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Agenda Item 3: Report by the Coordinator on Sustainable Development Activities for the period June 2023 – May 2025

Update on Flagship Initiatives and activities toward the implementation of the MSSD

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Updates on Flagship Initiatives

1. The 20th Meeting of the MCSD (14-16 June 2023, Marseille, France) and the 25th MCSD Steering Committee Meeting (18-19 April 2024, Athens, Greece) welcomed the presentations of the activities undertaken by MCSD Members and Observers, partners and the Secretariat under the MSSD Flagship Initiatives, noting with appreciation the advanced status of implementation of those initiatives, and acknowledged the efforts in support to the promotion of the MSSD Flagship Initiatives, encouraging to pursue such communication and capitalization actions.
2. The implementation of the MSSD Flagship Initiatives have been advancing quite steadily during the reporting period June 2023 – May 2025, in particular:
 - i. Support the Trust Fund for Mediterranean marine protected areas (Med Fund)
 - ii. Promote the “Green list” (IUCN World Parks Congress) in riparian states to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of parks managing bodies
 - iii. Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award (IEFCA)
 - iv. Create a sustainable urban toolbox for the Mediterranean, with a view to planning cities that will work for everyone, in order to make them inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
 - v. Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction
 - vi. Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change (MedEcc)
 - vii. WeMed Green Business Award
 - viii. Environmental Governance – Encourage the Accession to and Implementation of the Aarhus Convention on Public Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)
 - ix. Develop capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements
 - x. Establish a publicly accessible Mediterranean integrated information system through a triumvirate of national governments, international institutions and the private sector to collate and transparently display information on the state of the environment
3. The flagship initiative ‘Integrate sustainability principles into public procurement at national and local levels’ has not been launched yet.
4. The Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Action Plan towards 2030 has equally well advance and is considered ‘*de facto*’ as an MSSD flagship initiative. It is included in the proposed updated MSSD under Objective 6 on Governance.

Support the Trust Fund for Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas (MedFund)

5. The MedFund’s support is granted to promote "co-management" approaches, i.e. the joint involvement of a national authority in charge of the management, and an NGO present to support the implementation of actions. This allows to contribute to the long-term financing of activities that are poorly funded but essential to the effective management of MPAs, in particular their recurring management costs. Performance and the efficiency of activities funded through a scientific assessment tool developed for Mediterranean MPAs were put in place to monitor and evaluate the MPA management based on 3 conservation targets selected for each MPA.
6. To date, 2,7 million euros have been committed to support eight Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) covering over 3,000 km² in four Mediterranean countries: Karaburun Sazan MPA in Albania; Kuriat, Kneiss, Zembra and La Galite MPAs in Tunisia; Al Hoceima and Jbel Moussa MPAs in Morocco; and, Gokova Bay MPA in Türkiye.
7. The MedFund successfully implemented its activities while the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework targets go beyond simply increasing coverage of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas

(MCPAs) and Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) and require that protected area systems are also be effectively managed. There are a number of MCPAs in the Mediterranean that currently lack management plans, and many of those that have plans are not implementing them effectively, if at all. Management plans should be developed in participation with stakeholders and are a crucial tool in providing clear guidance to both MCPA managers and users alike. There is a clear need therefore to support the development of practical and cost-effective management plans for MCPAs in the region.

8. In the framework of the updated MSSD, SPA/RAC will update the MedFund flagship initiative on toward the objective of achieving 30 by 30 MPAs/ OECMs Targets.

Promote the “Green list” (IUCN World Parks Congress) in riparian states to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of parks managing bodies

9. The leading partner of the flagship initiative is the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), “the Green List”¹, through its Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation. The IUCN Green List Programme is engaged in disseminating the Green List across the Euro Region, as well as in the Mediterranean Region, hence is in conversations with several European, North African and Asian countries which are considering the application of some protected areas to the Green List in the near future.

10. The IUCN Green List programme in the Euro Mediterranean area is making significant progress in promoting sustainability and conservation efforts in the region. In Italy, three sites have been listed in the Green List and a new national Green List Expert Assessment Group has been formed with the support of IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation and the Italian Ministry of Environment. Spain is continuing its process of assessing former candidate parks and the Expert Assessment Group for Spain is being partially renewed at this moment. France has been implementing the Green List since 2013 and currently has 24 listed sites and 12 ongoing applications. Albania has officially committed to implement the Green List in the country.

11. In the North African region, Libya has officially committed to implement the Green List in the Country. Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria have created a regional Expert Assessment Group that is fully operational and in the process of being partially renewed. In the West Asia region there is a fully operational regional Expert Assessment Group. In Egypt two sites have been listed, in Lebanon one site has been re-listed and in Saudi Arabia, 2 sites has been listed. The total number of listed sites in the region is 12, distributed as follows: (2) Egypt, (3) Jordan, (1) Lebanon, (4) Saudi Arabia, (2) United Arab Emirates.

12. A Memorandum of Understanding and Implementing Agreement has been signed between IUCN and WWF North Africa to facilitate the implementation of the Green List standard in the North Africa region.

13. Significant efforts have been undertaken to reinvigorate the Green List programme in North Africa. In collaboration with national authorities and key partners, refresher workshops on the Green List Standard have been organised in both Tunisia and Morocco. These sessions have enabled candidate sites to carry out self-assessments and identify critical gaps and priorities in site management. This renewed engagement is intended to align protected areas more closely with the Green List requirements and to support their progress in management improvement and eventually toward achieving Green List status.

14. Important efforts are ongoing to consolidate the programme through fundraising. As a result, an Interreg Euro-MED project on Green List for MPAs has started in January 2024 with the goal of adapting the Global Green List Standard to the particularities of the Marin Mediterranean basin, including partners of the Adriatic Sea and Greece which may allow to enlarge operations in these areas. Moreover, the Act30 project² has been approved to support the implementation of the 30x30 commitments in Morocco during 2024.

¹ <https://www.iucn.org/theme/protected-areas/our-work/iucn-green-list-protected-and-conserved-areas>

² [act30-press-release.pdf \(iucn.org\)](#)

15. Launched at COP28 in Dubai by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) and technology company Esri, Act30 brings together a wide network of scientific experts and Indigenous peoples' representatives to help governments chart an effective and fair route to conserving their countries' biodiverse areas. The initiative is designed to support the 190 governments that have committed to the 30x30 target of conserving 30% of terrestrial, inland water, coastal and marine areas by 2030, under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, agreed in December 2022.

16. An important global initiative for Green List has been financed worldwide and is funding a new Green List Coordinator full-time position at the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation to support the Green List Mediterranean programme.

17. These latest developments will further allow expanding the impact and actions of this flagship initiative, aligned with the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

18. A regional Mediterranean Marine Green List Expert Assessment Group has been developed and will be operational in May 2025 to support the assessment of Marine sites in the Mediterranean area.

Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award (IEFCA)

19. As advised by the MCSD Steering Committee, the Secretariat took measures to simplify the application process further to encourage more cities to apply. Accordingly, the Secretariat has developed the Roadmap for the fourth edition 2022/2023 of the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award (IEFCA) that has been successfully held on 7 December during the COP23 in Portoroz, Slovenia.

20. The call for applications for the fourth edition of the award invited cities and municipalities located along the Mediterranean coast to apply by demonstrating actions, achievements and perspectives under four categories: nature and biodiversity protection, built environment (housing and urban planning), social, economic and cultural sustainability, governance.

21. The application deadline was end of June 2023, while the process was supported by MedCities which serves as a network of 80 local councils and unions of municipalities from around the Mediterranean region, helping its members bolster capacity to respond to the challenges they face regarding environmental policies, urban services, strategic planning and the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

22. The survey for the application was developed online, while a video developed by INFO/RAC facilitated IEFCA dissemination, giving the main information to candidates. The deadline for application was recently extended to end of July 2023, while MedCities, a MAP Partner, played a key role in promoting the Award to eligible cities around the Mediterranean. A dedicated online workshop was organized on 18 May 2023, to provide interested municipalities with the necessary information and support for the preparation of their applications, while a dedicated helpdesk has been also created under INFO/RAC.

