



Report of Activities

2024

January-December

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



**Mediterranean Information Office for Environment,
Culture and Sustainable Development**



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1. Institutional Developments of MIO-ECSDE

1.1. Executive Bureau

The MIO-ECSDE Executive Bureau (EB) was structured as follows during 2024 following the 28th AGM in December 2023:

Chair: Prof. Michael Scoullas (Elliniki Etairia)

Co-Chair: Prof. Mohammed Ftouhi (Morocco)

Members:

- Ms Anaïs Berthier (EEB where she represents ClientEarth, Brussels office)
- Ms Ghada Ahmadein (RAED) (with Dr. Emad Adly as alternate)
- Mr. Giannis Michail (Elliniki Etairia)
- Mr. Vjeran Pirsic (Croatia)
- Ms Antonia Theodosiou (Cyprus)
- Mr. Jean-Valère Geronimi (France) (with Ms Céline Labbé as alternate)
- Prof. Michael Scoullas and Mr. Giorgos Sampson (Greece)
- Ms Romina Bicocchi and Ms Patrizia Bonelli (Italy)
- Mr. Ziyad Alawneh (Jordan)
- Ms Marie Therese Seif (Lebanon)
- Mr. Vincent Attard (Malta) / Treasurer
- Prof. Mohamed Ftouhi (Morocco)
- Mr. Imad Attrash (Palestine)
- Mr. Mario Alves (Portugal)
- Mr. Milan Vogrin (Slovenia)
- Mr. Jeremie Fosse and Mr. Angel Juarez (Spain)
- Ms Suheir Raies (Syria)
- Mr. Habib Ben Boubaker (Tunisia)
- Mr. Mehmet Botan Kayhan (Turkey) (till mid-year)

Members of the Executive Bureau represented the Federation in various meetings, e.g. the Co-Chairman Prof. Ftouhi, represented MIO-ECSDE at the International Industrial Forum, organised by l'École Nationale Supérieure d'Arts et Métiers de Rabat, in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services the Rabat-Salé-Kenitra region (1-2 October 2024).

1.2. Membership issues

Four applications have been received by the Secretariat during 2024 from:

1. The Bethlehem Development Foundation (BDF), an environmental NGO operating in Palestine, applying for full membership;
2. Vamos Todos, an environmental NGO operating in Lebanon, applying for full membership;
3. IndyACT, an environmental, social and educational NGO operating in Lebanon, applying for corresponding membership;
4. Cedars for Care, that addresses socio-economic and environmental challenges and operates in Lebanon, applying for full membership.

All were unanimously approved by the 29th Annual General Meeting (9 December 2024). The Membership of MIO-ECSDE at the end of 2024 is 136 NGO members from 28 countries.

1.3. MIO-ECSDE Secretariat

During 2024 the status of the Secretariat's staff remained mostly unchanged. In late 2023, an open call was launched for a new Head of Finance and Administration and in early 2024, a new recruit, Ms Eirini Sakellaraki, was hired on a part-time transition basis, in view of a permanent position starting in September 2024. She joined full time, as planned, from the beginning of September. There was an overlapping period with the current Head of Finance and Administration, Ms Bessie Mantzara, which provided for a smooth hand-over phase. Ms Bessie Mantzara, after thirty three years of seamless dedicated work, will continue to support the Federation in her new role as Senior Advisor to the Chair.

1.4. Quality management, financial auditing, accountability standards

1. MIO-ECSDE maintains all the ISO procedures updated and prepares for 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 2024 review (second of a three-year cycle), covered all relevant institutional and operational issues, and was done by *Swiss Approval Certification Services*. To support MIO-ECSDE staff, an external consultant was contracted again in 2024, to conduct internal audits, review the current procedures and suggest updates and adjustments, etc.
2. The 2023 Financial Report was audited before the summer of 2024 by *Compass Certified Auditors and Business Consultants*. The results were positive and the full report is on the MIO-ECSDE website.
3. 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.
4. As **full member of "Accountable Now"**, a webinar for MIO-ECSDE member organizations was co-organized with Accountable Now on the 27th of March 2024 offering an insightful overview of the Global Standard 12 Commitments, with a special focus on six commitments specifically chosen by the MIO-ECSDE Secretariat as most relevant to its member NGOs: Women's Rights and Gender Equality, Healthy Planet, Open Organizations, Empowered, Effective Staff & Volunteers, Well-handled Resources, Responsive Decision-Making. The webinar was an opportunity for learning, discussion, and practical application of accountability principles tailored to the needs of MIO-ECSDE member organizations. In addition, a handbook was created as supporting material and was disseminated to the MIO-ECSDE network. It provides an overview of the 12 Accountability Commitments and unpacks the six commitments addressed in the webinar with rationale (the low-down) and practical actions. All MIO-ECSDE accountability reports and feedback from the Independent Review Panel, along with MIO-ECSDE's Code of Conduct, all of its Policies, Annual Reports of Activities and Financial Statements, are uploaded on the "[Our Accountability](#)" section of the webpage.
5. MIO-ECSDE continues hosting GWP-Med based on an agreement with GWP (Stockholm). All involved parties agree to continue this important for the region institutional relationship.

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

One issue of the MIO-ECSDE e-news covering the period January - July 2024 (in English and French) was prepared and sent out to Member Organizations and the wider MIO-ECSDE database (see Issue #120, <http://mio-ecsde.org/news/mio-ecsde-e-news/>) in September 2024. A second issue covering the rest of the year was sent in the beginning of 2025 (see Issue #121).

(ii) The 'Sustainable Mediterranean' journal

During 2024, no *Sustainable Mediterranean* Issue was published.

(ii) The MIO-ECSDE webpage and social media

The **MIO-ECSDE website** (<http://www.mio-ecsde.org>) was regularly updated and populated for all major events, milestones and resources. In addition, MIO-ECSDE Facebook, LinkedIn, X (former Twitter) and YouTube media were updated.

(iii) The MEDIES' webpage and e-bulletin

The MEDIES website 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 fed (on average 1 post per week), while a new Instagram account was launched in 2024.

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

2.1.2. Showcasing actions of the Membership

The Secretariat informs its members of various regional developments, events (webinars and on-line meetings) and opportunities. The dedicated section of the MIO-ECSDE website with the news of the Membership was updated with information they have shared. 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)**

COMPSUD maintains close relations with the UfM Parliamentary Assembly's Committee on Energy, Environment, and Water, as well as with the 2nd Standing Committee on Economic, Social and Environmental Cooperation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM). Efforts are underway to re-invigorate COMPSUD particularly with a new European Parliament in place.

Under the WES project, COMPSUD made significant progress in advancing its agenda of promoting the Aarhus Convention in all of the Mediterranean (see section 3.1.2.2)

▶ **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 Hybrid University, etc. Since the Chairman has coordinated the drafting of the "Sustainability Charter of the Greek Universities", its approval by the Synod of Rectors of the Greek Universities and currently its promotion, an effort is in the pipeline to mobilize through this network similar charters/guidelines in other interested countries. Access the Charter in the Greek and English languages: <https://medies.net/the-charter-of-greek-universities-for-sd/>

▶ **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 loosely 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 2024.

3. MIO-ECSDE 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). The UNEP/MAP Coordinator and other UNEP/MAP representatives have contributed with opening remarks or key presentations to many meetings (co-)organised by MIO-ECSDE.

MIO-ECSDE is participating in the on-going update of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) and thus contributing to the working sessions of the Extended Steering Committee of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development, and is also a member of the Working Group on Circular Economy for the Review of the MSSD. Furthermore, the Secretariat updated existing, or created new, factsheets for the MSSD Flagship Initiatives it is promoting, i.e. on Encouraging the adoption and implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the whole of the Mediterranean (on-going), on the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (on-going), and on Regional assessments and knowledge exchanges on waste reduction (completed). MIO-ECSDE is supporting some of the new proposed Flagship Initiatives that are to be approved at the COP24 of the Barcelona Convention that is to take place in Egypt in December 2025.

MIO-ECSDE staff has also continued its very close collaboration with UNEP/MAP on matters relating to marine litter monitoring and mitigation in line with the updated Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management. It is also very closely monitoring the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) that was established in 2022 to develop the Global Plastics Treaty and advocating for a truly effective Treaty.

