO-ECSDE's policy paper on the Mediterranean's wind energy transition.

### 2.1.3. Showcasing actions of the Membership

The Secretariat informs its members of various regional developments and events (webinars and on-line meetings). The dedicated section of the MIO-ECSDE website with the news of the Membership was updated with materials sent by the members. There is also a dedicated section in the MIO-ECSDE e-News. The MEDIES website also communicated relevant Membership initiatives.

## 2.2. MIO-ECSDE as facilitator of Mediterranean Networks

The MIO-ECSDE Secretariat facilitates the following networks:

### **The network of Parliamentarians and other Politicians for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean (COMPSUD)**

The 22nd Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP22) to the Barcelona Convention that took place in Antalya, Turkey from 7-10 December 2021 approved the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNEP/MAP and COMPSUD for their cooperation (set out in Annex II to [Decision IG.25/3](#)). The MoU was formally signed in a ceremony in Athens on 12 April 2022. In addition, COMPSUD was invited to remain a member of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSUD) also for the biennium 2022-2023 (set out in Annex V to this Decision). Normally the term is for 2 years.

COMPSUD maintains close relations with the Chairman of the UfM Parliamentary Assembly's Committee on Energy, Environment, and Water, as well as with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Standing Committee on Economic, Social and Environmental Cooperation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM).

The two COMPSUD/MIO-ECSDE efforts in support of two MSSD Flagship Initiatives advanced well during the year:

- The on-line repository of best practices on reducing and properly managing solid waste in the Mediterranean (in English and French) implemented under the ENI Southern Neighbourhood Region (WES) project (bestpractices-waste-med.net) was formally launched in January 2022. This work has been done to address the MSSD flagship: "Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction"
- At the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (focusing on Sustainable Infrastructure, Sustainable Tourism, Education for Sustainable Development) that took place from 5-7 October 2022 in Nicosia, Cyprus, COMPSUD and MIO-ECSDE co-organised a formal side event with the House of Representatives (Parliament) of Cyprus, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), the Mediterranean Action Plan – Barcelona Convention Secretariat (UNEP/MAP), the UNECE Aarhus Convention Secretariat, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and MEPIELAN Centre). The side event was entitled Environmental Governance for Transforming our Planet – Promoting the Aarhus Convention in the whole of the Mediterranean region, and it took place on October 7th. More than 45 stakeholders were informed of the joint efforts in the development of a Mediterranean Accession Agenda to the Aarhus Convention (Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters), encouraging the accession to and implementation of the Aarhus Convention in Mediterranean countries that are not yet members; the Foundation Discussion Document



itself; the key role that Members of Parliaments play in the proper implementation of the Convention itself and of the upcoming Mediterranean Accession Agenda.

In terms of Climate Change Education, COMPSUD, together with MIO-ECSDE/MEdIES contributed to the Cyprus Climate Change Initiative that aims at the development of a Regional Action Plan to address the specific needs and challenges countries are facing in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East (EMME) region, to address and ameliorate the impact of climate change and advance mitigation actions in accordance with the Paris Agreement. This report was published in 2022, and is available in the [MEdIES' website](#). Read more at 3.1.2.3

In June 2022, Prof. Rejdali, Chairman of COMPSUD participated in the closing conference of the Interreg MED project, MPA-Engage. Education, the role of Parliaments, and regional cooperation were some of the main take-home messages as explained by Prof. Rejdali, who participated in the discussions of the policy event of the conference held in Barcelona.

- ▶ **The network of Mediterranean Educators working on Environment and Sustainability / MEdIES:** See section 4.
- ▶ **Mediterranean Universities Network for Education for Sustainable Development (MedUnNet):** The MEdIES Secretariat continued to keep up-to-date its members about ESD developments in the higher education sector, and especially regarding SDG4.7, while the members were involved in the dissemination of calls for participation in major ESD trainings/events, the 9<sup>th</sup> EfE Conference in Cyprus, etc. Since the Chairman has coordinated the drafting of the “Sustainability Charter of the Greek Universities” and its approval by the Synod of Rectors of the Greek Universities, an effort is in the pipeline to mobilize through this network similar charters/guidelines in other interested countries.
- ▶ **The network of Mediterranean Journalists and Communication Professionals working on Environmental issues / COMJESD:** Members of the network were regularly informed about major developments. More specific work on strengthening the network did not materialise.
- ▶ **Other networks:** MIO-ECSDE kept the **Act4Drin Alliance** informed on developments related to the Drin Corda process. The **DeFishGear Network, a network for a litter free Adriatic and Ionian coast and sea**, was also facilitated by MIO-ECSDE throughout 2022.

## 3. MIO-ECDSE as a promoter of common NGO policies and the collective voice of Mediterranean environmental NGOs

### 3.1. Monitoring of and contribution to the formulation of policies relevant to the Mediterranean region and involvement in important Mediterranean processes

#### *3.1.1. Collaboration and representation in the work of UNEP/MAP and MCSD*

MIO-ECSDE has kept close contacts with the Athens-based coordinating unit of UNEP/MAP. The Federation has been invited to attend and contribute in meetings of UNEP/MAP, its RACs (Regional Activity Centres) and of the Mediterranean Commission of Sustainable Development (MCSD).

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of May MIO-ECSDE participated in a meeting between UNEP/MAP and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, where the Federation's efforts to actively engage and build the capacities of elected officials to take informed decisions towards a sustainable development of the region were presented.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2022, MIO-ECSDE actively participated in the Meeting of the Ecosystem Approach Correspondence Group on Marine Litter Monitoring (CORMON Marine Litter). The meeting deliberations focused on a number of issues including data standards and data dictionaries for IMAP Candidate Indicator 24; elements for monitoring riverine inputs of marine litter; and the methodological approach and results of the NEAT tool application for GES assessment for IMAP Common Indicator 22 (Beach Macrolitter) in the Adriatic Sea.

MIO-ECSDE participated in the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Meetings of the MCSD Steering Committee that took place on 1-2 June 2022 and 14-15 December respectively, and presented updates on how it is supporting (together with COMPSUD and other regional actors) the implementation of two "flagship initiatives" of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD 2016-2025) through the EU LIFE Programme and two regional WES activities (HE-4-REG/P2P: Overall environmental governance - promotion of the Aarhus Convention in the whole of the Mediterranean and RE-7-REG: Best practices in achieving waste reduction in the Mediterranean).

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2022, MIO-ECSDE actively participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Regional Cooperation Platform on Marine Litter in the Mediterranean held online. MIO-ECSDE presented an overview of its wide-ranging marine litter related activities addressing the entire management cycle of marine litter and provided input to the 2022-2023 joint work plan of the Platform. The work plan consists of measures clustered around five themes aiming to contribute to the implementation of measures in the Updated Marine Litter Regional Plan.

### 3.1.2. Securing the Mediterranean dimension in international policies and processes

#### 3.1.2.1. EU Policy

Some specific EU policy areas in focus were:

- ▶ The EU Green Deal
- ▶ The EU Zero Pollution Action Plan
- ▶ The EU Restoration Law
- ▶ European Neighbourhood Policy and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)
- ▶ 2030GreenerMed Agenda of the UfM (the EU is Co-President along with Jordan)
- ▶ European Marine Framework Strategy Directive (MSFD) and Ocean Literacy
- ▶ Climate Change
- ▶ Biodiversity (Natura 2000, MPAs, the LIFE Programme, etc.)
- ▶ Resource efficiency
- ▶ Sustainable Development
- ▶ Education for Sustainable Development
- ▶ Access to environmental information, participation, justice
- ▶ Air/Odour pollution and Chemicals

Some of the EU consultations that MIO-ECSDE contributed to in 2022 were:

- ▶ **EC Consultation on nature restoration targets under the EU biodiversity strategy:** The European Commission proposed a new Nature Restoration Law on the 22nd of June 2022 with pioneering legally binding targets and €100 billion for EU Member States to restore 20% of EU degraded land and sea by 2030. The proposed regulation is considered by many conservationists the first major piece of EU Biodiversity legislation since the Habitats Directive in 1992 and is expected to have significant implications beyond the EU, including the Mediterranean. MIO-ECSDE contributed to the EC's public consultation on nature restoration targets and put forth some recommendations in order to facilitate the strong implementation of the legislation and not limit it to wishful thinking.
- ▶ **EC Consultation on the revision of the Waste Framework Directive (WFD):** The European Commission aims to improve the overall environmental outcome of waste management in line with the waste hierarchy and the implementation of the polluter pays principle. On behalf of the ENI CBC MED funded project, Med4Waste, in which MIO-ECSDE is a key partner, MIO-ECSDE contributed to the revision of the WFD, in August 2022. The aim of the input to the consultation was to present the complexities of the reality of the Mediterranean waste management sector and remark that strong efforts need to be made in the EU Mediterranean countries to improve capacities and awareness on waste prevention and management. Another issue that was highlighted was that sustainable investments are still lagging in terms of new or upgraded efficient waste management infrastructures in the southern EU countries.

MIO-ECSDE also elaborated and/or co-signed the following:

- ▶ **Joint Statement on the revision of lists of surface and groundwater pollutants:** In October 2022, the European Commission released a set of initiatives to speed up the transition towards a zero-pollution and toxic-free environment among which the Zero Pollution package, that includes the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and the Updated lists of surface and groundwater pollutants. MIO-ECSDE, together with 19 other EU health and environmental civil

society organisations elaborated a joint statement that features policy recommendations on the update of the lists of surface and groundwater pollutants under the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC – WFD), the Environmental Quality Standards Directive (2013/39/EU – EQSD) and the Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC – GWD). The joint statement highlights that despite some improvements, water pollution remains a key environmental challenge across the EU and globally. Twenty years after the adoption of the Water Framework Directive, less than 40% of Europe’s rivers, lakes, coastal and transitional waters are in good chemical status. While the number for groundwater bodies in good chemical status is higher (74%), there are some large regional differences and it is also an effect of the fact that fewer pollutants are monitored in groundwater. The joint statement features 5 key recommendations that focus on: the need to expand the list of water pollutants to reflect the real scale of pollution; the need to improve monitoring practices; the need for EU water legislation to respond faster to scientific knowledge; the need to strengthen the responsibility of manufacturers, importers and users; the need of using the most cost-efficient measures to address water pollution at source.