23. 8 applications were received, from the municipalities of Erdemli (Türkiye), Gaziemir (Türkiye), Genoa (Italy), Izmir (Türkiye), La Spezia (Italy), Mersin (Türkiye), Santa Margherita Ligure (Italy) and Sfax (Tunisia).

24. After a thorough evaluation, the jury that comprises members of the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and the President of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, selected Genoa (Italy) as the winner of the 2023 edition of the Award, while the municipalities of Izmir and La Spezia scored respectively as second and third best positioned applicants.

25. The municipality of Genoa demonstrated progress in the three categories covered by the Award, in particular under the categories of Nature and biodiversity protection, Built environment and Planning and management, while the progress achieved in the last decade and plans for the future demonstrate a good to excellent level of commitment and implementation.

26. During the COP23 award ceremony, Mr. Mario Mascia, Genoa Municipality Councilor for Urban Planning, Maritime State Property, Economic Development and Labor, highlighted that the award is a great result for Genoa. An award that confirms the great commitment of the city to a prosperous and sustainable future. He stressed that learning from the past, studying the future scenarios and transforming challenges into opportunities represent the route to follow to become more attractive and sustainable, fostering a better quality of life through the protection and promotion of the terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems as a legacy for the people tomorrow.

27. UNEP/MAP press release on the 2023 IEFCA edition can be read at the following link: [The Italian City of Genoa receives the 2023 edition of Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award | UNEP/MAP](#)

28. The 5th edition (2024/2025) of the MSSD flagship initiative Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award has been launched by the Secretariat on 29 November 2024 in cooperation with MedCities and the kind voluntary contribution of the Republic of Türkiye. The application is supported by INFO/RAC via the specific platform³ where all information is available. In addition to two regional info day workshops that took place online on 19 March and on 13 May 2025⁴, a specific help desk has been activated in order to respond to applicants' questions.

29. Upon the indications of the 25th meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee (Athens, Greece, 18-19 April 2024), the Secretariat made efforts to further promote the initiative and facilitate broader participation from the Mediterranean municipalities and, thus, receive more applications. To this end the Secretariat worked on the simplification of the application by maintaining the four categories identified by the Decision IG.22/19 (Nature and Biodiversity Protection, Built Environment, Social, Economic and Cultural Sustainability, Policy and Governance), while selecting a limited number of indicative directions within the given categories. In particular, the proposed simplified application form considers the following: under the category Nature and Biodiversity Protection, the indicative directions of Climate Change mitigation and Ecosystems protection; under the category Built Environment, the indicative directions of Sustainable land use and green areas, Water and Air Pollution; under the category Social, economic and cultural sustainability, the indicative directions Green Economy and Eco-Innovation; under the category Planning and management the indicative directions Environmental governance, Planning, monitoring and evaluation and Communication and outreach.

30. The application period will close on 30 May 2025 with seven applications received so far. As per procedure the eligible applications will be assessed by the UNEP/MAP Task Force supported by three independent consultants (Technical Committee), while the Jury will take the final decision on the winner city based on the assessment report prepared by the Task Force and the Technical Committee. The MCSD will be informed according and before the Award ceremony in the framework of the COP24.

31. Based on the experience of the past four awards, and in the framework of the MSSD update and upscale of its flagship initiatives, the IEFCA is also part of the new flagship initiative on Mediterranean Zero Net Cities Network that actively promotes and supports exchanges of best practices among Mediterranean Cities, policy dialogue among Mayors on sustainable development challenges and institutional capacity building activities.

Create a sustainable urban toolbox for the Mediterranean, with a view to planning cities that will work for everyone, in order to make them inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

32. The MedUrbanTools⁵ platform holds more than 191 best practices, 132 videos of experts and 109 replicable tools on different topics concerning Mediterranean cities, including the experiences of 76 cities or metropolitan areas. The platform is continuously updated: 128 new entries are available since the beginning of 2024⁶, covering the most relevant topics for cities, such as climate change and how to address it with sustainable, nature-based options, or how to improve waste collection systems. Good practices related to water management and sustainable mobility are also available. In total, there are more than 432 practical and

³ <https://www.info-rac.org/iefca/>

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xJNiSezk7fU&t=8078s>

⁵ <https://medurbantools.com>

⁶ https://medurbantools.com/portfolio_page/

easily accessible cases, in French and English depending on the topic. The platform is being expanded by adding new sections, as the specific site for ProcuraMed project⁷ (funded Interreg Euro MED Programme) and for the GIZ Maghreb cases, to be developed in 2025.

33. In the period June 2023 – May 2025 efforts focused the visibility and outreach towards institutions and decision makers, national, regional and global, and linked to sustainability projects. To this aim MedCities developed a campaign of the 13 cases in the metropolitan area of Barcelona. The publications were made through X social media MedCities account and got a total impact of 1,182,034 cumulative impressions.

34. In 2025 a new paid campaign for new cases and tools is foreseen. In addition MedCities continues disseminating the other best practices among a wide public through MedCities monthly newsletter "MedUrbanTools" specific section and through Twitter, Bluesky, LinkedIn, and Facebook accounts. MedUrbanTools is further promoted and enhanced through MedCities projects and its presence in international fora, therefore generating and disseminating of new contents and cooperation opportunities.

35. The most important challenge ahead is to make the initiative grow and become a reference tool on sustainable urban development in the Mediterranean. This enhancement should be based on the regularly updated contents while improving the user experience in information search and related financial resources.

Undertake regional assessments, as well as knowledge exchanges, of high- and low-tech solutions, that have been successfully implemented to achieve waste reduction

36. This flagship initiative was implemented by MIO-ECSDE, COMPSUD and UfM through the EU funded WES Project and it consisted in a regional assessment and online repository⁸ launched in 2021 that aims to promote best practices on waste reduction and circular economy across the waste management chain in the Mediterranean region. The cases were selected out of many from different countries of the region via a stakeholders' consultation to identify best practices. They are of varying scale and type from which a lot can be learned and that could inspire more actions to substantially reduce waste generation by 2030 through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.

37. Under the same project, Regional Trainings, Study Visits and Peer-to-Peers processes on Monitoring and Mitigating Single-Use Plastics (2024, 2021), the Decentralized Management of Organic Waste (2023), Innovative Circular Economy Business Models (2023), the Sustainable Management of Construction and Demolition Waste (2022) have been conducted in support of the Flagship.

38. A Policy Toolkit on Municipal Waste Management: A Guide for Decision-Makers in the Mediterranean has been produced by the Med4Waste ENI CBC Med project⁹ in English, French and Arabic. It has made a genuine effort to provide fit-for-purpose guidance for Mediterranean decision-makers, but also other stakeholders, on the way forward, through a specific set of recommendations addressing the local, national and Mediterranean levels.

39. Although the flagship initiative can be considered completed, it can be further enhanced and expanded.

Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change (MedECC)

40. The network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change (MedECC), whose Secretariat is based at Plan Bleu, worked on a series of reports. These include the Special Report on Climate and Environmental Coastal Risks (SR1) and its Summary for Policymakers (SPM), approved during the COP 23 and it was published in November 2024. The Special Report on linking climate change with the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) nexus (SR2) and its SPM were published in November 2024. The Special Report on environmental change, conflict, and human migration in the Mediterranean (SR3) is scheduled for publication in 2025.

⁷ <https://medcities.org/fr/project/procuramed/>

⁸ <https://bestpractices-waste-med.net/>

⁹ <https://mio-ecsde.org/project/policy-toolkit-on-municipal-waste-management-a-guide-for-decision-makers-in-the-mediterranean/>

41. During COP 23, the Contracting Parties renewed their commitment to support MedECC activities through the 2024-2025 Programme of Work (PoW) and budget. The PoW foresees activities of the scientific network MedECC in order to promote developing science-based assessments and policy-relevant documents impacts of climate and environmental change, backing informed decision-making.

42. In the last quarter of 2024, a call was issued for the renewal of MedECC Steering Committee and Co-Coordinator positions. Two new Co-Coordiators, Piero Lionello (University of Salento, Italy) and Salpie Djoundourian (Lebanese American University, Lebanon), were appointed alongside Joel Guiot, who continues as the third coordinator.