3.1.2. Securing the Mediterranean dimension in international policies and processes

3.1.2.1. EU Policy

- ▶ Contribution to the formulation of the Pact for the Mediterranean
- ▶ Contribution to the formulation of the European Oceans Pact
- ▶ Inputs to the preparation of the Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness

- ▶ Monitoring the "Clean Industrial Deal" in relation to the EU Green Deal (especially linked to Biodiversity Strategy 2030, Fit-for-55 Package and the REPowerEU Plan)
- ▶ The EU Zero Pollution Action Plan (MIO-ECSDE is co-authoring a holistic, stakeholder led zero pollution framework, ultimately reflecting the EU's very ambitious policy and legislative framework governing the environmental protection of European seas with focus on the zero environmental pollution agenda)
- ▶ The EU Marine Framework Strategy Directive (MSFD) and Ocean Literacy
- ▶ Monitoring developments under the EU Plastics Strategy and the Circular Economy Action Plan (and all of the specific policies)
- ▶ Other policy areas followed are: the EU's International Ocean Governance Agenda; the EU Nature Restoration Law; the EU Neighbourhood Policy and the EU Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI); the renewed EU Agenda for the Mediterranean combined with the 2030GreenerMed Agenda of the UfM (the EU is Co-President); Education for Environment and Sustainability; Access to environmental information, participation, justice (Aarhus Convention); the EU Strategy for the Adriatic & Ionian Region.

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 2024, 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, in close collaboration with the Secretariat of the UNECE Aarhus Convention, supported various Mediterranean States in 2024 through a mentoring process to help them join the Aarhus Convention in a smooth and effective manner. This was part of the EU-funded WES project and a dedicated Peer-to-Peer exchange. The mentoring process, which followed the regional training held by WES in November 2023 in Athens and extended throughout the first half of 2024, showed that Partner Countries now have a much better understanding of the Aarhus Convention's importance and requirements. One country is now ready to join the Aarhus Convention, another is almost ready, and others are getting closer to the target set by the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development for five new countries to join the Convention soon. The "[Mediterranean Accession Agenda](#)" is being promoted throughout the region as well.

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: Following its adoption in the special High-Level Event within the 9th Environment for Europe (9EfE) Ministerial Conference in Cyprus (October 2022), the Secretariat and the Chairman continue to promote it and keep informed the educational community of the Euro-Mediterranean region on various related occasions (conferences and events) and through its communication channels (newsletters, posts, website, etc.).

Within 2024, the EU MED9 process provided another opportunity to put forward the MSESD and its Action Plan, this time to the 9 European Mediterranean Ministers of Education, during the MED9 High-Level Forum on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Green Transition in the

Mediterranean Region, that was organized and hosted by the Government of Cyprus, on the 27th of June. Read more in section 3.2.

UNECE Steering Committee 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) while the Chairman had a leading role in the Ad Hoc group on Strategic Planning 2030 of the UNECE Steering Committee on ESD (adopted at the EfE9 Conference).

Prof. Michael Scoullas actively participated on 29-31 May 2024 in the 19th 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 (MSESD).

UNESCO's ESD-Net 2030: MIO-ECSDE, through MEDIES, is part of the UNESCO Global Network "ESD-Net 2030", that is the follow-up initiative of the Global Action Programme on ESD (GAP) (since 2022). The network acts as a diverse and inclusive platform comprised of competent Strategic Partners - from 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. Currently, it organises a series of webinars on ESD pedagogies in consultation with its members.

UNESCO's Greening Education Partnership (GEP): Since its launching in 2022, MEDIES is pleased to have joined this global initiative of UNESCO with a common goal of "getting every learner climate-ready". Together with the 'ESD-Net 2030,' GEP provides a platform to exchange experiences and showcase good practices, structured around 4 key pillars of transformative education: Greening schools; Greening curricula; Greening teacher training and education systems' capacities; and, Greening communities. MEDIES participated in the 1st working group meeting (online) on 26 March, during which updates of the GEP initiative were discussed and the long-expected Greening Curriculum Guidance for schools was launched, as well as in the online GEP working group meetings that took place within the UNFCCC CoP29 on 15 November.

MEDIES was invited to participate in the National Conference on "Education for Sustainability & Global Citizenship" (Piraeus, 2-3 November 2024) during which the new national (Greek) framework for ESD/Global Citizenship education was launched. During a dedicated panel discussion, MEDIES discussed its work and experience in advancing ESD policy and pedagogy at the national and the Euro-Mediterranean level, by facilitating the secretariat of the Mediterranean Committee on ESD, developing educational programmes, etc.

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.

Through the WES and Med4Waste projects as well as the Innovative Sustainable Economy Mission of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme, MIO-ECSDE directly supports the UfM Secretariat in the implementation of the 2030GreenerMed Agenda and its monitoring process.

MIO-ECSDE has engaged in multiple exchanges with the UfM within the framework of the UfM labelled Plastic Busters Initiative and the recently elaborated and submitted Interreg Euro MED project proposal focusing on multiple stressors' effects on marine ecosystems as a follow-up to the Plastic Busters CAP and Plastic Busters MPAs child projects.

On the 16th of December 2024, MIO-ECSDE participated in the second edition of the UfM MedTalks, where it promoted participation opportunities for Mediterranean stakeholders through the Mentoring and Twinning Programme of the Innovative Sustainable Economy Mission. The event featured impactful testimonials, including one by Ms Ghada Ahmadein, MIO-ECSDE Executive Bureau Member, and Program Manager of RAED. The overall aim is to directly engage stakeholders from all Mediterranean shores through capacity-building programs, mentoring schemes, and trainings.

MIO-ECSDE actively participated in the 2nd UfM Stakeholder Conference on Sustainable Blue Economy held in Athens on the 20th and 21st of February 2024. The Chairman of MIO-ECSDE, Prof. Scoullou and the Senior Programme/Policy Officer of MIO-ECSDE Ms Vlachogianni actively participated in the multi-stakeholder workshop 5 entitled 'Tackling marine litter for a sustainable blue economy' held on the 20th of February 2024. They served as the workshop's moderator and rapporteur, respectively.

MIO-ECSDE actively participated in the Mediterranean Green Week held from the 14th to the 16th of May 2024 in Istanbul. Co-organised by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), this landmark event brought together 150 participants to address the region's most pressing sustainability challenges: the ongoing triple climate, biodiversity and pollution crisis.

MIO-ECSDE's participation in the Mediterranean Green Week was multifaceted over the course of the 3-day event:

- Michael Scoullou, as Team Leader of the EU-funded Water and Environment Support (WES) project, presented two policy papers, one on the UfM and Education for Sustainable Development and another on the Mediterranean Accession Agenda to the Aarhus Convention. On the 2nd and 3rd day he gave an overview of the progress on developing the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus Strategy and Framework within the Source-to-Sea (S2S) Mediterranean continuum. This significant initiative addresses a crucial issue for the region and offers Mediterranean countries an opportunity to transition to a green, circular, and socially inclusive economy making sure that none of the nexus components bears the brunt of the transition.
- As a WES Non-Key Expert, Ms Anastasia Roniotes, Head Officer at MIO-ECSDE, moderated a session dedicated to plastic waste and marine litter on Day 2 of the Med Green Week. During the same session, Dr. Thomais Vlachogianni, Senior Policy & Programme Officer, made a presentation highlighting recent MIO-ECSDE actions on the science-policy-society interface. She also referred to some of the key messages conveyed by the long-standing UfM labelled Plastic Busters Initiative, that has been steadily addressing marine plastic pollution in the Mediterranean since 2013.
- MIO-ECSDE also contributed to a dedicated civil society engagement session, with particular focus on gender and youth aspects within the role of civil society in achieving a meaningful and equitable transition in the Mediterranean. Both Ms Anastasia Roniotes, Head Officer of MIO-ECSDE, and Emad Adly, General Coordinator of RAED, emphasized key components of this process, including accountability and transparency, promoting environmental governance and Education for Sustainable Development as prerequisites for a just and inclusive transition, and the significance of designing tailored gender and youth strategies and action plans, both at institutional and project levels. The WES project's Gender and Youth approach was showcased as one of the few projects in the region monitoring and reporting youth and gender-disaggregated data. All of these elements are vital for driving progress in the region.
- Sharing knowledge and best practices is crucial for tackling the complexities and challenges of organic waste management in the Mediterranean region. Reflecting this collaborative approach during the 8th UfM Working Group on Environment session, Haris Paliogiannis,

Policy Officer of MIO-ECSDE, presented MIO-ECSDE's involvement in Med4Waste, a capitalization project that supported many Mediterranean municipalities in this quest. With the presentation of such reports and also another UfM report on Green Circular Economy at the Mediterranean Level Including Green Skills and Jobs, the 1st UfM Green Week served to inform decision-making processes with science-based evidence.

Under the WES activity "General support to the UfM Water and Environment Work," a publication titled "The Union for the Mediterranean & Education for Sustainable Development" was drafted and published in English, French, and Arabic. This publication encapsulates the significant work achieved by the UfM in advancing the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (MSESD) at the highest levels. Under this same activity, video guidelines on monitoring macrolitter on the seafloor were also developed and are available in English with two more versions with French and Arabic subtitles. In addition, input was provided for updating the UfM policy brief on marine litter. A document summarizing the cumulative results of the UfM-labelled Plastic Busters Initiative was prepared, along with a memo to the UfM outlining future plans for addressing marine litter.