▶ **Joint letter for the seismic exploration activities in the Hellenic Trench:** Noise pollution caused by seismic surveys poses severe risks to many marine species (including disruption of normal behaviour, exclusion from habitat, prey depletion and physical harm) and such surveys are being conducted in the Hellenic Trench in the course of exploration for new oil and gas. On the sad occasion of the stranding incidents of endangered Cuvier’s beaked whales off the coasts of Corfu Island, environmental organizations, scientific experts, and representatives of the local community of the Ionian, joined forces to signal that seismic blasts do not comply with the provisions of various UN Conventions, European Union law and Mediterranean environmental agreements and declarations that have been ratified by Greece, aiming to preserve important habitats and protect vulnerable species. More specifically, the execution of seismic survey operations diverts Greece from achieving a Good Environmental Status by reducing the effects of noise pollution (Descriptor 11 of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive). Aware that the current availability of energy at the national and regional level is an issue of high political sensitivity, more than 60 signatories, among which MIO-ECSDE, have sent a joint letter to the Greek Prime Minister and the responsible Ministries, expressing their deep concerns over the seismic exploration activities in the Hellenic Trench, and especially the threats they pose to marine species. Find the joint letter [here](#).

### **3.1.2.2. Following up progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Principle 10 of the Rio Convention and the Aarhus Convention), etc.**

As in previous years, during 2022, MIO-ECSDE took into consideration in all its thematic priorities and activities the outcomes and recommendations of major global fora that are follow-up actions of the Rio process or linked with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

More specifically for Principle 10 of the Rio Convention and the UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention), MIO-ECSDE and COMPSUD, have completed an important step in close cooperation with UNEP/MAP and the Secretariat of the UNECE-Aarhus Convention: the elaboration of a [desk study for the development of a Foundation Discussion Document \(FDD\) for the “Mediterranean Accession Agenda” to the Aarhus Convention](#) by MEPIELAN Centre (also Document UNEP/MED WG.523/Inf.6). In terms of next steps, as part of its workplan, the EU-funded Water & Environment Support project has launched a Peers/Experts process and Regional Training dedicated to “Overall environmental governance - Promotion of the Aarhus Convention in the whole of the Mediterranean”

(Activity no. HRE-4-REG / HRE-4-P2P). The activity will provide technical assistance and networking opportunities and will strengthen the capacities of the WES Partner Countries to be able to effectively prepare and put in motion the mechanisms needed to accede to the Aarhus Convention. At a first on-line meeting planned for early 2023 (most likely March) they will discuss the FDD and identify the priorities and implications of the implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the Mediterranean region and countries. The country representatives of the MCSD are expected to receive an invitation to be among the Peers by the WES Focal Point of their country. A regional in-person training will follow later in 2023.

### ***3.1.2.3. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the various political frameworks***

**Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (MSESD) and its Action Plan towards 2030:** MIO-ECSDE and the UNESCO Chair and Network on Sustainable Development Management and Education in the Mediterranean provides the Technical Secretariat to the Mediterranean Committee on ESD, through MEdIES, with the support of the Cypriot Government. The revision of the Action Plan started in early 2021 and included targeted communication and exchange with competent stakeholders and a series of actions to collect and compile the necessary evidence and feedback. Between June and September 2022 MIO-ECSDE / MEdIES facilitated the Secretariat of the Mediterranean Committee on Education for Sustainable Development (MCESD) in the preparation of the revised texts that were shared with the Ministries of Education of the Mediterranean countries and the IGOs participating in the MCESD, to receive comments and feedback. The finalized text was adopted during a High-Level Event of the Mediterranean Education and Environment Ministers that took place within the 9th EfE Conference in Nicosia, Cyprus (5-7 October 2022) (read more about the High-Level event in 3.2.) The revised Action Plan (in English and French) can be found [here](#).

**UNECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development:** The Chairman participates with a leading role in the Ad Hoc group on Strategic Planning 2030 of the UNECE Steering Committee on ESD, that developed the context and roadmap of ESD in the UNECE region towards 2030, in line with the global framework #ESDfor2030. It was adopted at the EfE9 Conference (Nicosia, 5-7 October 2022).

Prof Michael Scoullas actively participated on 30-31 May 2022 in the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the UNECE ESD SC in Geneva, where, among other advances, he presented the “Recent activities organized in the framework of the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development”.

MIO-ECSDE participates officially in the Bureau of the UNECE ESD Steering Committee having the status of Observer NGO Member (since October 2020).

The Chairman participated in the Task Force on Education and Outreach of the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East (EMME) Climate Change Initiative of the Presidency of the Republic of Cyprus and coordinated by the Cyprus Institute (since October 2020). He was actually co-author of the new report produced on “Climate Change Education (CCE) in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East (EMME) region”, aiming to identify the trends, commonalities and gaps of CCE in the EMME region and to help countries develop synergies to accelerate and integrate CCE into their educational policies and systems (available [here](#)).

**UNESCO ESD-Net 2030:** MIO-ECSDE, through MEdIES, has been officially invited to join to the new UNESCO Global Network “ESD-Net 2030”, that is the follow-up Initiative of the Global Action Programme on ESD (GAP). The network was officially launched on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October as a diverse and inclusive platform comprised of competent Strategic Partners - from the countries, IGOs, NGOs/CSOs, Academia, Youth, etc. in order to advance ESD Policy, boost knowledge sharing and collaboration schemes, enhance advocacy, monitoring and evaluation on ESD. The network is scheduling a series of

webinars and online meetings starting in 2023, while the first international partners meeting is provisioned for the second semester of 2023 in Japan.

#### **3.1.2.4. Active participation in the Euro-Mediterranean policy area: Union for the Mediterranean and the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) processes**

The MIO-ECSDE Secretariat has continued its close relationship with the relevant to the Mediterranean Unit(s) of DG ENV, CLIMA, MARE, NEAR while following up on the European Neighbourhood Policy and its financial instrument (ENI). The Secretariat has also continued to closely monitor the developments of the UfM and maintained its close relationship with its Secretariat.

MIO-ECSDE actively participated in the UfM event entitled “Working together – The BlueMed Pilot Initiative towards a Mediterranean lighthouse for the Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters” (held in February 2022) and made an intervention featuring the marine plastic pollution monitoring and mitigation actions of Plastic Busters MPAs. MIO-ECSDE also participated in and contributed to the 3rd Meeting of the UfM WG on ENV and CC (held in March 2022); Thomais Vlachogianni presented key policy recommendations related to tackling marine litter in the Mediterranean and showcased selected results from the Interreg Med Plastic Busters MPAs project and its ENI CBC tranche, namely the Plastic Busters CAP implemented in southern Mediterranean countries. MIO-ECSDE also contributed with a presentation on marine litter and the Plastic Busters CAP project to the 10th Meeting of the UfM Working Group on Blue Economy (March 2022) and participated in the 6th Task Force on ENV (November 2022).

Through the WES project, MIO-ECSDE directly supports the UfM Secretariat in the implementation of the 2030GreenerMed Agenda and its monitoring process.

The Chairman of MIO-ECSDE, Prof. Michael Scoullou, was invited by the UfM to record a video for the Mediterranean Day (28 November). See at <https://bit.ly/3ALYcTs>.

#### *3.1.3. MIO-ECSDE activities as partner of GWP-Med*

MIO-ECSDE acts as Host Institute of the GWP-Med Secretariat and continues its fruitful collaboration with it. As a member of the GWP-Med network, MIO-ECSDE promoted during 2022 the following which are integral to both the GWP-Med and MIO-ECSDE agendas:

- ▶ Submissions of joint/coordinated project proposals;
- ▶ Facilitation of the Circle of the Parliamentarians (COMPSUD), facilitation of the Circle of Media/Journalists (COMJESD);
- ▶ Collaboration with MEdIES for its water education activities;
- ▶ The ongoing HYDRIA virtual museum of water management techniques of the past;
- ▶ The Drin Corda (Coordinated Action for a Sustainable Future).

## **3.2. (Co-) Organisation of meetings at Mediterranean or sub-regional level**

### *3.2.1 Plastic Busters MPAs closing conference*

The Plastic Busters MPAs Closing Conference took place in Athens on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2022. It served as a stepping stone in consolidating marine litter management efforts in Mediterranean MPAs. The event was organized by MIO-ECSDE, the Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy, UNISI and

ISPRA, in cooperation with COMPSUD. More than 140 participants (105 in person; 35 online) from 14 Mediterranean countries came together at the Plastic Busters MPAs closing conference. The two-day event was emotionally charged since it brought together for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic, key marine litter actors of the region and many MPA managers. It was also the epilogue of the Plastic Busters MPAs project, featuring the knowledge, know-how, experiences and lessons learned obtained by the implementation of the demonstration and replication actions addressing the entire management cycle of marine litter, from monitoring and assessment to prevention and mitigation. Within the conference a high-level segment was held back-to-back with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between UNEP/MAP and COMPSUD aiming to foster bilateral cooperation for healthy marine and coastal ecosystems in the Mediterranean region. Read more at <https://shorturl.at/aptH0>

### *3.2.2 “What chances for the climate crisis? Mediterranean and Arab NGOs confer in advance of COP27”*

On May 26, 2022, the secretariats of MIO-ECSDE and RAED organized an online meeting aiming to provide to the member NGOs of both networks background information on COP27 (Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, 7-18 November 2022), hard scientific facts on the impacts of climate change in the Mediterranean and the degree of urgency, and key policy developments. The event was designed as a consultation, providing the space for the member NGOs to voice queries, concerns, achievements and ultimately formulate a set of climate action messages. The 3-hour on-line event was moderated by Prof. Michael Scoullos, Chairperson of MIO-ECSDE, and Dr. Emad Adly, President of RAED, and brought together more than 200 NGOs, politicians, policy makers, scientists, and media from more than 22 countries. The event featured keynote speeches and remarks by Nasser Kamel (Secretary General, UfM), Julien Le Tellier (UNEP/MAP), HE Mahmoud Mohieldin (UN Special Envoy and Climate Champion for COP27), Mahmoud Fath-Allah, (Director of the Department of Environmental and Meteorological Affairs at the Economic Sector of the League of Arab States), Amr Essam (Advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt), Prof. Wolfgang Cramer (MedECC Coordinator and Research Director at the Mediterranean Institute for Biodiversity and Ecology of CNRS) and Prof. Sherif El Khayyat (Kuwait Environment Public Authority). The link to the recording and some messages that sum up the discussions held during the event can be found [here](#).