43. Preparation for the Second Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR2) began in February 2025, with a planned publication scheduled for 2028. An open call for participation in the Scoping Meeting, self-nominations for authors, and a pre-scoping survey were conducted. The MAR2 Coordinators were appointed: Mohamed Abdrabo (Alexandria University, Egypt), Philippe Drobinski (Institut Pierre Simon Laplace (IPSL), Ecole Polytechnique, Energy4Climate Interdisciplinary Center, France) and Marta Guadalupe Rivera Ferre (INGENIO - Centre of the Spanish National Research Council and Polytechnic University of Valencia (CSIC-UPV), Spain). The online scoping meeting took place in April 2025.

44. MedECC, in collaboration with Plan Bleu, is exploring financial options through the European Commission, specifically the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement (DG NEAR).

WeMed Green Business Award

45. Following the adoption of Decision IG.24/3 at COP 21, the Secretariat, through the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for SCP (SCP/RAC-MedWaves), inaugurated the WeMed Award for environmental innovation and green entrepreneurship. The Mediterranean Sustainability Award aims at promoting an inclusive transition to sustainability in the Mediterranean. This award recognizes business achievements, promoting a green business ecosystem conducive to the implementation of SDG 12 “Responsible production and consumption”.

46. The inaugural edition in 2021, funded by the European Union’s project titled SwitchMed, set the foundation for recognizing Mediterranean businesses pioneering in eco-innovation and sustainability. This pilot edition targeted both public authorities and SMEs.

47. The second and third edition were funded by by the European Neighbourhood Instrument Cross-Border Cooperation for the Mediterranean (ENI CBC MED), and specifically through the Stand Up Project (2022) and the RESET Project (2023). The second edition further expanded the award’s reach, spotlighting businesses in the Textile and Fashion industry and their efforts in circular solutions; while the third edition focused on scaling impact and fostering deeper regional cooperation and awarded both SMEs and Business Support Organizations.

48. The fourth edition took place recently in 2024, and was funded through the EU-funded SwitchMed project. The award recognized sustainable and innovative blue economy practices and initiatives across the Mediterranean region.

49. The third edition took place on 23th October 2023 at Beit Al-Hikma (Tunisia). The event gathered around 65 participants on-site and 80 viewers online. The aim of the 2023 edition of the award was to highlight the importance of capitalizing on EU projects and related best practices, and to showcase innovative and effective approaches on capitalization in the field of Green Business Support to the wider ecosystem, therefore promoting national and regional value chains.

50. The 2023 WeMed Awards winners were young entrepreneurs from Lebanon, Tunisia, Spain and Italy. In particular Eco-Consulting from Lebanon, which won the award under the category ‘Business support organization’, is specialized in sustainability and circular economy, with a focus on reworking the relationships between business, institutions, industries, municipalities, builders and householders in order to improve greater energy efficiency paths and resources use; IrWise and Green Alafco are Tunisia based companies that won under the category ‘Green entrepreneurs – Southern Region’. IrWise is an agriculture technology startup the provides innovative solution for managing water resources in the agricultural sect, while Green Alafco is a recycling company of aluminum used beverage cans and PET bottles scrap by using new technological innovation of smart recycling containers. For the category ‘Green entrepreneurs

– Northern Region’ DCC Platform from Spain and Ohoskin from Italy were awarded. DCC Platform offers a number of services and products deeply rooted in the principles of sustainability and collaboration, incusing with indigenous communities, sustainable fashion., blockchain technology, etc. Ohoskin is an orange and cactus-based textile 100% plant-based non-fossil material.

51. Further information on the 2023 edition of the award can be read at the following link: [WeMed 2023 \(wemedaward.org\)](https://wemedaward.org/2023)

52. The Award was developed back-to-back with a Round Table on “The nexus between Green Entrepreneurship and Ecological Transition Change mitigation in the Mediterranean”, and it has been funded by the ENI CBC Med financed Project ‘RESults Enabling Transitions: mapping, synthesizing and mainstreaming sustainable, green and circular business support achievements in the MED region, for replication and policy-making’ (RESET project) , as well as by the SwitchMed Initiative.

53. The winners also attended the Euro Med Week for Waste Reduction (EMWWR)¹⁰ that took in Marseille in June 2024, therefore capitalizing best practices and further expanding stakeholders’ network, cooperation and engagement, with the key steer of MedWaves, together with the Association of Cities and Regions for sustainable Resource management (ACR+)¹¹.

54. The Euro Med Week for Waste Reduction contributes to catalyse concrete behaviors toward more sustainable consumption and production patterns, aligning to the key objectives, while reflecting the social, economic, and political specificity the Southern Mediterranean brings, therefore contributing to the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) as well as the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean. The initiative is entirely funded by the EU through the SwitchMed Programme.

55. The 2024 fourth edition of the WeMed award focused on blue economy and was launched in April 2024. The 2024 award was conceived as a tool to give visibility to business models that promote SCP patterns in the blue sectors of the Mediterranean area. Moreover, the award aimed at inspiring other start-ups/entrepreneurs contributing to the Blue Economy in the Mediterranean Region into integrating environmental and social innovations within their business models.

56. For this last edition, the WeMed Award targeted early and growth stage scalable eco-innovative ventures in the blue economy sector in the Southern Mediterranean region, including Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia (SwitchMed eligible areas). The WeMed Award 2024 was then addressed to entrepreneurs or companies in the Blue Economy sector that had integrated environmental and social values into their business models, in addition to having developed an economically viable business model and that are constituted in a Southern Mediterranean country.

57. Three awardees were selected: 1) PairHouse S.A.R.L (Lebanon) is an enterprise transforming fish waste into renewable biogas and bio-fertilizers through anaerobic digestion; 2) Chitelix (Tunisia) is an enterprise that converts crab waste into valuable biopolymers and bio-ingredients; 3) EcoProd Solutions (Morocco) is an enterprise that turns fish waste skin into high-quality leather products. Further information on the 2024 edition of the award can be read at the following link: [WeMed 2024 \(wemedaward.org\)](https://wemedaward.org/2024)

58. The prizes to the awardees included landing services, as well as marketing support and technical assistance services. Moreover, a Study-Tour & Workshop to Barcelona was organized for the awardees from 26 to 28 November (2024) to connect, learn and discover new potential markets. The Study Tour and Workshops were designed to support the winners of the WeMed Award 2024 and provided them with an enriching experience through intensive site visits, expert discussions, and practical workshops tailored to the needs of the entrepreneurs. Visits to organizations and innovative companies at the forefront of the Blue Economy in Catalonia were organized, what permitted participants to gain first-hand insights into practical applications and strategic approaches to sustainable business models. Moreover, a specialized workshop was organized on the second day of the Study Visits and focused on tools and techniques to enhance market access and business development. This session provided participants with hands-on strategies to improve their initiatives' market positioning and sustainability impact.

¹⁰ Euro-Med Weeks for Waste Reduction - EWWR

¹¹ <https://acrplus.org/en/>

Environmental Governance: Encourage the Accession to and Implementation of the Aarhus Convention on Public Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)

59. On Environmental Governance and the Aarhus Convention, efforts to encourage Contracting Parties, which are not yet part of it, to join the Aarhus Convention continue being bolstered and have registered concrete steps forward in the period June 2023 – May 2025.

60. With the EU support of the EU-funded ‘Water and Environment support in the ENI Southern Mediterranean region’ (WES project)¹² and via a multi-stakeholder effort, MIO-ECSDE, COMPSUD and MEPIELAN implemented a number of activities, further building on those already launched.

61. The first phase of the flagship initiative has been completed in close cooperation with UNEP/MAP and the Secretariat of the UNECE-Aarhus Convention, with the elaboration of a desk study for the development of a Foundation Discussion Document (FDD) for the “Mediterranean Accession Agenda” to the Aarhus Convention by the MEPIELAN Centre with the support of MIO-ECSDE and COMPSUD through the EU LIFE Programme.