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, apart from the WEFE Nexus advocacy work, MIO-ECSDE promoted during 2024 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 ("ZERO DROP MORNOS and RESILIENT THESSALY Programmes);
- ▶ 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 MIO-ECSDE and the 9th Our Ocean Conference

Since its inception in 2014, the Our Ocean Conference (OOC) has served as a beacon of hope for ocean conservation, rallying governments, international organizations, academia, the private sector, and NGOs to make tangible commitments towards safeguarding our oceans. With over 2160 commitments totalling nearly US\$ 130 billion, the conference has played a pivotal role in galvanizing global action to address ocean threats. Notably, the recent 9th Our Ocean Conference, hosted in Athens underscored the importance of collective efforts in shaping a sustainable future for our marine ecosystems.

The 9th Our Ocean Conference in Greece witnessed unprecedented participation, with over 3,500 attendees from 130 countries and international organizations. This edition marked a significant milestone with more than 470 new commitments amounting to over \$11 billion, demonstrating a renewed commitment to addressing pressing ocean issues. Greece's leadership in environmental stewardship was evident through its ambitious 21 commitments announced during the conference.

From the creation of marine protected areas to the reduction of marine pollution and decarbonization efforts, Greece pledged comprehensive measures totalling more than \$800 million.

Among the key Mediterranean players at this monumental gathering, which we are very proud to say were many, was MIO-ECSDE. Its active participation and influential voice resonated across various pivotal discussions.

At the forefront of tackling one of the most pressing challenges, MIO-ECSDE moderated the Plenary Session focusing on Confronting Plastic Pollution. This session delved into strategies and solutions to mitigate the pervasive threat of plastic pollution haunting our oceans. Furthermore, Prof. Scoullou, Chairperson of MIO-ECSDE steered the Plenary Session dedicated to exploring the challenges and viable solutions concerning the Mediterranean Sea, one of the 4 key focus areas of this year's OOC edition. The discussions brought forth insights crucial for addressing the unique environmental concerns of this vital marine ecosystem as well as the key elements for the green transition of the Mediterranean.

In addition to shaping discussions at the plenary level, MIO-ECSDE organized and participated in two Round Table side events. The first event, themed "Ocean Literacy – Blue Skills – Youth Engagement and Empowerment," underscored the importance of educating and empowering the younger generation in ocean conservation efforts. The second roundtable, titled "Navigating Change: Progress and Prospects in Fighting Marine Plastic Pollution," shed light on the ongoing initiatives and future strategies in combatting marine plastic pollution.

MIO-ECSDE's engagement extended beyond its own events, with active participation in several of the 70+ side events and over 180 bilateral meetings where its member organizations also showcased their advancements and initiatives.

3.2.2 Phase B of the 2023-2024 Hybrid University

Phase B (online) of the 2023-2024 Hybrid University, took place from 15 January to 12 February 2024 combining asynchronous (self-paced) and synchronous learning (meet-the-expert sessions) focusing on "Water Management". Like every year, the online part of the Hybrid course capitalized on a combination of the outcomes of Phase A (Asterousia, September 2023) the content of previous e-courses, and a wealth of online resources. The e-course offered to its 58 active learners from 25 countries the opportunity to exchange knowledge, and approaches and challenged in water management, especially in Biosphere Reserves of the Mediterranean and beyond. Read more on Phase B [here](#).

3.2.3 Webinar on cultural connections to biodiversity in European communities to support the EU Green Deal's ambitious goals

Led by MIO-ECSDE as a partner of the SHARED GREEN DEAL project, the first session of the event series 'Local actions for a SHARED GREEN DEAL', gathered more than 80 participants on March 14th, to delve into the intricate relationship between biodiversity and the cultural fabric of European communities. The webinar showcased inspirational initiatives, both rural and urban, from Greece, Ireland, Slovenia, and Sweden, highlighting the vital role of local engagement in biodiversity preservation.

During the webinar, the Biodiversity team of the project, including Haris Paliogiannis, Policy Officer of MIO-ECSDE, presented examples of how communities are actively engaging with their members in regards to preserving biodiversity and discussed how this experience anticipates supporting policy makers to reconcile the disconnect that, seemingly, most Europeans experience from their local biodiversity. Representatives from NGOs, public authorities and research centers who implemented

such initiatives shared their insights on how cultural values can help mobilize the transformative change needed for the ambitious EU Green Deal's biodiversity goals and targets to be met. One of the key highlights of the webinar was the introduction of the Shared Green Deal network, which seeks to foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing among stakeholders committed to environmental sustainability. More information [here](#).

3.2.4 MIO-ECSDE and the EU MED9 Forum on ESD

MEdIES Secretariat technically facilitated the organisation of the “MED9 High-Level Forum on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Green Transition in the Mediterranean Region” in Limassol, Cyprus on the 27th of June 2024. The MED9 Forum chaired by the Minister of Education of Cyprus, H.E. Ms Athena Michailidou, brought together more than 30 delegates, including Ministers of Education and high-level representatives from the nine EU Mediterranean countries, together with representatives of UNESCO (Mr. Christofer Carlson), the UfM (Mr. Almotaz Abadi), UNEP/MAP (Ms Tatjana Hema), and civil society. The Forum, was organised by the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth of Cyprus, and took place in parallel with the [UNECE Forum, on ESD and Youth](#) in order to review the progress on the status of integration of ESD in the countries, and exchange best practices and ways the Mediterranean Strategy for ESD can contribute to addressing related challenges. Its outcome, the ‘Recommendations and Conclusions Paper’, highlights the will of the MED9 countries to work more closely in the making the green transition happen also through ESD, at the European, Mediterranean and at the UNECE levels. It was submitted and discussed at the MED9 Head of States Summit that took place in Cyprus later in 2024. Furthermore, it will serve as a complementary supportive document to the initiatives launched by the DG for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (EU Commission, 2022), which have placed ESD at the core of its education policies.

3.2.5 Achieving Single Use Plastics (SUPs)-free coastal and marine protected areas

Within the EU funded “Water and Environment Support (WES) in the ENI Neighbourhood South Region” project, a Regional Mediterranean Training was organised from 9-12 July 2024 in Thessaloniki, Greece. It aimed to capacitate the WES Partner Countries in achieving Single Use Plastics (SUPs)-free coastal and marine protected areas; enhancing responsible tourism and recreation activities in coastal areas and strengthening the science-policy-practice interface through community-based research. Representatives from government agencies, ministries, and NGOs, dealing with plastic waste and SUPs management in their respective countries attended the training.

Sustainable practices in coastal tourism and recreational activities are essential for the shift from a linear to a circular economy and to advance towards a SUPs-free Mediterranean region as a common vision for our future. Today, the industry's extensive use of SUPs, coupled with its proximity to coastal areas, contributes to the vast amounts of plastic waste that ends up in the sea and on beaches. To encourage sustainable practices, such as the use of products with reduced packaging and adoption of reusable products or products with eco-friendly characteristics in tourism, particularly within or in proximity of coastal protected areas, it is essential to foster collaboration with tourism operators, businesses, recreational activity providers, as well as with local authorities. By working together, a collective effort can be made to promote and advocate for sustainable practices that effectively reduce the use of SUPs, and thus minimize the generation of waste that could end up as marine litter.

During the WES regional training, these challenging issues mentioned above, along with fit-for-purpose data related to the measures needed to address SUPs, were presented and discussed. By participating in the Regional Training, the participants were able to strengthen their capacities to effectively manage

SUPs in and around coastal and marine protected areas; gained knowledge on the tourism and recreation sector in terms of SUPs management and learned about the ways to enhance sustainable tourism and recreation related businesses in coastal areas, as well as various practices that minimise or eliminate the use of SUPs. In addition to synergies with other initiatives and projects in the region (mainly funded by the EU and/or labelled by the UfM), case studies from the EU and the Mediterranean with lessons learned were presented and discussed.

Participatory science interventions were also thoroughly presented and discussed as an effective way to close data gaps concerning marine litter, plastic pollution, and Single-Use Plastics (SUPs). Well-organized and guided participatory science can be particularly cost-effective for gathering necessary evidence and identifying emerging issues, thereby supporting public authorities, managers, and the coastal tourism industry in improving efficiency with less administrative burden.

An on-line regional webinar on “Tackling Plastic Pollution in the Mediterranean: Global and Regional Progress - Local Actions and Practical Solutions, the WES experience” took place on the 31st of October 2024, with welcome remarks by the UfM and UNEP/MAP. The webinar addressed a wide range of stakeholders and aimed in a simple manner to provide a short update on where the global and regional efforts on tackling plastic pollution stand and share some of the WES experiences, successes and resources with the wider Mediterranean community working on how to address the challenge of single-use plastics and effective plastic waste management ([read more](#)).