### *3.2.3 MIO-ECSDE Side Events within the 9<sup>th</sup> ‘Environment for Europe’ Conference*

MIO-ECSDE supported the Government of Cyprus and specifically the Pedagogical Institute of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, in the organisation of the official Side Events of the 9<sup>th</sup> Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference that took place from 5 - 7 October 2022 in Nicosia, Cyprus. Both the Conference and its Side Events were a success with MIO-ECSDE being in charge of thirty-eight Side Events taking place in two different venues.

In addition, MIO-ECSDE was the lead organiser or co-organiser of seven Side Events in collaboration with various international and regional partners and projects:

- “Higher Education towards Sustainable Development: Making Universities Lighthouses of Sustainability”, 5 October
- “Making the management of Construction and Demolition Waste (CDW) circular and truly sustainable”, 5 October
- “Towards a new Waste Management Governance: implementing circularity from the local to the regional level in the Mediterranean”, 6 October
- “Ocean Literacy in the Mediterranean”, 7 October, that was the Intro Session to the 2022 Hybrid University that followed (see further below)

- “Environmental governance for transforming our planet – Promoting the Aarhus Convention in the whole of the Mediterranean region”, 7 October
- “From the Whole School Approach (WSA) to Whole Institute Approach (WIA) as a tool to empower learners in facing today’s challenges”, 7 October
- “Marine Litter/Plastic Pollution, a major environmental and tourism problem: Monitoring and participatory science”, 7 October.

More about each of the side events can be found on the conference website.

### *3.2.4 High-Level Event of Education and Environment Ministers on the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development and its Action Plan towards 2030*

The High-Level Event took place on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October in the framework of the 9<sup>th</sup> Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in Nicosia, Cyprus. The event offered the opportunity to 55 participants – among them Ministers and High-Level officials, academia as well as representatives of IGOs and NGOs – to share, reflect and harvest insights regarding their activities, in line with the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy on ESD. The revised Action Plan towards 2030 was also unanimously adopted. The Event approved a Statement referring to what was agreed during the meeting, the adoption of the Action Plan towards 2030, and the Mediterranean Committee on ESD that will be guided by a new Bureau consisting of the Ministries of Education of Cyprus (Chair), Greece, Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine and UNEP/MAP, UNESCO, UNECE, UfM and LAS. The event was officially opened by HE the Minister of Education, Sports and Youth of Cyprus and Chairman of the MCESD, Mr. Prodromos Prodromou, while it was addressed by the MCESD representatives, and namely, Mr. Nasser Kamel, Secretary General of the UfM, Ms Ana Luiza M. Thompson-Flores, Director, UNESCO Liaison Office in Geneva, Ms Tatjana Hema, UNEP/MAP Coordinator, and Dr. Farraj Alajami, Minister Plenipotentiary/Director of Education and Scientific Research Department, LAS. All of them reaffirmed their commitment to promote ESD in the region as a most safe tool and effective investment for the development and the promotion of sustainable development and the achievement of the SDGs. Read more [here](#).

### *3.2.5 2022 Hybrid University – Phase A (live): 12-14 September (Crete) and 5-10 October (Cyprus)*

MIO-ECSDE/MEdIES and the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (Venice Office) have a long-standing commitment and cooperation in organising Summer Universities on the Sustainable Management of Biosphere Reserves and other protected areas. The main goal of these Universities is to strengthen, improve and capitalize on different aspects of the function of Biosphere Reserves of the MAB/UNESCO Programme and other Designated Areas (Natura 2000, MPAs, etc.) and enhance the competences of managers, post-graduates and other stakeholders involved.

The 2022 Hybrid University particularly aimed to equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and methodology tools enabling them to use sites such as Biosphere Reserves, and other marine and coastal Protected Areas as living labs for cultivating ocean literacy schemes for their inhabitants, businesses and visitors. The 2022 Hybrid University took place once again in a hybrid format with two phases.

PHASE A (in person) took place in Crete, from 12-14 September 2022, where a dedicated session was hosted in the BR of Asterousia, with 22 participants, focusing on the threats that marine and coastal ecosystems face and possible ways to combat them. This phase continued in Cyprus from 5 to 10 October, back-to-back and organically linked with the 9th Environment for Europe (EfE9) Ministerial



Conference (Nicosia, 5-7 October 2022). The curriculum included specific Side Events of EfE9 on topics such as: Ocean Literacy, Marine Litter, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), Biosphere Reserves (BR) as models of Sustainable Development and the Whole Institute Approach. Between 8 and 10 October, the 40 participants joined the sessions that took place in various sites in Cyprus (Centres of Environmental Education of Cape Greko, Akrotiri, Larnaka) including field visits, group-work, hands-on workshops and lectures on ocean literacy. Read more on the 2022 Hybrid University [here](#)

PHASE B (on-line): A three-four week long online course will start in January 2023 combining self-paced (asynchronous) and live broadcast (synchronous) learning. It will capitalize on a combination of the outcomes of the PHASE A, the content of previous e-courses, as well as on the new online material prepared by UNESCO IOC on Ocean literacy. It will provide learning opportunities to a wider audience.

### 3.2.6 27<sup>th</sup> AGM of MIO-ECSDE

Ending a critical year for environmental governance, marked by two major global summits on climate change and biodiversity, the 27th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of MIO-ECSDE was held on the 22nd of December 2022. The (virtually) assembled member organisations unanimously approved a series of key documents regarding the 2022 progress of the Federation and 2023 activity and financial planning. Members also shared their major highlights. The persistent impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the energy and food crisis coupled with the visible effects of climate change in the world and our region, were only some of the complex issues that were discussed.

Despite the changes in MIO-ECSDE's operational funding (not supported by the EU LIFE Programme in the 2022-2024 period), the regional influence of the Federation has not been compromised. By embarking on new exciting initiatives and successfully finalizing other international projects, MIO-ECSDE has demonstrated this year that it is capable to deliver as much or even more. The Secretariat, Executive Bureau and active Membership had a key role to play in this and their hard work and commitment were repeatedly praised. However, risks and challenges remain for 2023 onwards and need to be addressed head-on.

The AGM closed with the elections for those members of the Executive Bureau whose 2-year term has come to an end. The constitution of the Executive Bureau for 2023 can be seen [here](#).

## 3.3. Mediterranean Actions/Campaigns

### 3.3.1. Water in the Mediterranean

Regarding the ongoing MIO-ECSDE water agenda, the Secretariat did the following this year:

- ▶ Continued to provide expertise in the Core and Expert Working Groups of the framework of the Drin Dialogue Process and the implementation of the Shared Vision for the Management of the "Extended" Drin River Basin. MIO-ECSDE actively participated in two meetings of the Drin Core Group (organized online) during 2022.
- ▶ Continued to promote, in cooperation with GWP-Med various older and newer materials such as "Water in the Mediterranean" (available in seven languages); the "Alter Aqua" material for Malta, the "Other water" for Cyprus, the online app on non-conventional water resources ([www.ncwr-edu.net](http://www.ncwr-edu.net)), the various editions of the "Gift of Rain" (all water resources are available [here](#)) such as the "Zero Drop" action in Folegandros island, Greece ([read more](#)).
- ▶ The HYDRIA virtual museum is a founding member of the World Network of Water Museums (WAMU-NET) ([www.watermuseums.net](http://www.watermuseums.net)). The MIO-ECSDE Chairperson is on the Board of the

WAMU-NET. From January to April MIO-ECSDE/MEdIES collaborated closely with the Museums Network to organize and promote the third edition (2022) of the successful School Contest entitled: “The Water We Want - from heritage to future”. The contest invited students from all around the world aged 6 to 18 years old to express their ideas about the links between water heritage and the SDG challenges through drawings & collages, photos, soundscapes and videos. MEdIES disseminated widely the announcement and contest toolkit to its members and channels and assisted schools and NGOs to submit their works. In addition, MIO-ECSDE/MEdIES collaborated with WAMUNET in the creation of the digital Exhibition “I Remember Water” aiming to re-discover ways to connect people with their water heritage, create empathy and stimulate new perceptions and water awareness (<https://irememberwater.watermuseums.net>)

### *3.3.2. Biodiversity, Protected Areas, Climate Change, etc. in the Mediterranean*

In 2022 the following actions were undertaken:

- ▶ Within the Plastic Busters MPAs project MIO-ECSDE led actions related to defining and testing harmonized methodologies to assess the presence and impact of marine litter in Mediterranean MPAs (Marine Protected Areas); designing and implementing marine litter prevention and mitigation measures; and setting up a joint governance scheme for managing marine litter in pelagic and coastal MPAs (see 5.2).
- ▶ Within the MPA-Engage project - aiming to support and promote the role of Mediterranean MPAs as central tools for the implementation of the ecosystem approach for the adaptation and mitigation to climate change- MIO-ECSDE led actions related to capitalization, participatory approaches and the elaboration of climate change mitigation and adaptation plans for 7 MPAs and of a joint action plan (see 5.3).
- ▶ Within the service contract “Increasing public awareness about EU nature protection policy – utilising EU nature data”, MIO-ECSDE contributed to the development of a European Nature Policy Toolkit aiming to increase understanding of: nature and biodiversity, including concepts such as species, habitat and ecosystems; where key species and habitats can be found in the EU Member States; why Europe’s nature and biodiversity are important, and why they are under threat; what the EU is doing to protect its nature and how the youth themselves can get involved (see 5.8).
- ▶ MIO-ECSDE, the UNESCO Chair & Network on Sustainable Development Management and Education in the Mediterranean of the University of Athens, and the Greek National Committee of MAB/UNESCO together with the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, Venice (Italy) have a long-standing fruitful collaboration in projects and initiatives on topics relating to management as well as education within designated areas and especially Biosphere Reserves in the Mediterranean (see 3.2.5).
- ▶ MIO-ECSDE successfully applied and got funding from UNESCO and the abrdn Charitable Foundation for a one-year-long project entitled “Monitoring marine litter and generating fit-for-purpose data through a participatory science approach in Asterousia Biosphere Reserve”. The project entails actions focused on improving the marine litter knowledge base and evidence in the Biosphere Asterousia Reserve, strengthening its management plan with tailored-made marine litter prevention and mitigation measures and innovative solutions, educating and engaging local communities (in particular youth) in generating fit-for-purpose marine litter data through a participatory science approach (see 5.11).
- ▶ MIO-ECSDE participated in climate change related events of the membership.