62. On March 8-9 2023, the first WES project capacity building activity on Overall Environmental Governance and Aarhus Convention Promotion in the Mediterranean took place online in cooperation with the UNECE Aarhus Convention secretariat, UNEP/MAP, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the Energy, Environment and Water Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the UfM, COMPSUD and MEPIELAN. 37 Peers from Ministries of the Environment, Foreign Affairs, Justice and key NGOs participated to the meeting.

63. The meeting aimed at the promotion of the Aarhus Convention in the Mediterranean region and served as a an effective platform in two directions: first, presenting and discussing the importance of the findings and recommendations of the Foundation Discussion Document (FDD) for the preparation of the Mediterranean Accession Agenda to the Aarhus Convention (MAAAC) and, second, sharing experiences of Aarhus Parties aiming at facilitating the promotion of the public rights to the environment and the eventual accession to the Aarhus Convention by the countries of the Mediterranean region.

64. Based on the results of the FDD study and the outcomes of the 8-9 March 2023 workshop on Overall Environmental Governance and Aarhus Convention Promotion in the Mediterranean with the support of the WES project, the Mediterranean Accession Agenda to the Aarhus Convention (MAAAC)¹³ was finalized in November 2023. This key achievement was developed in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Aarhus Convention, the Union for the Mediterranean, the UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention Secretariat, the Energy, Environment and Water Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the UfM, COMPSUD and MEPIELAN.

65. A first ever regional training dedicated to the promotion of the Aarhus Convention in the whole of the Mediterranean was co-organized by the WES project and the UNECE Aarhus Convention Secretariat, in Athens, Greece, on 14-15 November 2023. The main purpose of this 2-days regional training, that was part of an ongoing WES peer-to-peer process, was to strengthen the implementation capacity of public authorities, country experts, NGOs and other stakeholders on the main pillars of the Aarhus Convention: access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to Justice, as well as on the application of the principles of the Aarhus Convention in international decision-making.

66. On 12 December 2023, MEPIELAN signed an Agreement with Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, a leading independent academic and professional publisher, to publish the “Foundation Discussion Document for the Mediterranean Accession Agenda to the Aarhus Convention”, under the title “Expanding the Environmental Democracy: The Mediterranean Accession Agenda to the Aarhus Convention”. This development followed the presentation of the FDD at significant events like the 9th Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Nicosia, October 5-7, 2022).

¹² www.wes-med.eu

¹³ <https://www.wes-med.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/HE-4-REG-2023.11.14-15-MAAAC-Agenda.pdf>

67. The Mediterranean Accession Agenda to the Aarhus Convention and the Foundation Discussion Document provide a wide and detailed set of considerations and information needed for a country to prepare and eventually set in motion the mechanisms needed to accede to the Aarhus Convention, therefore providing a sound base to plan the second phase of the implementation of the flagship initiative, both from the institutional and operational point of view.

68. In parallel, another important development should be flagged, related to the common efforts for the promotion of the Aarhus Convention in the whole of the Mediterranean. The meeting of the Committee on Energy, Environment and Water of the Parliamentary Assembly of the UfM, at its session of 15 February 2024 in Rabat, agreed to include in the Committee's recommendations a point calling on all the countries in the Mediterranean region to ratify the Aarhus Convention, as follows: 'Calls on parliaments and member states to be ambitious regarding environmental and climate legislation and policies, improving transparency practices and engaging with civil society, allowing participation in decision-making processes regarding projects, plans and programmes affecting and related to the environment. Calls on all countries of the Mediterranean region to ratify the Aarhus Convention.'

69. The 28th Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention (2-4 July 2024) acknowledged the efforts of the flagship initiative and called for all Parties to support efforts of the countries of the Mediterranean region to accede to the Aarhus Convention.

70. It is expected that for a wide accession of Mediterranean countries to the Aarhus Convention several years will be needed, however, there is a genuine willingness of many countries to advance in this direction and the momentum needs to be maintained. There is an enhanced understanding that being a Contracting Party to the Aarhus Convention significantly contributes to a country's efforts to promote citizen-centred and environmentally sound policies, as well as facilitate and speed up the implementation of strategies and measures related to sustainable development. It provides greater political visibility at international level, building the image of the acceding country as a strong supporter of environmental democracy and it sends a strong positive signal to other countries, including trade and aid partners, as well as foreign investors and international institutions of the Government's commitment to effective governance and democracy.

71. In terms of concrete follow-up actions to support the fulfilment of the Flagship's initiatives, the MEPIELAN Aarhus Centre (MAC)¹⁴ has been established by the MEPIELAN Centre¹⁵ (Mediterranean Programme for International Environmental Law and Negotiations), in collaboration with the OSCE, the UNECE Aarhus Convention Secretariat and the UNEP/MAP Barcelona Convention Secretariat. Aligned with the OSCE Guidelines for Aarhus Centres, the MAC will operate as a national entity with a regional scope (Mediterranean, Balkans), working with government agencies, relevant international organisations, academic institutions and civil society. Although not yet operational, its mission includes promoting the implementation of the Aarhus Convention at national and regional level, integrating its principles into international environmental agreements, and fostering participatory governance to advance green energy transitions

72. In addition, under the follow-up 3-year project of WES (2024-2027), the EU-funded "Water and Environment Support - Biodiversity and Climate Action in the Neighbourhood South Region (WES-BCA)", there is provisional planning for in-country support via e.g. the organization of national round tables together with the UNECE Aarhus Convention secretariat. In parallel, MIO-ECSDE and COMPSUD will mobilise civil society participation in the process, including national parliaments.

Develop capacity building programmes on issues related to implementation and compliance with environmental obligations and agreements

73. On May 5-10 2025, MEPIELAN organized, in cooperation with UNEP/MAP and MAP Partner European Public Law Organization (EPLO) the online Training School entitled "Sustainable Maritime Governance in the Mediterranean - Environmental Governance and Sustainability".

¹⁴ <https://ebulletin.mepielan.gr/activities-forum/2024/mepielan-center-presents-its-proposal-and-action-for-the-establishment-of-an-aarhus-centre-in-greece-at-the-first-regional-training-for-the-promotion-of-the-aarhus-convention-across-the-mediterranean/>

¹⁵ <https://mepielan.gr>

74. The new module is planned for October 2025, with a new structure, more flexible of 17 lectures over 6 weeks. This will enhance accessibility for professionals, researchers, and postgraduate students by replacing the original one-week intensive format. The transition aims to broaden participation, particularly encouraging applications from qualified candidates across Mediterranean states, and to improve interactivity and learning outcomes. It also aligns with the educational strategies of the organizing institutions within the framework of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development and the Barcelona Convention System. This evolution represents a significant step toward the potential establishment of a specialized Master's program.

Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development and its Action Plan Towards 2030

75. Following the adoption of the Action Plan towards 2030 of the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development¹⁶ in the framework of the 9th Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in Nicosia, Cyprus on 6 October 2022, and its High Level Event of Education and Environment Ministers on the Mediterranean, with the support of the “Mediterranean Education Initiative on Environment and Sustainability” (MEDIES)/MIO-ECSDE¹⁷ and related EU/other donors financed projects, during the period covered by this progress report, numerous national and regional physical and online training sessions have taken place and several countries have been technically supported in promoting ESD in their national contexts while many educational administrators and educators have been engaged in interactive trainings and dialogue linked to the implementation of the Strategy and its Action Plan.

76. Furthermore, during the COP23, on 8 December 2023 the Mediterranean Committee on Education for Sustainable Development (MCESD), supported by MEDIES/MIO-ECSDE and the Republic of Slovenia, organised a side event on “Education and youth: The process and actors to secure a sustainable future for the Mediterranean region”. The side event registered more than 60 participants, States and Civil Society representatives as well as Youth Associations representatives, such as the Arab Office for Youth and Environment, the UNECE Youth Platform, the Sava Youth Parliament, that provided the opportunity to share, discuss and to provide insights on how to solidify and upscale good practices at national and regional levels of youth empowerment and engagement in and through ESD, and further explore resisting challenges at the institutional and operational levels.

77. Highlights raised by the majority of the panelists and participants concern the needed transformation and paradigm shift for the institutions to bring in the youth in their processes, meetings and fora; the demand to change their “language” and approaches in order to engage meaningfully the young people; promote further youth’s empowerment for development of awareness and competences through participatory processes in order for them to be engaged in decision making; support for youth and ESD, also in financial terms; further raise the importance of ESD, values and ethics, as well as of enabling environments to enhance the youth in becoming active agents of change.