3.2.6 Asterousia Hybrid University 2024-2025 -Phase A

Building on the series of Summer Universities organised since 2014, this year’s Hybrid University of Asterousia about “Integrated Management in Biosphere Reserves of the Mediterranean and beyond” focused on SDG 15 “Life on Land” and SDG 6 on “Water” (terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems). It is structured in two phases:

- PHASE A (on-site) took place from 21 to 25 October 2024 in and around the Asterousia Biosphere Reserve (BR) in Crete. Following an international Call and selection process, a total of 30 individuals from 11 countries took part. The participants followed targeted presentations and interactive workshops on case studies about integrated management strategies, monitoring practices and tools, community engagement, as well as in a bilingual event focused on droughts which brought them together with the BR’s local community. The key presentations and certain parts of PHASE A were video-recorded and will be used in the upcoming PHASE B. Read more on PHASE A

- PHASE B (online) will be a three-week-long course to take place in January – February 2025 aiming at providing learning opportunities to a wider international audience (up to 100 participants expected), in the form of asynchronous and synchronous sessions.

The 2024-2025 edition of the Asterousia University is held with the kind contribution and co-organisation of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (Venice Office), the Region of Crete, the Heraklion Development Agency, and the Local Committee of the Asterousia BR.

3.2.7 SOS-ZEROPOL 2030 Living Lab on “Tyre Wear Particles: A Source-to-Sea Approach for Prevention and Mitigation Scenarios”

The SOS-ZEROPOL 2030 Living Lab on tyre wear particles took place in Athens, Greece on 19-20 November 2024, and explored the challenges and solutions for preventing and mitigating car tyre particle emissions throughout the product chain, with a focus on the eco-design of car tyres and the

removal of tyre wear particles at wastewater treatment plants. The Living Lab targeted Mediterranean policy and decision-makers, industry representatives, researchers and academics, civil society members, and service providers. This is the first of two Living Labs, with the second one set to further build on the insights gained. The conclusions drawn from both Living Labs will contribute to the recommendations provided to the European Commission on reducing pollution in European seas. The Living Lab was organized by MIO-ECSDE in close cooperation with the Wageningen University, within the framework of the SOS-ZEROPOL 2030 project. Read more in section 5.

3.2.8 29th Annual General Meeting of MIO-ECSDE

The year 2024 brought a whirlwind of challenges to the Mediterranean region, in the form of conflicts, natural disasters and not so promising regional and global political developments that are unlikely to work in favour of environmental integrity, the much sought-after sustainable development of the Mediterranean eco-region, nor of a robust civil society. In spite of this backdrop, the year ended on an encouraging note for the Federation, with the 29th Annual General Meeting (AGM) on December 9th marking the successful conclusion of a year of hard work and perseverance. Thanks to strategic vision and fundraising, good day-to-day management, the dedication of our members, and the steadfast commitment of the Executive Bureau members, MIO-ECSDE not only implemented its planned work programme in full, but even went above and beyond. Staff members briefly presented the highlights of the year, in some of which member NGOs had also contributed. Annual reports and financial statements were unanimously approved and elections for the Executive Bureau were smoothly conducted.

The AGM commended the achievements of 2024 and also approved the provisional planning for 2025. The membership had the opportunity, during a dedicated session, to share their own highlights, main concerns and also key announcements for the coming year. Furthermore, the MIO-ECSDE Federation welcomed [four new member NGOs](#): the Bethlehem Development Foundation from Palestine, Vamos Todos, Cedars for Care and IndyACT from Lebanon.

All in all, 2024 was a year that was difficult for several MIO-ECSDE member organisations but even in countries where there are ongoing conflicts, member NGOs stepped up as beacons of hope, assisting displaced communities and showing incredible resilience in continuing their environmental work, against all odds, reminding us of our collective and unwavering commitment to a peaceful, just and sustainable future.

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 be part of and monitor 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.
- ▶ Continued to promote, in cooperation with GWP-Med various older and newer educational 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), the various editions of the “Gift of Rain” (all resources are available [here](#)).

- ▶ In 2023 many targeted education and awareness activities had been organised in Cyprus and Greece within the “zero drop” campaign of GWP-Med, including the production of an appealing new [educational \(floor game\)](#), available in Greek and English. In 2024, the game has been approved by the Institute of Educational Policy (IEP of the Ministry of Education and Culture) and the Regional Educational Authorities of Crete and has been distributed in most of the schools of Heraklion (Crete) and many schools of Schimatari. MEDIES is looking into the possibility of translating and producing the game into other languages (French and Arabic) and delivering trainings on how to apply it. The water education activities carried out in collaboration with GWP-Med will continue in 2024-2025 in High-Schools of Schimatari, Trikala city and other parts of Greece.

- ▶ The HYDRIA virtual museum is a founding member of the World Network of Water Museums (WAMU-NET) (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 fifth edition (2024) of the successful School Contest entitled: “The Water We Want - from heritage to future”. The annual contest invites 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 artworks (drawings, photos, soundscapes, videos). MEDIES disseminated widely the call and contest’s toolkit to its members and channels and assisted schools and NGOs to submit their works. In addition, MEDIES participated virtually in the 5th (hybrid) International Conference of WAMUNET “Cities of Water” (Porto, 8-11 October 2024). On 9 October, a day dedicated to “Water Sustainability Education”, MEDIES presented its accumulated experience and methodology applied in the development and pilot implementation of educational resources on water topics, while in the afternoon session MEDIES coordinated an online discussion about creating an online repository of educational resources of water museums by WAMUNET. Last but not least, within the Credit (Creative Digital Waters) Project HYDRIA obtained a brand-new section dedicated to Mediterranean traditional water jars! (see section 4).

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

In 2024 the following actions were undertaken:

- ▶ 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.

- ▶ Within the SHARED GREEN DEAL context, MIO-ECSDE was the practice lead for the implementation of 4 social experiments aiming to explore the different values that people place upon biodiversity, in EU rural and urban areas, from a transitions perspective. In spring 2024, the project’s four local partners (namely: Posoški razvojni center (Tolmin, Slovenia), Ballyhoura Development CLG (Kilfinane, Ireland), Environment and health department, City of Stockholm, (Stockholm, Sweden) and the Municipality of Amaroussion, Athens, Greece) finished the 1-year implementation of the experiments they carried out. Following a webinar to share results and experiences (more in Section 3.2), a 2-pager case-study guide, depicting the main outcomes as well as challenges when replicating such initiatives, was produced with contributions from MIO-ECSDE (see 6. Publications & resources). As the project proceeds to the analysis of the data produced by the experiments, MIO-ECSDE will be supporting the secondary analysis of the project results that

draws out the implications of the social experiments for ‘zero pollution’. Reflections will be provided on how different governance approaches may be needed for this Green Deal priority.

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 March 2024, MIO-ECSDE participated in the in-person meeting of the MSFD Technical Group on Marine Litter and made several interventions related to setting threshold values for seafloor macrolitter.
- ▶ In May 2024, MIO-ECSDE participated in the in-person meeting of the MSFD Technical Group on Marine Litter held in Valencia and made several interventions related to a series of tasks that it contributed to or has been co-leading, namely: 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; the thorough mapping of marine litter prevention and mitigation measures. In addition, MIO-ECSDE has been actively engaged in discussions concerning the identification of a methodological approach for setting a threshold value for seafloor macrolitter at pan-European level. Furthermore, MIO-ECSDE is co-leading the task related to the update of the Joint List of Macrolitter Categories and is also contributing to series of other tasks.
- ▶ Since September 2024, MIO-ECSDE has been participating in bimonthly e-meetings focusing on the update of the Joint List of Macrolitter Categories.

In 2024, 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:

- ▶ In February 2024, MIO-ECSDE, participated at the PERMAGOV Stakeholder Workshop organized in Brussels by the Wageningen University, the Research Institute for Sustainability – Helmholtz Centre Potsdam and Blue Plan. The workshop served as an interactive forum to discuss marine governance within the marine life, marine plastic, marine energy, and maritime transport regime complexes, as well as to enrich the Multi-layered Collaborative Marine Governance Model with stakeholder expertise.
- ▶ In March 2024, MIO-ECSDE, participated as a speaker in the EU-OSPAR joint workshop on implementing measures to reduce marine litter from fishing gear, focusing on end-of-life and waste fishing gear policy, and promoting circularity. The workshop was held in Brussels. Ms Vlachogianni who represented MIO-ECSDE, shared insights into work on marine plastic pollution and fishing gear management in the Mediterranean, highlighting the importance of stakeholder engagement in devising practical solutions to address the problem. Fishermen can play a role as agents of knowledge, and collaborative initiatives involving diverse stakeholders - including government agencies, NGOs and industry - are needed. Pan-European guidelines are vital to facilitate the implementation of EPR schemes and foster public-private partnerships aimed at promoting sustainable practices within the fishing industry
- ▶ In May 2024, MIO-ECSDE participated as a speaker at the MARLICE 2024 conference held in Valencia. A MIO-ECSDE Senior Programme/Policy Officer made a presentation at a session focused on monitoring of biota and ecosystems as indicators of marine litter entitled

‘Monitoring marine litter in Mediterranean coastal and marine protected areas: findings and lessons learned’.