▶ To assist its NGO members and the other networks of stakeholders it facilitates in their advocacy, policy formulation and implementation efforts at regional, national and local level regarding the wind energy transition within and close to protected areas through concrete recommendations, MIO-ECSDE finalized in 2022 its policy paper on the Mediterranean’s wind energy transition and the opportunities and risks it may entail for the region’s protected environment. Through this paper, MIO-ECSDE aims to stimulate discussion on how the transition to wind energy and nature conservation can be addressed “wisely” and in a participatory way in pursuit of finding the maximum consensus for a common sustainable solution and draw attention to policy-makers whether the aggregated effects of wind energy development are sufficiently considered, so as not to exceed the carrying capacity of ecosystems or disrupt the components of a just and equitable energy transition. The position paper outlines the potential challenges and solutions related to a broad spectrum of environmental and social impacts of wind energy technologies and concludes with some key recommendations to ensure that the aggregated effects of wind energy development are sufficiently considered, so as not to impact ecosystems negatively, or disrupt the components of a just and equitable energy transition. You can find the full policy paper and the 2-page summary of the policy paper in [English](#) and in [French](#).

▶ MIO-ECSDE participated in the International Workshop: Towards Climate Neutrality in European UNESCO Biosphere Reserves at the International Academy for Nature Conservation on the island of Vilm. Organised by the Michael Succow Foundation and Nationale Naturlandschaften e. V., the workshop offered a diverse programme for 22 participants from 10 European countries. Among them, the Chairman of the Hellenic National Committee MAB/UNESCO Director and UNESCO Chair & Network on SD Management and Education in the Mediterranean and MIO-ECSDE, Prof. Scoullos presented the know-hows of two case studies: i) A proposal to reforest a large part of the Asterousia Biosphere Reserve in Southern Crete with indigenous species and carob trees in combination with small rain/storm waters retention systems and ii) a Feasibility Study carried out in Southern Euboea for eventual nomination of it as a BR, where the issue of high density of wind turbines has been examined and debated with the local communities and the relative industry. The two cases presented, cover issues related to climate change and biodiversity conservation emerging in many BRs throughout the Mediterranean, Europe and beyond.

▶ MIO-ECSDE actively participated at the UNFCCC COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, 7-18 November 2022. Prof. Scoullos participated in many events and was a keynote speaker in the following official side-events:

- Education for Climate Change: Towards more resilient communities in different regions, 10 November
- Redesigning strategies in a changing world, 10 November
- Conservation of Mediterranean Sea ecosystems under the climate crisis: challenges and adaptive solutions in a sea facing fast tropicalization, 14 November
- Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean - A rising tide which lifts all boats, 17 November

### *3.3.3. Marine and coastal issues*

MIO-ECSDE closely followed the progress of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and continued to be a member of the Working Group on Good Environmental Status (WG GES) and the Marine Strategic Coordination Group (MSCG). Furthermore, MIO-ECSDE has been actively contributing to the work of the EU/MSFD Good Environmental Status (GES) Technical Subgroup on Marine Litter. More specifically:

- ▶ In June 2022, MIO-ECSDE participated in the in-person meeting of the MSFD Technical Group on Marine Litter and made several interventions related to a series of tasks that it implemented or is currently co-leading, namely: the elaboration of a manual for the use of the Joint List of Marine Litter Items to facilitate the unambiguous identification of the litter items in order to assess macrolitter in the marine environment for the MSFD and pinpoint tailor-made management responses; the elaboration of the Online Photo Catalogue of the Joint List of Litter Categories; the elaboration of the updated guidance document on how to carry out beach macrolitter surveys; the updating of a comprehensive list of some 100 marine litter related projects that was published by the JRC/MSFD TGML.
- ▶ In May 2022, MIO-ECSDE participated in the 30th meeting of the Marine Strategy Coordination Group (MSCG). The main issues discussed were: the state-of-play of the review of the MSFD; the state-of-play of the MSFD implementation. MIO-ECSDE will also participate in the 31st Meeting of the Marine Strategy Coordination Group (MSCG) to be held in November 2022. Lastly, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of November 2022, MIO-ECSDE will participate in the EC Stakeholder Workshop on the Review of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

In 2022, MIO-ECSDE actively participated in a large number of high visibility European and Mediterranean events and also launched and/or joined key related initiatives and campaigns:

- ▶ On the 8<sup>th</sup> of February 2022 MIO-ECSDE was an invited speaker at the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission and IUCN event entitled “Regions acting for a plastic-free Mediterranean Sea”. MIO-ECSDE made an intervention on how to address marine litter in MPAs.
- ▶ MIO-ECSDE is part of “The Science We Need for the Mediterranean Sea We Want (SciNMeet)” Programme” linked to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030. The Mediterranean Sea we want is the title of a collective paper that presents major gaps and challenges for implementing the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) in the Mediterranean region (<https://doi.org/10.1590/2675-2824069.21019mc>). In June 2022, MIO-ECSDE participated online in the SciNMeet launch event where it assumed the task of co-chair in the Ocean Literacy & Education Task Team. MIO-ECSDE participates in two other task teams, the one related to climate change and the one related to marine pollution.

In June 2022, MIO-ECSDE was an invited speaker and the moderator of a side event at the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon entitled “The Regional response for the protection of the marine environment and its marine living resources from plastic pollution – A concrete case from the Mediterranean”. Organized by UNEP/MAP and the Ministry of Environment and Energy of Greece, the event focused on advancing global efforts to address plastic pollution by showcasing progress and lessons from the Mediterranean through national and regional activities supported by the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system. Prof. Scoullou’s intervention focused on ocean literacy and citizen engagement as part of a whole-of-society endeavor against marine litter. MIO-ECSDE also participated in the online side event entitled “Science and awareness: building Mediterranean networks against marine litter”, organized by Legambiente Onlus, University of Siena and Union for Mediterranean in the context of the UN Ocean Conference 2022. MIO-ECSDE’s contribution focused on the interactions between science, politics and society for addressing marine litter.

- ▶ In July 2022, MIO-ECSDE was one of the invited speakers at a capacity building webinar on sustainable use of resources and Marine Protected Areas organized by the Mediterranean

Biodiversity Protection Community. MIO-ECSDE contributed with a presentation entitled “The Plastic Busters MPAs marine litter prevention and mitigation actions”.

- ▶ In October 2022, MIO-ECSDE actively participated in the TouMaLi International Conference entitled “Contribution of sound waste management systems to sustainable tourism and the protection of marine ecosystems”, Alexandria, Egypt. MIO-ECSDE was an invited speaker in the session on regional and Mediterranean policies and programmes on plastic pollution and marine litter and presented its insights from turning science into policy & actions via its actions related to slashing plastic pollution in Mediterranean MPAs.
- ▶ In November 2022, MIO-ECSDE actively participated in the Interreg MED Biodiversity Protection Community event entitled “Mediterranean biodiversity challenges: acting against marine litter”, which was organized in the framework of COP27, within the Mediterranean Pavilion. MIO-ECSDE was one of the panellists of the event, contributing to the session on marine litter and science
- ▶ In November 2022 MIO-ECSDE, participated as a speaker on “Ocean Literacy in the Mediterranean” within the webinar series entitled “Promoting Ocean and Climate Literacy in Nautical High Schools and local communities” held within the ERASMUS+ project ‘Ride the Wave’ led by Member organisation Marevivo. [Read more](#)

#### *3.3.4. Culture and Sustainability in the Mediterranean*

Within this overall framework, during 2022 MIO-ECSDE did the following:

- ▶ Maintained and further promoted the HYDRIA virtual museum ([www.hydraproject.info](http://www.hydraproject.info)) – acknowledged as a good example bridging ESD and cultural practices (see [here](#)). It is a member of the Board of the Global Network of Water Museums-WAMUNET (see 3.3.1). The technical and aesthetical updating of the Hydria webpage is completed and the new website together with 8 new animations of water-works is online in three languages: English, Greek and Arabic .
- ▶ As regards the Mediterranean Food agenda, the e-learning course about Mediterranean Food ([here](#)), has successfully run two times in 2022. The e-course is largely based on the MIO-ECSDE educational package “Mediterranean Food: Historical, Environmental, Health & Cultural dimensions” (produced in five Mediterranean languages [here](#)). Since its launching 60 users have followed the course.
- ▶ MIO-ECSDE participated in the webinar “Food waste management and circular economy in Mediterranean cities” organized by the SFS-MED Platform where key stakeholders from across the Mediterranean shared experiences of their engagement in circular economy practices for food waste management at the local level (you can find the webinar’s outcomes [here](#)). Prof. Michael Scoullou, contributed to the discussions by underscoring the necessity of establishing a collaborative ecosystem among local governments, civil society, research centres, the private sector, international organizations, investors, etc. This cannot happen without education, information and knowledge sharing so as to enable a new mind-set.

#### *3.3.5. Med Action Day 2021: ocean literacy for all Mediterranean people*

The Mediterranean Action Day (MAD) 2021 was dedicated to ‘Ocean Literacy for all Mediterranean people’, inviting the Mediterranean NGO community to develop initiatives that inspire ocean citizenship and formulate effective actions to promote ocean literacy. After careful evaluation of the

applications received, 21<sup>1</sup> activities were accepted to go ahead in 11 Mediterranean countries as they met the criteria set in the Terms of Reference: Overall, the implemented activities directly engaged more than 6,835 stakeholders in some 234 locations.

In 2022, an issue of MIO-ECSDE's Sustainable Development journal ([soft version only](#)) was published to showcase the activities and their results, and a complementary promotional video based on footage sent by the participating NGOs was produced and widely disseminated. The journal was accepted to be featured in the UNESCO IOC Ocean Literacy Portal as an open-source available to the Ocean Literacy Global Community to facilitate collaboration among professionals interested in developing joint ocean literacy activities (<https://bit.ly/36mrzQd>).