78. As suggested by the 23rd meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee of June 2023, closer links with ocean literacy and education for climate change have been initiated, and more and more participation from youth is being mobilized. The provisions of the MSED and of its Action Plan towards 2030 in regard to ocean literacy were presented during the Side Event “Ocean Literacy-Blue Skills-Youth Engagement and Empowerment” of the 9th Our Ocean Conference (Athens, Greece, 15 April 2024). The event underscored the importance of educating and empowering the younger generation in ocean conservation efforts.

79. The MCESD, supported by MEDIES/MIO-ECSDE, participated in the “MED9 High-Level Forum on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Green Transition in the Mediterranean Region” in Limassol, Cyprus, on 27 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, the UfM, UNEP/MAP and civil society. The Forum, was organised by the

¹⁶ [MSED Action Plan-towards-2030-EN.pdf \(medies.net\)](#)

¹⁷ [Projects | MEDIES](#)

Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth of Cyprus, and took place in parallel with the UNECE Forum on ESD and Youth to review the progress on the status of integration of ESD in the countries, and exchange best practices and ways the MSED can contribute to addressing related challenges.

80. So far the main achievements of the Mediterranean Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development include 5 national ESD policy frameworks prepared and based on the MSED; 12 national and regional physical and online training sessions; 1700 administrators and educators engaged in interactive trainings; 19 countries have been technically supported in their efforts of promoting ESD in national contexts; 1 Flagship Project of UNESCO/GAP dedicated to the Action Plan of the MSED; a Ministerial Statement in the framework of the 2022 High-Level Event of Education and Environment Ministers on the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development and its Action Plan towards 2030.

81. The MSED and its “Action Plan towards 2030” and their updates are systematically promoted through MEDIES/MIO-ECSDE to ESD related international fora, and namely: (a) the UNECE Steering Committee on ESD (last meeting held in 29-31 May 2024), (b) UNESCO’s ESDNet for 2030, that is a global platform comprised of Strategic Partners: countries, IGOs, NGOs/CSOs, academia, youth, etc. with the goal to advance ESD policy, boost knowledge sharing and collaboration schemes, enhance advocacy, monitoring and evaluation on ESD, (c) the Greening Education Partnership (GEP) a global technical platform led by UNESCO, for stakeholders’ co-working and exchanging on climate change education.

82. With reference to the next steps, given that the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development and Action Plan towards 2030, is the first such strategy adopted at regional level, further funding is needed for its full-fledged implementation, while there is also a need for data to populate the relevant Indicator 28 of the MSSD.

Update activities toward the implementation of the MSSD

83. The table reproduced in Annex I provides an overview of activities implemented by MCSD Members, stakeholders and the Barcelona Convention Secretariat toward the implementation of the MSSD.

Annex I

Update on activities toward the implementation of the MSSD

Annex I: Significant activities and initiatives undertaken by MCSD Members in the period June 2023 – May 2025 based on the inputs received by the Secretariat