- ▶ In June 2024, MIO-ECSDE participated remotely as a speaker in the BlueMissionMed workshop entitled ‘Mobilising stakeholders towards the implementation of transformative innovative solutions for the EU Mission Ocean and Waters within the Mediterranean basin’.
- ▶ In August 2024, MIO-ECSDE co-signed, endorsed and supported the production of the [“Blue Manifesto”](#) led by Seas At Risk, Oceana, Birdlife, WWF, Surfrider Europe and ClientEarth. This roadmap is a comprehensive action plan aimed at restoring the health of Europe’s oceans and seas by 2030. It outlines key targets, including reducing marine pollution, protecting marine biodiversity, and promoting sustainable fishing and renewable energy practices. The manifesto calls on governments, industries, and citizens to take urgent, coordinated action to achieve these goals and ensure the long-term resilience of marine ecosystems.
- ▶ In November 2024, MIO-ECSDE participated remotely as a speaker at the in-person 4th REMEDIES Cluster Meeting titled ‘(Micro)plastics: How to Prepare for Tomorrow?’. MIO-ECSDE gave a talk on the topic of EU’s ambitious target to reduce microplastic emissions by 30% by 2030, offering key insights and recommendations. The talk also shed light on the emerging issue of tyre wear particles, the second-largest source of microplastics in European Regional Seas.

3.3.4. Culture and Sustainability in the Mediterranean

Within this overall framework, during 2024 MIO-ECSDE did the following:

- ▶ Maintained and further promoted the HYDRIA virtual museum (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 HYDRIA is always on-going (see 4).
- ▶ The e-learning course about Mediterranean Food ([here](#)), largely based on the MIO-ECSDE educational package “Mediterranean Food: Historical, Environmental, Health & Cultural dimensions” (produced in five Mediterranean languages [here](#)) remains active.
- ▶ The Interreg Euro-MED Innovative Sustainable Economy (ISE) Mission hosted the first edition of the MED Innovation Days, in Marseille on 18-19 June. The event, titled ‘Shaping Sustainable Innovation in the Mediterranean’, also marked the launch of the ISE Community of Practice (CoP). As an implementing partner, MIO-ECSDE had an essential presence at this gathering by facilitating the different working groups formed during the event to exchange on the sustainable future of the Mediterranean’s: marine resources, agri-food systems, industrial transition and resource valorization. The ISE CoP, comprising the Thematic Projects of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme, convened online in November 2024. During the event, MIO-ECSDE highlighted opportunities for mentoring and capacity-building that the projects could offer to Mediterranean stakeholders, set to commence in 2025.

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 was acknowledged as an example of regional (Mediterranean) capacity building from NGOs in the 2023 report “Teacher education for the green transition”. The report is linked to the EU Council Recommendation on learning for the green transition and sustainable development, and reviewed documented research and good practices in relation to effective teacher education for sustainability, with the purpose of informing policy decision-making and related policy frameworks.

An overview of the MEDIES activities in 2024 can be summarised as follows:

- ▶ Facilitating the e-network of educators and other practitioners (www.medies.net).
- ▶ Following ESD policy processes at many levels (European, UfM, UNECE, UNESCO, UNEP-MAP, etc). Various processes have progressed as described in 3.1.2.3.
- ▶ Authoring and producing new teaching and learning materials (in printed or e-form).
- ▶ Continuing projects on marine litter/plastics, water, ESD pedagogy, etc.
- ▶ 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 in the host country (Greece) in order to replicate them throughout the Mediterranean Region.

4.1. *Project on Recycling, Single-Use Plastics and Marine Litter*

The collaboration of MIO-ECSDE with the Hellenic Recovery Recycling Corporation (HERRCO) in 2024 continued to be minimal, due to limited funding. Nevertheless, MEDIES continued with the implementation of the Program in a few schools and teacher trainings. Its educational material is included in the "Platform 21+: Skills Workshops" by the Institute of Educational Policy (IEP of the Ministry of Education and Culture) for Primary and Secondary Education, also during the 2024-2025 school year. Read more about the Programme [here](#), download the educational material [here](#) or view the [flipbook](#).

4.2. *Partnership between MIO-ECSDE / MEDIES and the Swedish school Futuraskolan I*

A new partnership between MIO-ECSDE / MEDIES and the International School (of Sweden) began in the last months of 2024. The school's K-9 classes will be travelling to Athens between 2024 and 2027 as part of their horizontal agenda of developing green and entrepreneurship skills around the "Sustainable Development Goals". As part of their week-long curriculum while in Athens, MEDIES facilitates educational workshops and activities centered around:

1. The coastal environment: Beach clean-up and monitoring (organized twice on 7 October and 11 November)
2. Creative upcycling of waste through Tinkering (already organized twice on 8 October and 12 November)
3. The Mediterranean Diet and Food

[Read more](#)

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

The online web application on water developed by MIO-ECSDE which is available in [English](#) and [Greek](#) is fully functional and promoted through MEDIES related activities and events. Learners are invited through the application 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. *Tinkering for Sustainability in School*

MIO-ECSDE/MEDIES Secretariat is a partner in the “[Tinkering for Sustainability at School](#)” Project (funded by ERASMUS+ KA2), together with the University of Iceland (Lead), NEMO Science Museum of Amsterdam, the Centre for Research and European Studies – Future Business (CRES-Italy), and Bartolomeo Associazione Culturale (Italy). The project aspires to link the methodologies of tinkering and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at the primary school level through a series of activities.

2024 was a very productive year for the project, since the consortium i) met in Athens (February 2024) and fine-tuned the educational material, ii) completed the co-creation of educational material in the English language, iii) translated it into the partners’ languages, iv) implemented the material in schools of the partner countries, v) organized the foreseen national events and seminars to disseminate the project’s progress, and vi) organized the project’s Final Conference and Partners Meeting on 25-27 September at the University of Iceland. Read more on the project website <https://tinkering.school.eu/>

4.5. *Be2aty / My Environment project*

[Be2aty / My Environment](#) project aims to empower Egyptian youth, through non-formal education activities (such as bootcamps, exhibitions and mentoring schemes) to become innovators for environmental protection and sustainability. Led by the Goethe-Institute, the three-year project, that was launched in April 2023, brings together a consortium of Egyptian and EU-based partners, among them MIO-ECSDE/MEDIES, to join forces and build the skills of Egyptian youth to tackle urgent local environmental problems, while at the same time increasing the sector’s capacity to support them. [In March 2024](#), the pilot Bootcamp which is the “heart of the project” took place with MIO-ECSDE facilitating two-day workshops. After the evaluation of the pilot and the [partners’ meeting in June 2024](#), a series of back-to-back Bootcamps took place between July and October, in and around Cairo. On the occasion of the International Clean-up day on 20 September, two parallel clean-ups were organised in Athens (by MIO-ECSDE) and Alexandria (by Greenish), followed by a “What did we find,” joint webinar, a few days later. The 1st project exhibition, showcasing the prototypes of youth works was organised in Cairo (22-23 November, Goethe-Institute) [Read more](#)

4.6. *Creative Digital Waters*

In February 2023 the 24-month “[Creative Digital waTers](#)” (CreDiT) project kicked-off. The consortium includes the Global Network of Water Museums, the Aquatika-freshwater aquarium of Karlovac, Canali

de Bologna Museum, VirtualGeo and Doc Servizi, while MIO-ECSDE participates through its virtual museum “HYDRIA”. The project is co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme aiming at improving people’s, and particularly youth’s, access to and understanding of the precious water heritage, inside and outside water museums. During this year the partners (a) held their 3rd Partners Meeting in Karlovac (March 2024) and co-planned the upcoming activities; (b) organized two student trainings on digital tools for water heritage on 20 March and 11 April with more than 30 students from Croatia, Greece and Italy; (c) finalised their new digital platforms, including interactive maps, rich visual material, arting and coloring sections, as well as a unique section with 3D models of selected points of interest chosen by the museums. In this context, HYDRIA obtained a brand-new section presenting a collection of Mediterranean traditional water jars in two languages (English and Greek) that will be launched in the upcoming final conference of the project in Athens on the 29th of January 2025. [Read more here](#).