Unfortunately, without the MIO-ECSDE Operating Grant (EU LIFE Programme), no Med Action Day was organized in 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> By Croatia (EKO KVARNER), Cyprus (AKTI), Egypt (Arab Office for Youth and Environment - AOYE), Greece (Greek Eco Project, iSea, OIKOTOPIA), Italy (Circolo Festambiente, Posidonia Project Carloforte, DelTa), Jordan (Jordanian Society of Friends of Heritage - JSFH, Land and Human to Advocate Progress - LHAP), Lebanon (Makhzoumi Foundation, Human Environmental Association for Development - HEAD), Morocco (Moroccan Club for Environment and Development - CMED), Spain (Asociación Hippocampus, Eco-Union, Posidonia Green Project), Syria (Syrian Coast Society for Environmental Protection - SCSEP), Tunisia (AEKélibia, ASMP Kélibia) while the European Marine Science Educators Association - EMSEA implemented their activity in Croatia, Greece and Italy.

## 4. Implementing Education for Sustainable Development through the MEDIES secretariat

Through the MEDIES Initiative, MIO-ECSDE plays a leading role in promoting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the Mediterranean, with activities ranging from drafting and following ESD policies, authoring of books and materials, trainings-of-trainers, to grass-root activities at school level. ESD is an “umbrella” type of education that ultimately equips learners with sustainability knowledge, values, skills, and motivation to act for a more just and meaningful life.

MEDIES is included in a new study focusing on the Teacher Professional Development entitled “Teacher education for the green transition and sustainable development” by the European Commission that will be published early in 2023.

An overview of the activities in 2022 can be summarised as follows:

- ▶ Facilitating the e-network of educators ([www.medies.net](http://www.medies.net)).
- ▶ Following ESD political processes at many levels (European, UfM, UNECE, UNESCO, etc). Various processes have progressed as explained in 3.1.2.3.
- ▶ Authoring and producing new teaching and learning materials (in printed or e-form).
- ▶ Continuing projects on marine litter/plastics and water
- ▶ Facilitating the Mediterranean Universities Network for ESD (MedUnNET).
- ▶ Preparing and disseminating on a quarterly basis the e-bulletin to its members (see MEDIES bulletins).
- ▶ Piloting projects with authorities of the host country (Greece) in order to replicate them throughout the Mediterranean Region.

### 4.1. *HERRCO project on Recycling, Single-Use Plastics and Marine Litter*

The collaboration of MIO-ECSDE with the Hellenic Recovery Recycling Corporation (HERRCO) in 2022 was minimal due to limited financing. Nevertheless, MEDIES continued with the implementation of the Programme in a few schools and focused on training of educators. Schools from Kalymnos island, Heraklion (Crete) and Peristeri (Attika) took part in the Programme. Also, in collaboration with the Directors of Primary Education of Ilia - Peloponnese, online teacher training seminars were conducted with 40 participating teachers from kindergarten, primary and special education. The relevant educational material was distributed to students, teachers, civil servants. The Institute of Educational Policy (IEP of the Ministry of Education and Culture) confirmed that the Programme is included in the thematic cycle, “Caring for the environment” and was tested in the pilot application of the action “Platform 21+: Skills Workshops” designed for Primary and Secondary Education also during the 2021-22 school year. Read more about the Programme [here](#), download the educational material [here](#) or view the [flipbook](#) (suggested form of viewing).

### 4.2. *Erasmus+ Mobility Courses for European teachers (Key Action 1)*

After a pause due to the pandemic, these Mobility Activities began again this year, with two different MIO-ECSDE thematic courses having taken place, twice each in 2022. These week-long courses for European Educators are meant to be regularly organised, with the aim to build the skills

of educators in delivering meaningful interventions on the issue of a) marine litter and b) non-conventional water resources (NCWRs). Participants are Educators in Europe-based Schools and Adult Learning Institutions, whose expenses can be fully covered through Erasmus+ Mobility grants they receive in their countries. The application process is communicated through the MEDIES network.

- ▶ **The course on Marine Litter Education** (in two rounds 1-7 May and 16-22 October 2022) with 29 educators in total, from Malta, Spain and Greece. The course focused on the issue of marine litter, especially SUPs by applying experiential, learner-centered, on-site (outdoor), and hands-on training methods. A mix of in-house and external experts facilitated the sessions, comprising a rich learning content and experience. [Read more](#)
- ▶ **The course on Education for Alternative Water Resources** (in two rounds 15-21 May as a pilot, and 6-11 November 2022) with 16 educators in total, from Malta, Spain and Greece. The course was piloted in May and standardised in its second round in November. The course proposes a complete set of ESD methodology and resources to support ESD educators to cultivate water responsible behaviour and transformative action, and develop competences in embedding NCWRs in their work. The course combines on-site (outdoor) training sessions with hands-on workshops, lectures and other indoor sessions. [Read more](#).

MIO-ECSDE hosted at its premises a **course on eLearning-eInclusion-eCulture** co-organised with the Pedagogical University of Crete and in particular with the “Laboratory for Advanced Learning Technologies in Lifelong and Distance learning” from 17-23 Oct 2022. Nineteen educators from Cyprus, Austria, Spain, Finland, Germany, Italy and Greece followed the course, that focused on the issue of Interactive Tours & Augmented Reality (AR) and training in the field using smart phones (mobile education). The Chairman and MEDIES staff contributed to the course curriculum.

#### *4.3. Web-based education applications on water and climate change*

The online web application on water developed by MIO-ECSDE and which is available in [English](#) and [Greek](#) was promoted throughout the year. Learners are invited to discover in an interactive manner the various aspects of non conventional water resources, urban water vulnerability, climate change challenges, etc. Though the materials have been developed for learners of 10-13 years old, several sections can be used either by younger or older students.

#### *4.4. Beach Clean-Ups (in Greece)*

A series of clean-ups have been organised in 2022, either autonomously, or as part of the MEDIES education activities. Between 2 and 2.5 tonnes of litter have been removed from coasts and seas.

On 11-12 April at two beaches of Malevisi, within the "Waste Ashore-Malevisi" project with the participation of about 120 students and teachers in total. On 13-14 April at Kokkinos Pyrgos beach, within the "Waste in the Net-Mesara" project with the participation of about 120 students and teachers in total. On 3 May 2022, in Avra Beach of Aigina combined with a seafloor clean-up, as part of the KA1 Course for European Educators, with the participation of ~100 students and teachers in total. On 25 June, in Elefsina, as part of the EuropeanCleanUp Day, together with the staff of the Hellenic Petroleum Company, with the participation of more than 130 people.

#### *4.5. Mediterranean food: Our legacy, our future*

This new project is essentially the adaptation of [SIDUMEF](#) in Greece and is supported by the UNESCO Participation Programme 2022-2023. Its key activities include the adaptation and production of the SIDUMEF publication in Greek and the organisation of awareness raising actions for educators and the public, in general, both live and online, with invited SIDUMEF speakers and other experts. Key aim once again is the increase of understanding of the environmental and socio-economic aspects of the



Mediterranean food and diet today, as well as its dynamic in strengthening and maintaining the intercultural dialogue for sustainability in the Mediterranean region.

#### 4.6. *PLASTEAM: STEAM education for Plastic-free Primary Schools*

This is a 30-month long Erasmus+ Project launched in November 2020, with MIO-ECSDE/MEdIES as one of its partners. [PLASTEAM](#) aims to educate pupils and teachers from primary schools of five European countries in responsibly using, consuming and recycling plastic items. This was a dense year for the project with many activities taking place:

- During the European Seminar held on 30 March, organised by the MEdIES Secretariat in Piraeus (Greece) the “Plastic Footprint App/Diary for schools” was presented to 40 teachers from 7 EU countries. During the Seminar participants were introduced to the PLASTEAM project overall; they tried out the App; and exchanged their views.

- MEdIES led the development of the “STEAM-Box”, a new educational resource aiming to contribute to the awareness raising, sensitization and education of students and teachers of primary schools on plastic waste, and in particular, Single Use Plastics (SUPs), and on sustainable ways of managing them at school level. It includes 14 educational activities and is accompanied by a methodological guide for teachers. The STEAM Box is available online in Dutch, English, Greek, Italian and Romanian [here](#).

- On 27 September, a 90-min webinar was held, aiming to inform educators on how to use the STEAM-Box material. It was attended by 33 participants joining from the partner schools and beyond.

- A school competition took place among the Partner Schools and beyond, on ideas of how they can minimize plastics use in their schools. The national winners were student groups of: the Themistokis Primary School (Greece), the St. Francis Primary School of Gozo and St. Theresa Secondary School (Malta), the D.R.Popescu of Nojorid/primary and Scoala Gimnaziala Nr. 30 of Timisoara (Romania) and Breda Primary School and Roermond Secondary School (The Netherlands), who will compete at the International competition, to be held in Amsterdam in the Spring of 2023. Read more at <https://plasteam.eu/>

#### 4.7. *WASTE ASHORE, WASTE IN THE NET! - Three projects for marine litter on selected coastal regions of Crete (Greece)*

Three small scale projects have been taking place in Crete (Greece) in 2021 and 2022 in close cooperation with the local authorities on the crucial issue of marine litter with emphasis on Single-Use Plastics (SUPs) reduction. The projects engage diverse target-groups: fishermen, owners and staff of tourism and leisure businesses, tourists as well as the educational community. Read more [here](#).

#### 4.8. *Project in Messara-Crete*

This is a small-scale pilot project aiming to promote the essential dialogue between the protection of natural and cultural monuments and Sustainable Development. It is taking place in Messara-Crete of the Asterousia Biosphere Reserve targeting the local population. A 2nd Awareness and Information Day for residents and socio-economic associations and local government officials was held on September 12, 2022. The activity was attended and participated by the students of the Hybrid University 2022.

#### 4.9. *MEdIES networking*

During 2022 MEdIES engaged with several education networks of mutual interest, such as the [Climate ECOS Community](#), [Action for Climate \(ACE\) by UNFCCC](#), the Paris Committee on Capacity-Building ([PCCB Network](#)), the [Bridge 47 Network](#), the [Global Education Monitoring \(GEM\)](#) the [Futures of Education](#)

(UNESCO), the [#ESDfor2030](#) framework, the [Teaching for Climate Action Initiative](#) and the [EU4Ocean Initiative](#).