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED)	Contribution to COP 28 and COP 29	It initiated a discussion on Arab Eco-Futures at the Climate Future Week organized by UAE Cop 28 Presidency at the Museum of the Future in Dubai (Sep '23). AFED presented its vision on Impact of Climate Change on Arab Economic Development at the pre-COP gathering of the Arab Society for Economic Research- ASFER (Dubai Nov '23). Series of analytical essays on lessons of COP 28 and what Arab countries can contribute to COP 29 (Dec '23-Nov '24'). At World Government Summit in Dubai (Feb '24) AFED discussed employing Artificial Intelligence for environment and climate planning and action.	4	Regional			
	Contribution to the 12th World Conference on Environmental Education in Abu Dhabi (Feb '24)	AFED presented its vision based on its guidebook on Education for Sustainable Development in Arab Countries, urging environment educators to open windows of hope not to scare younger generations.	6	Regional			
	Small Green Innovative Projects Competition	AFED partnered with the Environment and Sustainable Development Unit at the American University of Beirut (AUB) on the implementation of the project in the period June '24-May '25 distributing grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$60,000 in 3 categories.	5	Regional		American University of Beirut (AUB)	
	Contribution to regional events related to sustainable development	– Contribution to Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue (March '24) – Prospects for green hydrogen in Arab countries. Contribution to Saudi Media Forum (Feb '25) highlighted the need for investigative reporting in environment and development media, beyond public relations – AIM Investment Summit in Abu Dhabi (April '25) on transforming urban greening to investment opportunities	3, 4, 5	Regional			
Egypt	Supporting Education and Capacity Building	– Integrating environmental sustainability concepts into school curricula. – Training teachers and providing specialized educational toolkits. – Designing academic courses and a professional master's program in sustainability. – Implementing capacity-building programs for employees across various government sectors. – Activating a cooperation protocol with Ain Shams University and training top-performing students on key environmental issues	6	National			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
	Supporting Innovation and Environmental Projects	– Participated in judging: ○ The Best Environmentally Friendly University Competition across Egyptian universities. ○ The National Initiative for Smart Green Projects covering all governorates. ○ The Excellence in Sustainable Development Competition for Companies launched by the Ministry of Investment. – Providing technical and advisory support for university graduation projects with environmental and innovative components	5,6	National			
	Community Awareness and Outreach	– Conducting awareness workshops and lectures on the SDGs and Egypt's Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) 2030. – Participating in environmental awareness programs with judicial and religious institutions (Ministry of Justice, Al-Azhar, and Church leaders). – Leading the "Our Health Depends on the Health of Our Planet" competition and delivering related awareness lectures. – Cooperating with the United Nations Office to organize media campaigns promoting public dialogue on sustainability	Cross cutting	National			
	Green and Circular Economy	– Developing circular economy standards and encouraging private sector investment in green agriculture. – Expanding opportunities for green jobs and promoting sustainable project financing. – Publishing technical guidelines on energy and water efficiency to ensure environmental sustainability in development projects. – Contributing to the development of the Circular Economy Strategy and Action Plan for Egypt, in collaboration with the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the African Circular Economy Network (ACEN)	5	National			
	Governance and Strategic Planning	– Coordinating with the Cabinet's Information and Decision Support Center (IDSC) to monitor the implementation of environmental strategies and performance indicators. – Contributing to the preparation of national strategies, including Egypt's Vision 2030 and the Green Recovery Strategy. – Reviewing OECD reports on productivity policies and innovation in higher education. – Providing technical support for national and international sustainable development meetings	Cross cutting, 6	National Regional			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
	Partnership Coordination and Support	– Coordinating with donors and international projects to secure technical and financial support. – Partnering with the EU Green Project to build the capacity of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) staff. – Supporting the digital transformation of the environmental sector in line with international best practices	Cross cutting	Regional			
	Preparation of Guidelines and Scientific Reports	– Publishing the Environmental Sustainability Standards Guide in cooperation with the Ministry of Planning. – Preparing sector-specific manuals in the fields of energy and water resources. – Developing the investment plan and updating environmental data within the national digital platform	1, 2	National			
Greece	Second update of the River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs)	River Basin Management Plans of the country's 14 River Basin Districts, covering surface freshwaters such as lakes and rivers, groundwater, transitional and coastal waters up to one nautical mile, was approved by Q2 in mid-2024. It provides the necessary information, the objectives and operational instructions for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) within a River Basin, in accordance with the provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) (2000/60/EC), including at the transboundary level. In parallel, the National Water Monitoring Network has been revised to monitor the qualitative and quantitative status of surface water and groundwater bodies.	1,2	National			
	Wastewater	The proportion of the population served by at least secondary wastewater treatment (according to the requirements of the EU Directive 91/271) presents a mild but steady increase, approaching a percentage of around 95% in 2024. Nevertheless, there is not untreated urban wastewater in Greece as all the remaining load is managed by small individual systems with obvious benefits for marine waters quality.	2	National			
	Bathing areas	The number of bathing areas with excellent water quality per area has reached 1,659 in 2023 compared to 1,624 in 2022, with Greece ranking 4th among EU countries in this indicator, thus highlighting emphasis given on the 'source-to-sea' approach.	2	National			
	Revised National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) (December 2024)	Ambitious intermediate emission reduction targets were set by at least 55% for 2030 and 80% for 2040, compared to 1990 levels, as well as top-down emission reduction targets and a carbon budget mechanism for all key sectors of the economy. Moreover, a coherent framework for improving the adaptation and climate resilience of Greece was created, aiming inter alia at the promotion of nature-based solutions and green infrastructure. Further to these: - a national monitoring and evaluation mechanism to track the status of implementation of mitigation and adaptation policies and measures has been introduced.	4	National			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		- an annual reporting obligation by the Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy (MoEE) with information on emissions (total and per sector), emissions and removals from LULUCF, emission forecasts and a yearly evaluation per sector across its respective sectoral carbon budgets, has been set. - and a new horizontal Governmental Committee for Climate Neutrality was established in 2024, which, together with the Scientific Committee for Climate Change that elaborates proposals for climate policy adjustments, will assess the impact of sectoral policies and measures. - a National Adaptation Observatory (NAO) that will integrate related data from all existing networks, contributing to monitoring and evaluating the country's resilience, on an indicators-based system, is under establishment. At the same time, the efforts for the de-lignitisation of the country's energy mix by 2028 continue, coupled with a just transition plan of the affected lignite producing regions. The only four left lignite plants operate on a limited basis and are due to shut down by 2028. Hybrid systems (combining various renewable energy sources, like wind and photovoltaics, with energy storage/batteries) already operate on smaller not interconnected islands through the GR-eco islands initiative that focuses on decarbonising islands and turning them into models of green and sustainable development. With regard to adaptation in particular, the 2016 National Adaptation Strategy (NAS) is still implemented through 13 Regional Adaptation Action Plans (RAAPs) that tailor adaptation needs and measures to varying local circumstances. To ensure action across sectors at national level, through the Climate Law all central government departments are mandated to integrate adaptation into sectoral strategies and plans (Art 9.2) and adopt measures to increase resilience in all sectors of economy, natural environment and biodiversity (Art 10.3). According to the Climate Law, the NAS and the RAAPs are subject to a review every five years, thus an evidence-based review and revision of the NAS and RAAPs will commence in 2025. The revision will be guided by the National Climate Change Adaptation Committee (NCCAC) that is expected to convene regularly, to this end, in 2025-2026.					
	Sustainable Cities	Six Greek cities (Athens, Kozani, Thessaloniki, Kalamata, Ioannina and Trikala) have been awarded the EU Mission Label for climate neutral cities, presenting strong actionable Climate City Contracts (CCC) and investments to foster sustainable urban development, urban climate resilience, and, ultimately, climate neutrality by 2030. Interventions to address evolving urban and climate challenges are supported by the NetZeroCities Mission platform and rigorously evaluated by the EC.	3	National			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		The six cities of the Greek Mission, plus Limassol of Cyprus, are in close cooperation, and have recently created their own network called CLIMANET, to facilitate coordination, joint projects and observatories, leveraging of funds, as well as sharing of expertise on all pillars of climate neutrality, such as energy, transport, urban planning and waste management.					
	Marine Environment	With regards to Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in Greece, it consist of (a) the National Spatial Planning Strategy for the Maritime Space (NSPSMS) and (b) the Maritime Spatial Frameworks (MSFs), which correspond to Maritime Spatial Plans and refer to Maritime Spatial Units (MSUs). The NSPSMS determines the strategic directions towards sustainable development, is harmonised with the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) 2008/56/EC aiming at achieving good environmental status (GES) of the marine environment, indicates and justifies the priorities for the elaboration of Maritime Spatial Frameworks, sets goals focusing on the promotion of the Blue Economy and integrates within its planning the political framework and the current legislation introduced by the EU Green Deal, taking into account the New EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change. The enactment of the NSPSMS has been concluded with the adoption of the Council of Ministers' Act no 6 on the "Approval of the National Spatial Planning Strategy for the Maritime Space" on 17 April 2025 (OJG D' 227/17.4.2025). The benefits of its enactment include sustainable development, allocation principles and rules for marine space and resources, economic growth, stability, transparency and predictability of the investment climate. Moreover, to complete the required legal framework, on 17 April 2025 Greece Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy has also adopted two Ministerial Decisions on the "Technical Specifications for the Maritime Spatial Frameworks (MSFs) in accordance with Law 4546/2018" and on the "Determination of Maritime Spatial Units (MSUs) for the elaboration of the Maritime Spatial Frameworks (MSFs)". With regard to other recent important activities and commitments pursued at the moment by Greece, these include inter alia the following: - raise the coverage of Marine Protected Areas to more than 30% by the end of 2025, in line with the Kunming Montreal GBF, as well as EU and regional objectives; - declare 10% of territorial waters as no-take reserves, by 2030; - complete the mapping of all marine habitats by 2027; and - deploy state-of-the-art digital surveillance systems for all marine protected areas, to avoid "paper parks" and ensure effective protection on the field.	1, 2	National			
	Biodiversity	With the Law on the Protection and Restoration of Natural Environment (5037/2023), Greece, committed to the collective targets under the KMGBF at the global level and the European biodiversity goals, adopted in its national legislation, in March 2023, the target of protecting at least 30% of the land and 30% of sea area by 2030. The new Law includes ambitious targets and measures for marine	1,2	National			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		and terrestrial ecosystems, especially for vulnerable ecosystems like forests and wetlands, and incorporates the principle of non-deterioration into the national legal system. By the same Law, Greece became the first EU country to recognise Key Biodiversity Areas in its national legislation, as a key tool for expanding the network of protected areas. At the same time, Greece: - is updating its National Biodiversity Strategy and its Action Plan, in 2025, in line with the GBF; - is completing, in early 2025, the elaboration of Management Plans for all Natura 2000 protected sites; - is filling in the knowledge gaps for species and habitats by having already updated the Red List of threatened species and by having compiled the list of invasive (alien) species and their assessment, already in 2024					
	9 th Our Ocean Conference Athens, April 2024	- Greece successfully organized the 9th “Our Ocean Conference” (OOC-9), in Athens (Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre), on 16-17 April 2024, gathering more than 3500 participants from 130 countries and 10 International Organizations. The Youth Leadership Summit of the OOC-9 which was held on April 15th, assembled participants from more than 60 countries. - The Conference achieved high-level participation of governmental officials, representatives from International Organizations and a very large attendance from academia, scientists, businesses and NGOs. - In parallel with the Conference, 76 side events and more than 180 bilateral meetings took place, enhancing cooperation among participants and marking progress on critical ocean issues. The side events promoted cooperation and solutions’ finding among interested stakeholders and managed to achieve, highlight and propose practical actions on all the thematic Areas of Action, which are common for all OOCs¹⁸. - Greece decided to also include in the Conference four additional Themes, i.e. “sustainable tourism”, “green shipping”, “marine plastic pollution” and “the green transition in the Mediterranean”, as these are issues of global interest as well. - High level side events, such as on the BBNJ Agreement ratification, on the significant role women can play for the protection of oceans, as well as on the greening of the shipping sector, underlined the added value of Conference to international joint efforts towards ensuring a healthy, productive and resilience marine environment for future generations. - The 9th Our Ocean Conference closed with 469 new commitments worth at least USD 11,35 billion, across its six main Areas of Action. - Greece announced 21 new ambitious national commitments, worth of EUR 780 million. These include the designation of two new marine protected areas (MPAs) -reaching the 30% set target	Cross cutting	Regional			

¹⁸ Marine Protected Areas; Sustainable blue economy; Ocean and climate Nexus; Maritime Security; Sustainable fisheries; and Marine pollution.