4.7. *Physical and Augmented Reality for Climate Change Education (PARCCE)*

The 36-month Erasmus plus KA2 programme, launched in November 2023, and led by MIO-ECSDE, is in full running mode. Together with partners from Cyprus, Italy, France and Greece (including MIO-ECSDE members Legambiente and U Marinu), MIO-ECSDE is leading this project that addresses climate change through educational material and interventions based on the principles of ESD, and inclusion education. After the kick-off Meeting (Athens, December 2023) the consortium drafted its communication and dissemination strategy and tools. Throughout 2024 the consortium has drafted the content list, the coordinator, Prof. Scoullou concluded the authoring of the theoretic background, and the partners proceeded with co-authoring the learning activities of the first robust output, the so called Traditional Educational Material (TEM). The learning activities are currently being peer-reviewed and after they are finalised they will be translated into the project languages. In 2025 the TEM will be taught in teacher training seminars, and pilot tested by the schools/partners, while in parallel, the University of Crete will transform parts of the TEM to an Innovative Educational Material (IEM). [Read more](#)

4.8. *YOU(th) CARE FOR CHANGE*

In December 2023 a new 40-month European project (funded by the DEAR Programme) was launched entitled “YOU(th) CARE FOR CHANGE: Engaging new generations on innovative, joint and multidimensional actions addressing the Global Challenges”. The project seeks to reinforce active citizenship and engagement of youth through empowering youth organizations and groups in Italy, Spain, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Czech Republic, Hungary, Greece and in Albania, Serbia, Tunisia, Morocco, through multiple targeted activities (capacity building, campus, learning platform, youth assemblies and fora) so that they are engaged in co-designing and applying their own actions on the SDGs in their local communities. The project has a strong cross-cutting priority on gender equity. During the first half of 2024 a mapping activity took place by all partners in order to identify existing youth-led CSOs, associations and initiatives oriented towards the green transition, inclusion, and gender equity in their countries. In parallel with the mapping, the partners conducted focus groups and interviews to further identify the youth’s priorities and needs and to explore their initial interest to join the project. On 8 -10 April 2024 the kick-off meeting took place in Florence and Turin, during which the partners co-designed the format and content of activities of the Campus and the Toolkit. Within May and July all the Partners completed their mappings (including also focus groups and interviews) and identified interested and competent Youth Groups in their countries to get them onboard (approx. 30 groups/country). In the following months of September, October and November the selected youth participated in the You(th) Care for Change Campus (virtual) in which they had the opportunity to follow interactive sessions, presentations and discussions on the Care approach

principles in line with the SDGs/Agenda2030, from experts and from practitioners presenting their case studies and projects. [Read more.](#)

4.9. *MEdIES networking*

In 2024, MEdIES continued to engage with several education networks with mutual interests, such as the [Climate ECOS Community](#), [Action for Climate \(ACE\) by UNFCC](#), 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, the [EU4Ocean Initiative](#), the Education for Climate Community of the EC, [and the Greening Education Partnership \(GEP/UNESCO\)](#).

5. Running international projects

5.1. The Water and Environment Support (WES) project

MIO-ECSDE (and member organisation RAED) are part of the consortium that was awarded the regional EU-funded project Water and Environment Support mechanism (2019-2024). The overall aim was 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).

The WES project officially concluded at the end of October 2024 with a closing ceremony held on October 8th, in Athens, Greece. During the meeting, the results and impact of this significant regional 5.5-year project (2019-2024) were presented and discussed ([see more](#)).

The Marine Litter activities in Algeria and Morocco that MIO-ECSDE had undertaken, concluded with numerous meetings and significant outcomes were achieved in 2024:

- ▶ A WES workshop in Algeria enhanced capacities of the invited stakeholders on how to make informed decisions based on sound scientific evidence, with regards to marine litter and on how to operationalize best practice marine litter measures. Thirty passionate individuals from Algeria participated in a captivating two-day immersive training workshop taking place on 12-13 June 2024 in Algiers.
- ▶ WES supported Morocco's fight against marine litter with a workshop held in Rabat. A group of 30 Moroccans came together at a two-day workshop held on 26-27 June 2024. The workshop aimed to strengthen the skills and knowledge of the stakeholders on how to make informed decisions based on sound scientific evidence, with regards to marine litter and on how to operationalize best practice marine litter measures.
- ▶ Assessment reports analyzing the survey findings in each country and proposing potential management options to address the marine litter challenge were drafted.
- ▶ A strategic framework and key components for the development of a Marine Litter Management Plan for Morocco were developed, with a focus on priority measures aimed at preventing and reducing marine litter which are detailed in the Assessment Report.
- ▶ Videoguidelines on monitoring macrolitter on the seafloor were developed and are available in English with two more versions with French and Arabic subtitles.

The WES project organized a Regional Training on 9-12 July 2024 in Thessaloniki, Greece, to capacitate the WES Partner Countries in achieving Single Use Plastics (SUPs)-free coastal and marine protected areas; enhancing responsible tourism and recreation activities in coastal areas and strengthening the science-policy-practice interface through community-based research. An online webinar on "Tackling Plastic Pollution in the Mediterranean" also took place on 31 October 2024, updating stakeholders on global and regional efforts and sharing WES experiences and resources (see section 3.2.5).

Three national WES Meetings took place in Algeria, Jordan and Morocco.

MIO-ECSDE/MEdIES provided expertise in the WES Regional Activities on Awareness Raising and

Education for Sustainable Development for Sustainable Consumption and Water/NCWRs (HE-2b-REG, HE-3b-REG) which were both launched in July 2023 and concluded with a joint final session in May 2024. The two activities ran in parallel, built on the previous WES Activities HE-2-REG (2021) and HE-3-REG, respectively, and aimed to deepen understanding and enhance the competences of the targeted stakeholders to effectively apply ESD campaigns and initiatives on sustainable consumption/water topics, as well as to provide them targeted support through bilateral and group mentoring/capacity building sessions. The activities included:

- ▶ An Assessment Phase (July-November 2023) to assess progress achieved since the previous WES Activities, and address the current needs of a selected number of trainees on themes relating to ESD and awareness campaigns for sustainable consumption (HE-2b-REG) and for water/NCWR (HE-3b-REG).
- ▶ The selection of 14 cases of awareness raising projects and campaigns on both sustainable consumption and on water topics, from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Turkey.
- ▶ A first joint online session on 25 January 2024 to set the context, and give the opportunity for peer exchange and experts' initial feedback on the selected cases; all cases' representatives participated.
- ▶ Bilateral online mentoring sessions (February – March 2024) for an in-depth analysis of the contexts, approaches, challenges and achievements as well as the potential solutions and opportunities, for the selected cases.
- ▶ Two webinars on topics related to communication, outreach, engagement and methodology of awareness raising campaigns on 23 and 30 April 2024, as a response to the mentees' expressed needs, from both activities.
- ▶ A final online joint session on 28 May 2024 to recap, reflect on the process and discuss key outcomes with the participation of mentees / case-representatives from both HE-2b-REG and HE-3b-REG activities.

The sub-regional/regional activity, "Support for the development of a public awareness campaign for curbing the use of SUPs in Jordan and Morocco" was the final activity implemented under WES. Kicking off in June 2024, it successfully concluded in October 2024 with the creation of several products: a list of proposed elements for the awareness-raising campaign against SUPs in Jordan and Morocco, an animated video tailored for [Jordan](#) and [Morocco](#), and guidelines and recommendations for promoting the campaigns at the national level. These products were well-received by the countries' ministries, and this successful model is recommended for replication in other WES partner countries.

The regional activity on Mediterranean "Champions" of plastic pollution prevention, which began in April 2023, also concluded. This initiative aimed to recognize, support, and motivate individuals and organizations contributing innovative solutions to combat plastic pollution, with the support of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Mediterranean Action Plan of UNEP (UNEP/MAP). In the autumn of 2023, Cooperation Agreements were sent to the 87 selected candidate champions. In September 2024, WES conducted a thorough assessment to determine if, by August 2024, the commitments had been fulfilled or sufficiently advanced. Based on this assessment, the title "Mediterranean Champion for Plastic Pollution Prevention" was awarded to 39 champions by WES, the UfM, and UNEP/MAP. A few were awarded in person during the WES closing conference that was held in Athens on the 8th of October. The initiatives awarded span an impressive array of thematic areas, including: Governance that results in reduced use, production, and trade of (single-use) plastics, design, production, and introduction of innovative products and/or application of innovative methods,

improved waste collection systems and education, public awareness-raising campaigns and mobilization of synergies between different stakeholders.