#### *4.10. New Projects about to launch*

MEdIES will be a partner in three new projects: (i) Be2aty: An Erasmus+ project aiming to build the capacities of youth through creating bridges between Egyptian and European youth organisations; (ii) TINK@School: An ERASMUS+ KA2 project aiming to build knowledge and competences of European educators on embedding the tinkering method in their ESD projects; (iii) CreDit: aims to strengthen digitization and innovation of Water Museums (see Hydria), and public accessibility to water heritage (Creative Europe grant).

## 5. Running, drafting, completion and/or follow-up of international projects

### 5.1. The Water and Environment Support (WES) project

MIO-ECSDE and RAED are members in the consortium that was awarded the regional EU-funded project Water and Environment Support mechanism (2019-2024). The overall aim is to assist the implementation of an integrated approach to pollution reduction and prevention in line with the UfM Agendas and Barcelona Convention and to contribute to a more efficient management of scarce water resources in the Neighbourhood South region ([www.wes-med.eu](http://www.wes-med.eu)).

In 2021, MIO-ECSDE through WES, UNEP/MAP, the Secretariat of the UfM and the Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians for Sustainable Development (COMPSUD) mobilized collective efforts to implement an MSSD Flagship Initiative. As a key achievement, an [online repository of Mediterranean best practices in achieving waste reduction](https://bestpractices-waste-med.net/) (<https://bestpractices-waste-med.net/>) was launched in January 2022, with 20 case studies available in English and French. By making available in a user-friendly way the description, key challenges and results of selected Mediterranean case studies, this online repository aims to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and techniques to key stakeholders of the region and enable them to replicate or adapt these viable approaches. This first set of 20 cases covers various aspects of waste management including prevention, reduction, reuse, and recycling, as well as a variety of waste fractions and instruments: awareness raising, legal instruments, economic incentives, etc. The publicly available website is a living platform since it gives the opportunity to interested stakeholders to propose additional best practices to be considered.

MEdIES provided expertise in the WES Regional Training on Awareness Raising and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) with focus on Waste Water Treatment (WWT) for reuse, and Non-Conventional Water Resources (NCWRs). The training included a sequence of 2 webinars that took place on 23 February and 9 March 2022, gathering 52 participants from ministries, international organisations, academic institutions and educators, CSOs and NGOs. The first Webinar provided the contexts of ESD and the Whole Institution Approach (WIA) and of the Non-Conventional Water Resources (NCWRs) while the second one focused on selected ESD practices and methodologies to apply Non-Conventional Water Resources in teaching and learning.

In May and June 2022, MIO-ECSDE and SCP/RAC (now MedWaves) co-organized a series of 3 webinars focused on microplastics (Activity No: RE-2-REG); in particular MIO-ECSDE contributed to the implementation of module 1 entitled “Understanding the issue of microplastics in the marine environment: amounts, types, sources, effects and monitoring approaches”. Also, within 2022, considerable progress was made in relation to the WES marine litter activities in Morocco and Algeria; in both countries a first set of pilot marine litter monitoring surveys on the sea surface and the seafloor have been completed and a first set of data has been generated.

As part of its workplan, WES just launched a regional Peer-to-Peer (P2P) process dedicated to “Overall environmental governance - Promotion of the Aarhus Convention in the whole of the Mediterranean” (Activity no. HRE-4-REG / HRE-4-P2P). The overall aim of this activity is to promote Environmental Governance in the region by launching the MSSD Flagship Initiative on Environmental Governance to

encourage the accession to and implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the Mediterranean countries and promote stakeholders' engagement. The activity will provide technical assistance and networking opportunities and will strengthen the capacities of the WES Partner Countries to be able to effectively prepare and put in motion the mechanisms needed to accede to the Aarhus Convention. This EU-funded WES activity is part of a joint effort of MIO-ECSDE with the Secretariat of the UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention Secretariat, the UNECE-Aarhus Convention Secretariat, the UfM Secretariat, the Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians for Sustainable Development and the MEPIELAN Centre. A first meeting will take place in March 2023 and a regional training later in the year.

## 5.2. The Interreg Med Plastic Busters MPAs project

Plastic Busters MPAs aimed at shedding light on the impacts of marine litter in coastal and pelagic protected areas and consolidating Mediterranean efforts against marine litter. The project entailed actions that address the whole management cycle of marine litter, from monitoring and surveillance to prevention and mitigation.

Plastic Busters MPAs concluded its activities in June 2022; within its 4-year-long journey it delivered a first-of-its-kind comprehensive diagnostic analysis of the presence and effects of marine litter in Mediterranean MPAs; marine litter monitoring and assessment tools and approaches; showcases and guidelines of best practice measures, particularly focused on slashing single-use plastics in Mediterranean MPAs, and so much more.

MIO-ECSDE was the operational leader of the communication, the studying and the capitalization components of the project. In addition, MIO-ECSDE together with the Italian National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA) were the co-chairs of the Steering Committee of the project, which was chaired by the University of Siena (UNISI).

Some of the highlights of 2022 were:

- ▶ The organization of the Plastic Busters MPAs closing conference in Athens on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2022 (see note under section 3.2.1 and read more at <https://shorturl.at/aptH0>)
- ▶ The development of two e-learning modules (<https://envirolearning.net>):
  - Plastic Busters MPAs module on how to monitor the presence and effects of marine litter. This e-learning module has been designed specifically for the busy practitioner, conservationist, researcher, professional and student working for litter-free coasts and seas. It aims to assist them in becoming competent in implementing selected marine litter monitoring methodologies. By following this module, they will learn how to design and implement marine litter monitoring campaigns and how to generate fit-for-purpose, reliable and comparable data on the presence and effects of marine litter, thus contributing with essential knowledge for a targeted response to address the urgent marine litter threat in the Mediterranean.
  - Plastic Busters MPAs module on how to operationalize marine litter prevention & mitigation measures. This e-learning module has been designed specifically for the busy practitioner, conservationist, researcher, professional and student working for litter-free coasts and seas. It aims to assist them in becoming competent in implementing selected marine litter prevention and mitigation measures. By following this module, they will learn how to contribute to a joint response to address the urgent marine litter threat in the Mediterranean. They will gain a deeper understanding and acquire new knowledge and skills related to the design, implementation and monitoring of the following best practice

marine litter measures: setting up a single-use plastics free network of coastal food and beverage outlets; establishing the adopt-a-beach scheme; setting up a reusable cup system; establishing a derelict fishing gear management scheme.

- ▶ The release of a step-by-step guide for operationalizing marine litter prevention and mitigation measures (<https://mio-ecsde.org/resources>)
- ▶ The elaboration of a joint plan for action entitled “Fast-tracking a collective Mediterranean response for litter-free coastal and marine protected areas: the Plastic Busters MPAs priority actions”. The collective experience of the Plastic Busters MPAs project has been crystalized in a set of priority actions that need to be implemented in order to effectively address the issue of marine litter in Mediterranean coastal and marine protected areas towards achieving their conservation goals.
- ▶ The elaboration of a toolkit on “Monitoring the presence and effects of marine litter in Mediterranean MPAs: the Plastic Busters MPAs protocols”.
- ▶ The development of “Report on the results and findings of the piloted harmonized marine litter monitoring approach in Mediterranean MPAs”.
- ▶ The development of a “Report on the results and findings of the piloted marine litter monitoring approach to assess the impacts of marine litter on biota”.

Plastic Busters MPAs was a 48-month-long project funded by Interreg Mediterranean (EU) and implemented by MIO-ECSDDE and several other partners (<https://plasticbustersmpas.interreg-med.eu>).

### 5.3. The Interreg Med MPA-Engage

The Interreg Med MPA-Engage project aimed to support and promote the role of Mediterranean MPAs as central tools for the implementation of the ecosystem approach for the adaptation and mitigation to climate change (CC). The 3-year-long project kicked-off in January 2020 and ended in June 2022. By strengthening the management and the networking of MPAs, and by promoting a Mediterranean policy dialogue among the stakeholders, the project contributed to maintaining marine ecosystems in the region. The main lines of action of the project included: an assessment of the CC vulnerability (ecological and socio-economic) of MPAs; monitoring the CC effects on MPAs; engagement of citizen scientists (in particular recreational divers and small-scale/recreational fishermen) in monitoring actions; introducing CC aspects within the MPAs management plans; transferring actions; etc. The project was led by the Institute of Marine Sciences (CSIC) and was implemented by 15 partners from the following 8 countries: Albania, Belgium, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain. MIO-ECSDDE led actions related to capitalization, participatory science and the elaboration of climate change mitigation and adaptation plans for 7 MPAs and of a joint action plan. Find more info the project here: <https://mpa-engage.interreg-med.eu>

Some of the highlights of 2022 were:

- ▶ The organization of the final event of the project; from the 14th to the 17th of June, more than 120 scientists, managers of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), decision-makers and conservation practitioners from 18 Mediterranean countries came together in Spain to share the results of two European Interreg Med projects: MPA Engage and MPA Networks. The joint event featured the key results and policy recommendations of the two projects related to MPAs management effectiveness, small-scale fisheries management, conservation of mobile species, sustainable financing, and adaptation to climate change.

- ▶ The elaboration of the deliverable entitled “Joint Plan for Climate Change Adaptation in Mediterranean MPAs: methodological approach & priority actions”.
- ▶ The elaboration of the deliverable entitled “Deploying the Quintuple Helix Participatory Approach in Mediterranean MPAs for effective decision-making against Climate Change: showcases & essential elements for success”. This document is a synthesis report of the results, outcomes and lessons learned of the quintuple helix participatory approach implemented in the 7 pilot Mediterranean MPAs with the aim to identify and adopt priority climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.
- ▶ The release of a policy paper entitled “Climate Change in Mediterranean MPAs: fast-tracking actions for effective management and enhanced resilience in a changing ocean”.
- ▶ The development of an operational guide for users of the MPA engage results & outputs.