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners
		before 2030-; the ban of bottom trawling in all MPAs by 2030; the establishment of a scientific monitoring and surveillance system for all MPAs; as well as the reduction by 50% of marine plastic litter and by 30% of the release of microplastics into the environment, by 2030. - As the first OOC convened after the adoption of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement), Greece announced that will proceed with its ratification prior to the 3rd UN Ocean Conference, in Nice, 9-13 June 2025. - Among the outcomes of the Conference was also the establishment of a permanent Secretariat to be hosted by the World Resources Institute (WRI), in order to ensure the smooth transition and institutional memory of the ‘Our Ocean Conferences’ for the years to come.				
Italy	National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS)	Transposed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into the NSDS - The Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security (MASE) is responsible for the overall implementation, monitoring and review process of the NSDS at national level, including the involvement of civil society and other central and territorial administrations, to ensure the alignment of national policies with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to ensure their localization. - The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) is responsible for coordinating the external dimension of the Strategy, through the Three-year Programming and Policy planning Document. - The Inter-ministerial Committee for Economic Planning (CIPE) Resolution no. 108 firstly approved the NSDS in 2017. The NSDS is updated every three years, most recently in 2023 with formal approval of the Inter-ministerial Committee for Ecological Transition (CITE) with Delibera CITE 1/2023. The NSDS represents the national coordination framework for sustainable development in Italy. The document presents two sections: - “5 Ps” section: this section describes Italy's sustainable development goals, based on the “5 Ps” of the 2030 Agenda - People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, Partnership, identifying 15 Strategic Choices, which are divided into 55 National Strategic Objectives. NSDS also establishes an integrated monitoring system to monitor target values and associated indicators. - “Sustainability Vectors” section: the NSDS identifies the Sustainability Vectors as the enabling conditions for the achievement of sustainable development goals at national and territorial level. The three Sustainability Vectors are policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD), culture for sustainability, participation for sustainable development. - Finally, NSDS includes two annexes. The first one is the National Action Plan for Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD NAP), which is the result of the collaboration between MASE, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), DG Reform of the European Commission with the support of state and non-state actors. The second one is the renewed	Crosscutting	National Regional		

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		Regulation of the national Forum for Sustainable Development. Both annexes have been approved in 2023 as an integral part of the reviewed NSDS. The NSDS monitoring system was developed by identifying a common set of core indicators, deployable at territorial level. NSDS integrated monitoring system includes not only quantitative data, but it foresees also the identification of performance and process indicators, to describe complex social processes and phenomena that cannot be described solely through quantitative descriptions. According to the art. 34 of the Legislative Decree 152/2006 and subsequent amendments, the NSDS represents the national reference framework for environmental and territorial planning, programming and evaluation processes. To this end, MASE ensure the widest participation of institutions and non-state actors to the NSDS implementation, monitoring and review process. Meetings of the Interministerial Group on the implementation of the NSDS and of the National Working Group for the monitoring of the NSDS ensure coherence among line ministries on the implementation of the NSDS and of the PCSD NAP. All Regions, Autonomous Provinces and Metropolitan Cities participate in the implementation of the NSDS and its PCSD NAP and are committed to the definition and implementation of sustainable development strategies at their own level, aligned with the NSDS, following art. 34 decree 152/2006 and sub amendments. To support the process, MASE engages with territories with specific Bilateral Collaborative Agreements and facilitates technical “Territorial Working Groups” with Regions/Autonomous Provinces and with Metropolitan Cities. The MASE facilitates the activities of the national Forum for Sustainable Development (Forum SvS) and works to make the Forum SvS the permanent Italian platform dedicated to the engagement of civil society and non-State actors in sustainable development policies and initiatives. To date (May 2025), more than 300 organizations joined the Forum SvS. According to law 125/2014 the NSDS explicitly aligns Italy’s transboundary impacts to its development cooperation goals stated in the three-year Programming and Policy Planning Document (PPPD) for development cooperation. Evolution in the period covered by this period: - 2023: NSDS and PCSD NAP are formally approved by CITE. The PCSD NAP is complemented with a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. - 2024: The Interministerial Group on the implementation of the NSDS is formally relaunched. MASE concluded a second round of Collaboration Agreements with 29 (over 35) Regions,					

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		Autonomous Provinces and Metropolitan Cities dedicated to NSDS and PCSD NAP implementation. - 2024: TSI Multi-country project “<i>Building policy coherence for sustainable development in Austria, Italy and Slovakia</i>” was approved. As for the Italian part, it focuses on the localization of the PCSD NAP in four Regions: Piemonte, Marche, Sardegna and Puglia. - 2024: UN-Habitat and MASE jointly launch the initiative “<i>Partnership Platform on Localizing the SDGs</i>”, aiming at building National SDG Localization Frameworks using PCSD as a key enabling tool for multi-level governance and territorial engagement. - 2025: The national Forum for Sustainable Development elected its new governance bodies and entered into a second mandate.					
IUCN Med	Marine and Coastal Ecosystems	IUCN Med contributed to the protection and restoration of Mediterranean marine biodiversity through updated IUCN Red List assessments (e.g., sponges, wild bees, cetaceans) and species monitoring (e.g., <i>Pinna nobilis</i>, monk seal). It supported the restoration of <i>Posidonia oceanica</i> meadows via the <i>Cherish the Nature</i> project. To address marine pollution, a macro and microplastic pollution assessments in Tunisia and Albania was launched under the <i>BeMed+</i> project, identifying sector-specific leakages and informing targeted waste reduction strategies. IUCN Med has been selected and is finalizing its role as a Technical Support Centre for Southern Europe under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), reinforcing its commitment to advancing Mediterranean cooperation and supporting countries in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.	1	Regional			
	Sustainable Rural Development and Food Systems	Through the Mubadarat initiative, IUCN Med empowered 38 North African CSOs, restoring over 200 ha and conserving 73 species. It delivered training on project design, gender equity, and advocacy. IUCN-Med also advanced agroecology and soil health through EU-funded projects (<i>SOILGUARD</i>, <i>NATAE</i>, <i>NBSoil</i>, <i>Curiosoil</i>) and promoted sustainable agriculture-culture links via the Alliance for Mediterranean Nature and Culture (AMNC), including a major conference on cultural landscapes in 2024.	2	Regional	EU		
	Sustainable Cities	IUCN Med assessed biodiversity integration into urban food policies in 17 Mediterranean cities committed to the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, offering recommendations to align urban planning with sustainability and nature conservation. Findings of this analysis will be published in 2025.	3	Regional			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
	Green and Blue Economy	IUCN Med promoted sustainable coastal tourism through its collaboration with <i>ETC-UMA</i> , producing the report “ Mapping the Impact of Blue Tourism in the Mediterranean ”, and worked with <i>MedPAN</i> and the <i>Blue Tourism Initiative</i> to integrate sustainability into MPA tourism.	5	Regional			
	Governance and Regional Cooperation	IUCN Med strengthened MPA governance by launching the Expert Assessment Group for the Green List (EAGL) dedicated to MPAs, supporting the adaptation of Green List tools to strengthen management standards; and IUCN Med promoted Nature-based Solutions (NbS) through projects like <i>RESCOM</i> , <i>IMPETUS</i> , and <i>REST-COAST</i> . It also coordinated the 2024 Institutional Dialogue on Coastal and Marine Restoration in Málaga , gathering over 150 stakeholders from 17 countries to align science and policy for ecosystem recovery.	6	Regional			
Lebanon	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023–2025	The UNSDCF serves as the strategic framework guiding UN entities' support to Lebanon's implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It emphasizes collective efforts towards sustaining peace and advancing development goals in the country.	Crosscutting	National			
	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Programme Document (2023–2025)	UNDP's initiatives during this period focused on supporting Lebanon's reform strategies to restore economic growth and financial sustainability. Efforts included strengthening governance, enhancing transparency, and increasing social and reconstruction spending.	5,6	National			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
	World Food Programme (WFP) Country Strategic Plan (2023–2025)	WFP aimed to ensure food security and meet the essential needs of vulnerable populations in Lebanon. The strategic plan aligned with national priorities and the UNSDCF, focusing on outcomes that support SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).	2	National			
	Lebanon Recovery Fund – 2023	In 2023, approximately 2,293 beneficiaries (74% women) received technical training in areas such as agri-food processing, business leadership, and environmentally sustainable agriculture. These programs aimed to enhance economic resilience and promote sustainable livelihoods, contributing to SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality).	2, 5, 6	National			
	Arab Forum for Sustainable Development 2025	Lebanon hosted the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development in 2025, focusing on inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs. The forum discussed SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).	Crosscutting	Regional			
	Energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions	Lebanese Center for Energy Conservation (LCEC) Initiatives implemented pilot projects aimed at reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. For instance, in collaboration with Electricité de Zahlé, LCEC distributed over 1,000 energy-efficient lamps in the Bekaa region.	4	National			
	ESCWA's "SDG Stories" Project (Phase II: 2022–2023)	ESCWA continued its "SDG Stories" initiative, promoting the Sustainable Development Goals among youth in Lebanon. Partnering with the Lebanese National Commission for UNESCO and seven schools, the project utilized educational tools to engage students in sustainable development topics.	Crosscutting	National	UN		
	Addressing SDG Data Gaps	To strengthen Lebanon's national statistical system, ESCWA and UN-Habitat organized training sessions in May 2024. These sessions focused on utilizing earth observations and data science tools to analyze SDG indicators related to land consumption and rural accessibility	6	National			