All WES activities can be found in the [booklet “WES Project Achievements and Impact 2019-2024”](#) and the [WES website](#).

MIO-ESCDE will be a key partner of the WES project’s next phase: “Water and Environment Support - Biodiversity and Climate Action in the Neighbourhood South Region (WES-BCA)” which will kick off in December 2024.

5.2. The ENI CBC MED MED4WASTE

The ENI CBC MED project entitled “Mediterranean Dialogue for Waste Management Governance (MED4WASTE)” that kicked off in October 2021 successfully concluded at the end of 2023. The two-year long project aimed at facilitating new governance models for integrated and efficient urban waste management policies across the Mediterranean. Its main lines of action were: (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 increasing awareness among key stakeholders, promoting cross-border and cross-sectorial networking, and fostering long-term commitment of decision and policy makers to promote an environmental, socio-economic and institutional transition towards green growth. The project actions were implemented in Spain, Greece, Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan, and Italy. It was led by Fundació Universitària Balmes (Universitat de Vic – Universitat Central de Catalunya), while MIO-ECSDE was co-leading the policy dialogue and mainstreaming, and cross fertilization activities of the project.

The project’s achievements and main results were presented in different events, such as the project’s closing conference in October 2024 and during the UfM’s inaugural Mediterranean Green Week (see 3.1.2.4.)

One of the main outputs of Med4Waste was the development of a Policy Toolkit on municipal waste management which was finalized in November 2023 and officially published in early 2024. It was developed by MIO-ECSDE with contributions of key experts and is available in English, French and Arabic. The objective of the document is to transmit to key Mediterranean actors a set of concise recommendations and policy guidelines to promote better governance in the sustainable use of resources and management of waste and facilitate achieving a circular economy in the Mediterranean. You can access it [here](#).

5.3. The H2020 SHARED GREEN DEAL project

In February 2022 a Horizon Europe 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, has been leading the social experiments on Preserving Biodiversity and will also help draw out of the project experiments key insights on zero pollution and climate change.

The project's partnership met in November in Paris for the 2024 Autumn Consortium Meeting to discuss advancements and next steps. As the project proceeds to the analysis of the data produced by the 4 experiments (conducted by the following four local partners: Posoški razvojni center (Slovenia), Ballyhoura Development CLG (Ireland), Environment and Health Department, City of Stockholm (Sweden), Municipality of Amaroussion (Greece)), MIO-ECSDE will be supporting the secondary analysis of the project results that draws out the implications of the social experiments for 'zero pollution' (and climate action). Reflections will be provided on how different governance approaches may be needed for these Green Deal priorities.

5.4. 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.

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.

Within the project's scientific component, MIO-ECSDE plays a pivotal role and is actively engaged in the development of an integrated analysis and scenario framework. This framework encompasses various facets, including the identification of primary emission sources along the value chain, the assessment of environmental risks, an evaluation of existing value chain and technological initiatives, and an examination of prevailing governance strategies, efforts, and arrangements. This work primarily focuses on two case study pollutants: per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs) and car tyre wear particles.

The main project highlights for 2024 have been the organization of three regional Living Labs: one held in April 2024 in Utrecht (the Netherlands) targeting stakeholders from the North-East Atlantic and

focused on the use of PFAS in medical applications and exploring transition scenarios; one held in May 2024 in Varna (Bulgaria) targeting stakeholders in the Black Sea focused on designing strategies for better governance of persistent chemicals in the Black Sea basin; and a third Mediterranean Living Lab organized in Athens, Greece on 19-20 November by MIO-ECSDE focused on tyre wear particles.

The SOS-ZEROPOL 2030 Living Lab on tyre wear particles in the Mediterranean explored the challenges and solutions for preventing and mitigating car tyre particle emissions throughout the product chain, with a focus on the eco-design of car tyres and the removal of tyre wear particles at wastewater treatment plants. The Living Lab targeted policy and decision-makers, industry representatives, researchers and academics, civil society members, and service providers. It brought together 35 stakeholders from 8 Mediterranean EU Members States (Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Malta, Italy, Slovenia, and Spain) and 6 other EU Member States (Belgium, Bulgaria, Ireland, Germany, Norway, and The Netherlands). This was the first of two Living Labs, with the second one set to further build on the insights gained. The conclusions drawn from both Living Labs will contribute to the recommendations provided to the European Commission on reducing pollution in European seas. Read more [here](#)

5.5. FOLOU project

In January 2023, a HORIZON Research and Innovation Actions project entitled “Bringing Knowledge and consensus to prevent and reduce FOod LOss at the primary production stage. Understanding, measuring, training and adopting” (FOLOU), kicked off. The 4-year long project brings together 16 multidisciplinary partners from 10 countries (Spain, Italy, Belgium, Norway, Austria, Greece, Ireland, France, UK) with the aim to set up all the necessary mechanisms to (i) measure and estimate (robust and harmonized methodology), (ii) monitor and report (national and EU Food Loss registries), and (iii) assess the magnitude and impact of Food Losses. Additionally, FOLOU will also work to assure the appropriate knowledge transfer and adoption of the project outcomes by the key targeted stakeholders: primary producers, retailers, consumers, policymakers and researchers.

As a network of networks, MIO-ECSDE will support the exploitation, communication and dissemination of the project’s outcomes and will:

- ▶ Support the twinning programme activities of the project by identifying regions and actors interested in replicating the experience of FOLOU beyond the partners’ territorial coverage;
- ▶ Support in synthesizing the project’s findings and the policy analysis of regulations impacting food loss in the EU into a set of recommendations on food loss reduction along the value chains of primary production on EU level;
- ▶ Organise at least one national stakeholder workshop to disseminate preliminary project results to as many stakeholders as possible and to collect feedback which will be integrated in the final formulation of policy recommendations and guidelines.

During 2024, MIO-ECSDE’s work was focused on:

- ▶ Mapping policies on food loss and waste in Greece to better understand current policy and regulatory barriers and to develop well-informed and effective policy strategies. MIO-ECSDE will serve as the main reviewer for the relevant overall deliverable.
- ▶ Coordinating the FOLOU Twinning Regions Program, which was officially launched on October 29, 2024. MIO-ECSDE contributed to the development and wide dissemination of the FOLOU Twinning Program brochures prior to the program’s launch.
- ▶ Conducting semi-structured interviews with practitioners from various commodity sectors in Greece’s primary production sector during September and October 2024 to gather their insights into the main drivers of food loss (behavioral, societal, and environmental).

FOLOU partners convened in Ancona on 25-26 January 2024, where the progress made within the first year of the project was discussed (read more about the meeting [here](#)). The consortium met again in Ghent on the 4th and 5th of July 2024 for the project's General Meeting in view of the review meeting which took place in September 2024.

5.6. Interreg Euro-MED Mission Innovative Sustainable Economy

The Innovative Sustainable Economy (ISE) Mission of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme is a 7-year project aiming to boost a fair transition to a circular economy in the Mediterranean through two governance projects (Thematic Community Project and Institutional Dialogue Project) by developing innovative technical knowledge and ensuring these new solutions are transferred into public policies. MIO-ECSDE is involved in the transferring, mentoring and twinning activities of the Thematic Community Project of the Mission. Among other tasks, it will be analysing projects related to social innovation and supporting the transferring of results through its extensive network in the whole Mediterranean region. The project brings together a consortium of 10 key institutions and organizations from Greece, Italy, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Spain that form an experienced partnership in implementing sustainable development policies, action plans, and strategies in the Mediterranean.

The Thematic Community Project of the Mission formally kicked off on 30 January 2023. With its long-standing collaboration with governments, international organisations, socioeconomic partners and networks, MIO-ECSDE is leading the 'TRANSFER' work package of the project that seeks to foster the uptake of the knowledge produced by thematic Interreg Euro-Med projects on sustainable innovative economy. Such activities falling under the transferring phase of the Mission were presented during the UfM's MED Talks, the first edition of the MED Innovation Days, in Marseille on 18-19 June 2024 and the 2nd ISE Community of Practice (CoP) meeting that took place online on 14 November 2024.

MIO-ECSDE is to coordinate one of the pillars of the Innovative Sustainable Economy Community (ISEC) Hub, a platform for stakeholders to collaborate and exchange on innovative actions and practices. More specifically, MIO-ECSDE will be leading the dissemination of capacity building trainings, mentoring schemes and existing innovative tools, solutions, and policy approaches to drive innovation in the Mediterranean. This work was presented during the on-line consultation workshop with the ISEC Hub Ambassadors on 26 March 2024. The feedback received was fully considered for the launching of the ISEC Hub that took place online on 2 October 2024. The launch event welcomed around 70 participants from across the region, marking the beginning of a collaborative effort to drive innovative, circular economy practices throughout the Mediterranean over the coming years. MIO-ECSDE plays a critical role as a partner in the ISEC Hub and coordinates the activities under Pillar LEARN, focusing on knowledge transfer and capacity building. MIO-ECSDE's involvement centers on coordinating activities on fostering mutual learning among stakeholders and providing access to a wide range of educational resources. For this purpose, an [e-Library](#) (see [here](#)) has been created, including various webinars and educational materials to support the Mediterranean's green and blue transition. The ISEC Hub will also be a space for the Interreg Euro-MED Thematic projects to transfer their results through specific tailor-made programmes, encouraging their uptake and replication by other actors.