## 5.4. The ENI CBC MED MED4WASTE

The ENI CBC MED project entitled “Mediterranean Dialogue for Waste Management Governance (MED4WASTE) kicked off in October 2021. The two-year long project aims at facilitating new governance models for integrated and efficient urban waste management policies across the Mediterranean. Its main lines of action are: (1) building on and improving existing knowledge to foster capitalisation of socially innovative, integrated and efficient practices from public, private and social sectors in waste management, with special focus on waste prevention and circular economy approaches; (2) offering guidance and training for public administrations and relevant private and social stakeholders, to apply transferring actions and exploitation measures and to support planning, adapting and re-addressing of waste management plans, policies and other management actions and normative drivers; (3) supporting dissemination of key results and increase awareness among key stakeholders, promote cross-border and cross-sectorial networking, and foster long-term commitment of decision and policy makers to promote an environmental, socio-economic and institutional transition towards green growth. The project actions will be implemented in Spain, Greece, Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan, and Italy. It is led by Fundació Universitària Balmes (Universitat de Vic – Universitat Central de Catalunya), while MIO-ECSDE is co-leading the policy dialogue and mainstreaming, and cross fertilization activities of the project.

During the first year of implementation of the project, two important project capitalisation opportunities took place:

- Towards a new Waste Management Governance: implementing circularity from the local to the regional level in the Mediterranean. The event took place on the 6th of October during the 9th Europe for Environment Ministerial Conference (5-7 October) and was co-organised with the Union for the Mediterranean and the Cyprus Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth and MIO-ECSDE. The event aimed at strengthening knowledge sharing and stimulating debate around themes relevant to circular economy and waste management transformation in the Mediterranean, as well as showcasing successful and inspiring actions to promote adaptive waste management plans, policies and other management actions. Ultimately, the event promoted policy-oriented innovations and new governance models for integrated and efficient municipal waste management public policies across the Mediterranean and beyond.
- Med4Waste participation during ECOMONDO 2022, the international environmental exhibition. Med4Waste was present in this year’s edition of ECOMONDO, a leading event in Europe for promoting ecological transition and new models of circular and regenerative economy.

## 5.5. The ENI CBC MED Plastic Busters CAP

In January 2022, the ENI CBC MED project entitled “Fostering knowledge transfer to tackle marine litter in the Med by integrating EbA into ICZM (Plastic Busters CAP) kicked-off. Plastic Busters CAP aims to facilitate decision-makers and stakeholders in effectively tackling the problem of marine litter by integrating EbM (Ecosystem-Based Management Approach) into ICZM (Integrated Coastal Zone Management) planning towards good environmental status.

The project seeks to consolidate and fully exploit the knowledge obtained by five relevant projects in order to develop tailor-made capitalization actions that will create the enabling conditions for a societal shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns, and a truly circular and green economy. In the long-term, the project will contribute to enhancing ecosystem services via a reduced leakage of marine litter and marine plastic pollution in the Mediterranean Sea and reduced emissions of greenhouse gases by a wise use and sustainable disposal of plastics. Plastic Busters CAP is a 24 month-long project, with a total budget of € 1.1 million and is co-funded by the European Union under the ENI CBC MED Programme 2014-2020. Plastic Busters CAP brings together partners from 7 countries of the Mediterranean region, namely Egypt, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Spain and Tunisia.

The backbone of Plastic Busters CAP is the Interreg Med Plastic Busters MPAs; both projects are implemented within the framework of the UfM labelled Plastic Busters initiative that addresses the issue of marine litter and plastic pollution in the entire Mediterranean region. Plastic Busters MPAs implemented pilot marine litter monitoring and mitigation actions in northern Mediterranean countries (Albania, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Spain, Slovenia), while Plastic Busters CAP will replicate such actions in southern Mediterranean countries, namely Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia.

The Plastic Busters MPAs partners, UNISI and MIO-ECSDE are leading members of the Plastic Busters CAP consortium. UNISI is the coordinator of the project, while MIO-ECSDE is leading the marine litter monitoring and mitigation component of the project. The other 5 partners of the project are: Legambiente Onlus (Italy), Higher Council for Scientific Research – Institute of Marine Sciences (Spain), El Ramis Society for Local Community Development of Barrany (Egypt), National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technologies – Department of Marine Environment (Tunisia), Tyre Coast Nature Reserve (Lebanon), University of Jordan – Aqaba Branch Faculty of Basic and Marine Sciences, Department of Marine Biology (Jordan).

## 5.6. The H2020 SHARED GREEN DEAL project

In February 2022 a new H2020 5-year project kicked-off, in which MIO-ECSDE is a partner. It is entitled Social sciences & Humanities for Achieving a Responsible, Equitable and Desirable GREEN DEAL (SHARED GREEN DEAL), brings together 20+ partners and aims to undertake 24 innovative social experiments in behaviour and practice, through the use of comparative (across country) case studies spanning all topic areas of the European Green Deal. This will generate a better understanding of social practices and behavioural change processes, including enabling as well as inhibiting factors. From these interdisciplinary foundations, a new ‘Shared Green Deal’ network will be launched, and clear policy and governance recommendations will be provided, based on the lessons learnt from the project’s experiments. MIO-ECSDE, by bringing in its experience in the research-policy-society interface, in advocacy, networking, awareness-raising and Education for Sustainable Development, will be leading the social experiments on preserving biodiversity and will also help draw out of the project experiments insights on zero pollution. The call for submissions was launched on November 24<sup>th</sup> and will be open till the end of January (see [Call for Local Experiment Partners | SHARED GREEN DEAL](#)).

## 5.7. The H2020 SOS-ZEROPOL2030 project

MIO-ECSDE is part of a € 3 million European research project entitled Source to Seas – Zero Pollution 2030 (SOS-ZEROPOL2030) aiming to develop a holistic, stakeholder led zero pollution framework, ultimately reflecting the EU’s very ambitious policy and legislative framework governing the environmental protection of our seas with focus on the zero environmental pollution agenda. The four-year SOS-ZEROPOL2030 project, funded by the EU’s Horizon2020 scheme, kicked-off on 27 September 2022 and will run till September 2026. Led by MaREI, the SFI Centre for Energy Climate and Marine Research at University College Cork, the project brings together a consortium of 10 European institutions and organizations that form a unique interdisciplinary partnership with expertise in fundamental and applied natural sciences and associated governance concerning marine pollution, in social sciences concerning stakeholder engagement and in human behaviour.

Stakeholder engagement is central to this project and the holistic research approach championed by SOS-ZEROPOL2030, emphasises human behaviour, socioeconomics, and governance; and is underpinned in knowledge about and understanding of current barriers to effective and efficient prevention, reduction, mitigation, and monitoring of marine pollution in European Seas.

MIO-ECSDE is leading the ‘Zero Pollution Accelerator’ related work package of the project that seeks to:

- ▶ pave the way for multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral and multi-level actions that can deliver a successful blue green transition towards clean European Seas by 2030, through a truly ambitious, transformational and pragmatic framework and roadmap;
- ▶ foster an effective, swift and wide uptake and replication of novel solutions and best practices by user communities, via fit-for-purpose and user-friendly guidelines that will enable the operationalization of the framework and roadmap towards clean European Seas by 2030;
- ▶ strengthen the science-policy-society interface and ensure a seamless environmental management continuum, where robust knowledge on pollution related issues can be effectively streamlined into a refined policy vision that can deliver an informed societal response that deploys targeted and effective pollution prevention and mitigation approaches.

## 5.8. The UNESCO & abrdn Charitable Foundation marine litter project

In September 2022, MIO-ECSDE kick-started a one-year-long project entitled “Monitoring marine litter and generating fit-for-purpose data through a participatory science approach in the Asterousia Biosphere Reserve” funded by UNESCO and the abrdn Charitable Foundation. The project entails actions focused on improving the marine litter knowledge base and evidence in the Biosphere Asterousia Reserve, strengthening its management plan with tailor-made marine litter prevention and mitigation measures and innovative solutions, educating and engaging local communities (in particular youth) in generating fit-for-purpose marine litter data through a participatory science approach.

The project is implemented within the framework of an initiative undertaken by UNESCO and the abrdn Charitable Foundation entitled “Promoting sustainable development through UNESCO’s programmes and sites”. Running over 3 years, the initiative focuses on promoting a more sustainable and climate-neutral Europe by working through research and education, with the goal to develop innovative solutions to environmental and climate change challenges in selected UNESCO sites, 5 per year. Following a comprehensive selection process, the first set of 5 sites was selected for this year, among which the Asterousia Biosphere Reserve and MIO-ECSDE’s project. The initiative was officially launched on the 21st of September at the Venice-based, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in



Europe, which brought together the donors and the grantees.

## 5.9. FOLOU project

In June 2022, the project “Bringing Knowledge and consensus to prevent and reduce FOod LOss at the primary production stage. Understanding, measuring, training and adopting” was approved by the European Commission. It is a 48-month long project and it is planned to kick-off in January 2023. MIO-ECSDE will bring its expertise to the tasks related to the exploitation and outreach of project results and dissemination and communication, among others.

## 5.10. Community4Innovation project

Community4Innovation is a 7-year Interreg EuroMed project that will launch in January 2023 and MIO-ECSDE is one of the project partners. It aims to support a better coordination among different levels of policies to approach thematic issues and to increase the institutional capacity of Mediterranean authorities in engaging in transformative public policy, governance and cooperation. Specific objectives are 1) establishing conditions for the reuse of results, the development of synergies and the increase of coordination between thematic projects working towards the same mission by articulating a community of Interreg Euro-MED projects partners, and 2) implementing transfer and mainstreaming strategies of Euro-MED thematic project results in practices of public and private actors at local, regional and national levels by providing the technical support to relevant institutions.