During this period, together with ACR+ and UVIC, the capacity-building activities of the project and their synergies with other activities of the Mission were further articulated and organized for their timely implementation in 2025. Specifically, the methodology for the Mentoring & Twinning Programme will be developed as a guiding document for its implementation throughout the project's duration, until its conclusion in 2029.

5.7. METAVASEA “People-Centered Transition for Maritime Decarbonization in the East Mediterranean”

MIO-ECSDE is a partner in this project that is led by the Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMEPA), based in Greece, and supported by Lloyd’s Register Foundation. The project aims to:

- ▶ Provide a region-specific overview of the state of play with regard to maritime decarbonization,
- ▶ Identify necessary skills and competencies to support the green digital transition,
- ▶ Develop flexible training/upskilling/reskilling tools for seafarers, port workers and administrators.

MIO-ECSDE will bring into the project its experience working in the Mediterranean region, on:

- ▶ the science-policy-society interface
- ▶ networking and synergy-building
- ▶ awareness-raising and Education for Sustainable Development
- ▶ capacity building of wide-ranging stakeholders
- ▶ capitalization and transferring

Since the kick off of the project (Athens, October 2023) MIO-ECDE supported the development and circulation of a mapping survey, that was sent to various relevant stakeholders in coastal communities of South East Mediterranean: port authorities, civil society, etc. The survey is on-going and can be accessed here: <https://shout.com/s/MScUpEz9/i/0>

MIO-ECSDE/MEDIES also developed the scenario of a short awareness video on the topic of climate change. The video is planned to be finalized in 2025, along with guidelines for teachers to use this and other materials and methods in the classroom. The Chairman of MIO-ECSDE was supported by the METAVASEA project to attend the 29th COP of the UNFCCC in Baku from 18-21 November 2024.

5.8. New INTERREG IPA Adrion project: TETHYS4ADRION

In September 2024, a new project launched in which MIO-ECSDE is a partner: “Enhancing Cross-Border Cooperation for Riverine Plastic Litter Reduction in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas” and its acronym is TETHYS4ADRION. The overall aim of the project is to investigate the role and contribution of rivers to marine plastic pollution in the Adriatic-Ionian region and to develop and implement strategies to mitigate the discharge of riverine litter into the sea. Specifically, the project will focus on:

- ▶ introducing new and state-of-the-art methods and implementing coordinated and concerted monitoring of riverine litter on selected rivers
- ▶ testing solutions to prevent and mitigate pollution of the sea by riverine litter
- ▶ laying the foundation for the development of a sustainable and effective plan for the management and reduction of river waste in the Adriatic-Ionian region
- ▶ reduce the harmful impact of riverine litter on the marine environment and biodiversity of the region by promoting transboundary cooperation, fostering dialogue with stakeholders, and implementing multi-level actions.

The duration of the project is 36 months. The initial meeting of the project, attended by representatives of all project partners, was held in Ljubljana, Slovenia on 16 and 17 October 2024.

5.9. “Water and Environment Support – Biodiversity and Climate Action (WES-BCA) in the Neighbourhood South region” project

WES-BCA builds on the experience gained by its predecessor projects (WES, 2019-2024; SWIM-H2020 SM, 2016-2019; SWIM SM, 2010-2015; and CB/MEP, 2009-2014). The goal of the 3-year project is to enhance the capacity of various stakeholders in the MENA countries involved in pollution prevention and reduction, protection of biodiversity and water resources management, in order to support them in formulating and/or implementing the corresponding policies. It also aims to raise awareness, increase knowledge and improve public understanding, stimulating thus behavioural changes needed for appropriate climate action and environmental protection. The project is led by LDK Consultants SA.

The project’s work plan will be implemented through two complementary, closely related and mutually supportive Components: Component I – focusing on Water, Biodiversity and Environment and Component II – focusing on Communication and Outreach with emphasis on Climate Action.

Component I will focus on Prevention & Reduction of Pollution; Curbing Plastic Pollution & Marine Litter; Promoting the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus approach; Promotion of water efficiency at all steps and levels of water management and use; Climate Change mitigation and adaptation actions, including Water Scarcity and Biodiversity protection as priorities. 16 national activities across the 8 Partner Countries will take place, while at the regional level some 11 study tours, regional trainings and on-line capacity building actions will be organized.

Under Component II, an Outreach Strategy and Implementation Plan will be developed and outreach and communication campaigns will be rolled out in all 8 PCs, targeting specific target groups. Regional networks of climate change/environmental champions will be activated and supported, promoting people-to-people outreach, and local CSOs/NGOs will also be mobilised.

MIO-ECSDE, one of the key WES-BCA consortium members, will be in charge of Component II of the project, with the support of ACR+, RAED and MedWaves.

The project officially kicked-off in Brussels on the 17th of December 2024 and will run till November 2027.

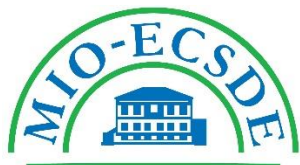
Read more at www.wes-bca.eu and <https://mio-ecsde.org/project/wes-bca/>

5.10. Framework & Service Contracts

MIO-ECSDE is participating in the 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, INSPIIRO and COFFEY. During 2024, MIO-ECSDE did not contribute to any service contract.

6. Publications & other resources

- ▶ Vlachogianni, Th., Scoullou, M., 2024. Baseline assessment of macrolitter on the coastline of Algeria: Fit-for-purpose data for tailor-made measures to navigate the Plasticene Age. *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 205, 116646. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpolbul.2024.116646>
- ▶ 12 Accountability Commitments Handbook, created for the MIO-ECSDE Network. 2024 (<https://shorturl.at/WEok2>)
- ▶ Med4Waste project, 2024. Policy Toolkit on Municipal Waste Management: A Guide for Decision-Makers in the Mediterranean (<https://mio-ecsde.org/project/policy-toolkit-on-municipal-waste-management-a-guide-for-decision-makers-in-the-mediterranean/>)
- ▶ The Mediterranean Accession Agenda to the Aarhus Convention (<https://mio-ecsde.org/project/the-mediterranean-accession-agenda-to-the-aarhus-convention/>)
- ▶ TINK@School Learning Resources, including (a) Methodology Toolkit (b) Learning Activities (c) Facilitator's Guide. Available in Dutch, English, Greek, Icelandic and Italian [here](#).
- ▶ Kovács, K., et al., 2024. SHARED GREEN DEAL Case Study Guides. Cambridge: SHARED GREEN DEAL. (<http://surl.li/wsffm>)
- ▶ WES Video Campaign for curbing the use of SUPs in Jordan (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4HOrxfzA11E>)
- ▶ Vidéo WES Campagne à réduire l'utilisation des PUU au Maroc (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OuL58gmPYG0>)
- ▶ Ruhl, R., Vlachogianni, Th., 2024. Novel PFAS exposure data for SOS-ZEROPOL2030 Task 4.2. Wageningen Food & Biobased Research, Netherlands & Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECDSE), Greece
- ▶ Booth, A.M., Sørensen, L., Maes, T., Hansen, B.H., Nepstad, R., Ruhl, R., Fylakis, G., Blaauw, R., Thoden van Velzen, U., Igartua, A., van Hulst, F., Del Savio, L., Cowan, E., van Leeuwen, J., Vlachogianni, T. (2024). SOS-ZEROPOL2030 Deliverable D4.1 'Knowledge and outcomes from T4.1-T4.4 summarised in the integrated analysis section of the individual case study pollutant template. Part B: Tyre Wear Particles (TWPs)'.
- ▶ Ruhl, R., Blaauw, R., Thoden van Velzen, U., Booth, A.M., Sørensen, L., Maes, T., Hansen, B.H., Nepstad, R., Igartua, A., Fylakis, G., van Hulst, F., Del Savio, L., Cowan, E., van Leeuwen, J., Vlachogianni, T. (2024). SOS-ZEROPOL2030 Deliverable D4.1 'Knowledge and outcomes from T4.1-T4.4 summarised in the integrated analysis section of the individual case study pollutant template. Part A: Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)'.



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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 Concervacion 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 • Asociación 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 deBizerte • Association for the Protection of Nature and Environment - 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