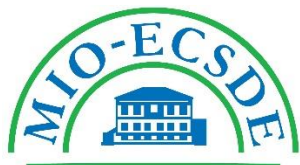
## 5.11. Framework & Service Contracts

MIO-ECSDE was participating in the following framework and service contracts in 2022:

- ▶ **Framework Contract entitled "Green Growth and Circular Economy - Supporting activities for stakeholder engagement, exchange of information and best practices. Ad hoc stakeholder engagement activities and stakeholder engagement toolkit (LOT 2)".** Within this framework contract MIO-ECSDE is collaborating with INTRASOFT, AEIDL, TEAMWORK, INSPIRO and COFFEY. During 2022, MIO-ECSDE did not contribute to any service contract.
- ▶ **Service Contract entitled Increasing public awareness about EU nature protection policy – utilising EU nature data.** Within the contract MIO-ECSDE is collaborating with ADELPHI, INTRASOFT and ATECMA. The contract entails several activities that focus on improving access to biodiversity data and its use in awareness raising via the development of communication and awareness raising materials. MIO-ECSDE provided expertise on environmental science communication and advocacy, and on Environmental Education/Education for Sustainable Development. In July 2022 the new European Nature Protection Toolkit was launched (<http://shorturl.at/ejuFK>). It is designed to support educators, facilitators and site managers looking for creative educational resources to engage students in environmental conservation and preservation of European wildlife and natural habitats. Designed for students aged 13-16, the toolkit is organised around four modules: (1) How do we relate to nature? (2) Explore Europe’s nature. (3) How do we protect nature in Europe? (4) Engaging in nature protection. The toolkit also includes lesson plans with ready-to-use materials and activities. It provides resources for finding and recognising plants, animals and habitats in proximity of the students. In addition to studying the nature around them, students will also learn about issues related to nature in Europe, delving into concerns like loss of biodiversity and what can be done about it. The toolkit, which is available in 22 languages, was developed by ADELPHI in partnership with ATECMA, MIO-ECSDE and Netcompany-Intrasoft, for the European Commission.

## 6. Publications & other resources

- ▶ Assessing the amount of marine litter on beaches of Mediterranean Coastal and Marine Protected Areas. Filling in the knowledge gaps via a participatory-science initiative. MIO-ECSDE, 2022. (<https://shorturl.at/bnFV3>)
- ▶ Deploying the Quintuple Helix Participatory Approach in Mediterranean MPAs for effective decision-making against Climate Change: showcases & essential elements for success. The Interreg Med MPA Engage Project & MIO-ECSDE, 2022. (<https://shorturl.at/gktvY>)
- ▶ Joint Plan for Climate Change Adaptation in Mediterranean MPAs: methodological approach & priority actions. The Interreg Med MPA Engage Project & MIO-ECSDE, 2022. (<https://shorturl.at/aeAD0>)
- ▶ Plastic Busters MPAs module on how to operationalize marine litter prevention & mitigation measures. The Interreg Med Plastic Busters MPAs & MIO-ECSDE, 2022. (<https://shorturl.at/pFO39>)
- ▶ Plastic Busters MPAs module on how to monitor the presence and effects of MARINE LITTER, The Interreg Med Plastic Busters MPAs & MIO-ECSDE & UNISI, 2022. (<https://shorturl.at/gpxC7>)
- ▶ Step-by-step guide for operationalizing marine litter prevention and mitigation measures. Interreg Med Plastic Busters MPAs & MIO-ECSDE. (<https://shorturl.at/nOY69>)
- ▶ Policy Paper on the Mediterranean’s Wind Energy Transition, MIO-ECSDE, July 2022. (<https://shorturl.at/hw015>).
- ▶ Climate Change Education (CCE) in the EMME region Report (<https://shorturl.at/zDMOV>)
- ▶ The STEAM Box in many languages (EN, GR, DU, IT, RO) (<https://shorturl.at/brC27>)
- ▶ The Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development Action Plan towards 2030 (in English and French)
- ▶ Calling for “Healthy Planet” being a cross-cutting value (<http://bitly.ws/wS18>)
- ▶ Sustainable Mediterranean Journal Issue No 79, Ocean Literacy for All Mediterranean People: The Ocean We Need for the Future We Want. <https://bit.ly/3w1DQIR>
- ▶ An educational material & Video tutorial (in Greek) entitled “Waste Ashore – Malevisi”. It can be used by local educators to sensitise their students. Read more (in Greek)
- ▶ An educational material & Video tutorial (in Greek) entitled “Waste in the net – Mesara”. It can be used by local educators to sensitise their students. Read more (in Greek)
- ▶ Three Works of Art plastic collecting mermaids installed in three schools of Malevisi



# Our Members

133 from 28 countries

**ALBANIA (4):** ALBAFOREST Center • Environmental Center for Administration and Technology • Environmental Centre for Development, Education and Networking • Protection and Preservation of the Natural Environment in Albania • **ALGERIA (3):** Association Ecologique de Boumerdes • Association Memoire de SETIF • Association de Volontariat TOUIZA de la wilaya d'Alger • **BELGIUM (1):** European Environmental Bureau • **CROATIA (3):** Eko Kvarner • Euromediterranean Forum • The Croatian MAB Committee • **CYPRUS (3):** Federation of Environmental & Ecological Organisations of Cyprus • Friends of Akamas • Terra Cypria • **EGYPT (6):** The Arab Office for Youth and Environment • Arab Media Forum for Environment and Development • Arab Network for Environment and development • Balady Association, Port Said Branch • Nature Friends Association • Arab Society for Fungal Conservation • **FRANCE (8):** Association MerTerre • Association U. MARINU • Centre International de Droit Compare de l'Environnement • Ecomed 21 • France Nature Environnement • Languedoc Roussillon Nature Environnement • Société de Protection de la Nature de AGDE • Union Régionale pour la Sauvegarde de la Vie, de la Nature et de l' Environnement • **FYROM (1):** BIOSFERA-Centre for Education, Environment and Nature Protection • **GREECE (15):** Athens Environmental Foundation • Athens Network of Collaborating Experts • ECOCITY • ELLINIKI ETAIRIA (Society for the Environment and Cultural Heritage) • Hellenic Association of Educators for Environmental Education • Hellenic Institute of Environment, Water Reuse and Preservation • Hellenic Ornithological Society • Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature • Interdisciplinary Institute for Environmental Research • Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles – GREECE • Mediterranean SOS Network • Mediterranean Scientific Association of Environmental Protection • Nature Watch Crete • SOLON for synthesis and ecological civilization on 21st century • World Wide Fund for Nature – Hellas • **ISRAEL (5):** EcoOcean • EcoPeace Middle East • Israel Society for Ecology and Environmental Quality Sciences • Sustainable Development for the Negev • The Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel • **ITALY (9):** ARMADILLA • Centro Regionale d' Intervento per la Cooperazione • Coordinamento delle Organizzazioni non governative per la Cooperazione Internazionale allo Sviluppo • Forum per la Laguna • Italia Nostra • House of Social Rights FOCUS / Casa dei Diritti Sociali FOCUS • Istituto per l' Ambiente e l' Educazione Scholé Futuro • LEGAMBIENTE • MAREVIVO Associazione Ambientalista • **JORDAN (6):** Aqaba International Laboratories • Jordan Environment Society • Land and Human to Advocate Progress • The Jordanian Society for Desertification Control and Badia Development • Jordanian Society for Organic Farming • Jordanian Society of Friends of Heritage • **LEBANON (11):** AMWAJ of the Environment • Association Libanaise pour la Maîtrise de l' Energie et de l' Environnement • Association Liban Nature Environnement • Human Environmental Association for Development • Lebanese Environmental Forum • Makhzoumi Foundation • Organisation Big Blue Association • The Union of Northern Associations for Sustainable Development • Window to Environment Association • Development for People and Nature Association • BALDATI • **LIBYA (1):** International Energy Foundation • **MALTA (2):** Birdlife Malta • Nature Trust Malta • **MAURITANIA (2):** Association pour le Développement Durable • Club des amis de la nature et la protection de l'environnement • **MONTENEGRO (1):** NGO Greens of Montenegro • **MOROCCO (8):** Alliance Maghreb Machrek pour l'Eau • Association Femmes et Jeunesse dans l' Environnement Maghrebin (AFJEM) • Association Marocaine pour la Protection de l' Environnement et du Climat • Club Marocain pour l' Environnement et le Développement • Fondation Mohammed VI pour la Protection de l' Environnement • Maison de l' Environnement-Association Atlas Saïa • Observatoire National de la Secheresse • Société Protectrice des Animaux et de la Nature (SPANA) • **PAKISTAN (1):** Swat Youth Front (SYF) • **PALESTINE(2):** Palestine Wildlife Society • Palestinian Hydrology Group for Water and Environmental Resources Development • **PORTUGAL (3):** ETNIA-Cultura E Desenvolvimento • Liga para a Proteccao da Natureza • Amigos da terra • **SLOVENIA (1):** DPPVN - Society of Bird Research and Nature Conservation • **SPAIN (8):** Amigos del Mediterraneo • Asociacion Malaguena para la Protection de la Vida Silvestre • Centro Mediterraneo de Estudios para el Uso y Conservacion de las Costas-Centro Mediterraneo • Eco-union • Mare Terra Fundació Mediterrània • Fundacion Iberoamerica-Europa (Centro de Investigacion, Promocion y Cooperacion Internacional-CIPIE) • Itaca Asociacion defensa Naturaleza y Medio Ambiente • Asociacion hippocampus • **SWITZERLAND (1):** Global Footprint Network • **SYRIA (1):** Syrian Coast Society for Environmental Protection • **THE NETHERLANDS (1):** Stichting Connecting Natural Values & People Foundation (CNVP) • **TUNISIA (21):** Alliance )Femme et Environnement • Association des Amis du Belvedere • Association 'Les Amis des Oiseaux' • Association de Developpement et de Protection de l' Environnement- La Marsa • Association de l' Environnement de Kelibia • Association des Habitants d'El Mourouj II • Association de Sauvegarde de la Medina et du Patrimoine de Kelibia • Association for Sustainable Development • Association Nationale Tunisienne de la Protection de la Faune Sauvage • Association pour la Protection de l' Environnement et le Développement Durable de Bizerte • APENA • Association pour la Protection de l' Environnement et la Nature du Gouvernorat de Bizerte • Association for the Protection of Nature and Environment - Kairouan • Association pour la Sauvegarde de la Médina de Gafsa • Association Tunisienne pour la Protection de la Nature et de l' Environnement • Femmes pour le Développement Durable / Women for Sustainable Development • ATMT ENVIRONNEMENT • Centre de Recherches, d' Etudes, de Documentation et d' Information sur la Femme • Conservation de la Nature - Developpement • Youth and Science Club of Hammam-Lif • Agence de la Démocratie Locale de Kairouran, Tunisie • **TURKEY (5):** Green Steps for Environmental Literacy • Legacy • Turkish Association for the Conservation of Nature • The Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats • Turkish Marine Environment Protection Association.