MCS Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
	Resilient Water Solutions Against Climate Change	In collaboration with UN-Habitat and UNICEF, ESCWA supported the "Resilient Water Solutions Against Climate Change" project. This initiative aimed to enhance climate resilience in Lebanon through sustainable water management practices, including rainwater harvesting and wastewater reuse.	2, 4		UN		
	SEACAP 4 SDG Project in Jdeideh El Chouf	The SEACAP 4 SDG project, led by the Lebanese Center for Energy Conservation, conducted training sessions on energy efficiency measures for public buildings in Jdeideh El Chouf. The initiative aimed to reduce CO2 emissions and promote renewable energy solutions at the municipal level.	3,5,6				
	Lebanese Development Network (LDN) Initiatives	LDN incorporated the SDGs into its organizational strategy, implementing projects like the EU-funded 'MYSEA' for the Blue & Green Economy and the 'READY' project to raise environmental awareness among youth. These efforts aimed to align national development with global sustainability goals.	5		EU		
	Berytech's Engagement with the SDGs	Berytech supported over 140 startups, focusing on clean technology and agri-food innovation. Programs like Cleanergy and Agrytech provided training and resources to entrepreneurs, contributing to job creation and sustainable economic development in Lebanon.	2,5				
	Greening Education Partnership (GEP)	In January 2023, Lebanon joined UNESCO's Greening Education Partnership, committing to integrate climate education into the national curriculum. Initiatives included the activation of the Green Demonstration Room and training programs for educators to promote environmental stewardship among students.	4,6				
	Sustainable Waste Management Initiatives	To address challenges in solid waste management, UNDP, in collaboration with the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, proposed the installation of solar power systems at key facilities. For example, a photovoltaic system at Zahle's waste facility aimed to ensure operational sustainability and reduce carbon emissions.	3,4				
Malta	Sustainable Development Strategy for 2050	With the Sustainable Development Strategy for 2050 published in 2024, Malta's aims to reinforce existing institutional mechanisms and support structures, while introducing new processes to enable more effective, efficient, and coherent efforts toward achieving sustainable development. The Strategy outlines five strategic goals identified as most significant and relevant to Malta: - Transitioning toward a climate-neutral green and blue economy - Preserving sustainable urban development and cultural heritage	Crosscutting	National			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		- Ensuring healthy lives and well-being for all - Accelerating digital transformation, smart mobility, and connectivity - Achieving social fairness and prosperity for all					
	Second Voluntary National Review	Malta will present its Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) this year on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This reaffirms the country's long-standing commitment to sustainable development. The review builds on the progress made since 2018, when Malta presented its First VNR. It incorporates a new strategic framework, broader stakeholder engagement, and a stronger reliance on comprehensive data. The Second VNR highlights the Maltese Government's efforts in implementing numerous initiatives that have positively contributed to socio-economic and environmental sustainability. The data confirm the effectiveness of these measures, including a notable reduction in poverty, particularly among adults aged 18–64, increased employment rates, growth in small-scale industries, and heightened investment in innovation.	Crosscutting	National			
	Gender equality	Malta made substantial progress in gender equality, narrowing the gender pay gap, increasing female representation in leadership and politics, and strengthening legal frameworks to combat gender-based violence. In education, completion rates have improved, and digital skills have advanced. In the healthcare sector, life expectancy has increased, and healthcare coverage has expanded. Environmental quality has benefited from urban greening initiatives, heritage preservation, and reduced air pollution. Effective measures have also led to reduced domestic material consumption and increased municipal waste recycling. Ambitious initiatives in renewable energy, alongside the expansion and modernization of electricity infrastructure, have produced positive outcomes. Furthermore, Malta has achieved near-universal access to safe drinking water and complete wastewater treatment coverage. Significant progress has also been made in marine protection, with the establishment of 18 Marine Protected Areas, substantially increasing the extent of protected marine zones over the years.	6	National			
MedCities	Support exchanging good practices among Mediterranean cities	4 thematic Working Groups have been consolidated as an instrument or to gather technical representatives of the municipalities for exchanges as to technical aspects in the field of selected topics, creating direct links between peers. This structure also make it possible to consolidate and transfer the results of some projects. The 4 themes covered are: 1) Greener and resilient cities, 2) Coastal Cities, 3) Sustainable Urban Mobility and 4) Integrated solid waste management. Trainings, capacity building activities and technical visit are some of the activities of the groups, which can also include policy and advocacy actions	3	Regional			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
	Mediterranean Academy for Mediterranean Municipalities (BAMM)	BAMM was successfully launched organized by MedCities and the Barcelona City Council. The academy brought together 16 technical experts and mayors from ten Mediterranean cities. The focus of this first edition was on developing Green and Blue cities, structured into three major blocks: Policies and Initiatives for Urban Resilience, Planning Resilient Cities, and Efficient Urban Water Management, concluding with a peer-to-peer session. Training sessions were combined with technical visits. The second edition will take place on October 2025 with the support of the Spanish Cooperation Agency (AECID)	3	Regional			
	Support capacities building Mediterranean cities	MedCities was approached by the City Climate Gap Fund in order to identify opportunities for cooperation in the framework of its Capacity Development for Knowledge and Advocacy partners programme. MedCities has submitted a proposal for the implementation of the “MedCUC - MedCities Climate Urban Capacity” programme, which has launched its activities in 2025. Among other goals, this project aims to enhance our capacities as providers of services to our members in different areas of expertise.	3	Regional	City Climate Gap Fund		
	Governance and policy processes	MedCities has continued engaging in policy process, co-organising with the European Commission an event in the UN Ocean Decade Conference in Barcelona in April 2024, preparing MedCities position towards the World Water Forum 2024 and to UNOC3 in Nice, participating in the latest COPs of Climate and the Biodiversity Convention as well as those of the Barcelona Convention, actively engaging in the consultations towards a New European Pact for the Mediterranean, among many others.	3	Regional			
	Projects	Another key field of work is the engagement in the articulation of sustainability agendas through EU governance projects: Clear examples are the participation in the Interreg Euro-MED governance projects Dialogue 4 Natural Heritage and Community for Living areas as well as the Mediterranean Lighthouse of the EU Mission Ocean & Waters, through BlueMissionMed. In 2024 only, MedCities engaged in 19 projects, leading 7 of them and incorporating to different extends 46 member cities. MedCities organized 17 capacity building activities (trainings, workshops, mentoring processes) and 8 exchange visits. MedCities produced 17 studies, reports or position papers.	1,3	Regional	EU		
Morocco	Energy transition	Morocco is accelerating its energy transition with the aim of placing its economy on a green growth trajectory based on the use of clean energy. Indeed, the energy sector has undergone significant transformation in recent years, with the development of renewable energies, widespread access to affordable energy and improved energy efficiency. Morocco continues to engage in large-scale projects and reforms to modernise its energy system, particularly through the development of green hydrogen and green mobility.	4	National			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		Morocco has launched an ambitious initiative, called ‘Offre Maroc’, aimed at positioning the country as a major player in the field of green hydrogen. This strategy is based on an integrated approach, ranging from electricity production from renewable sources to the conversion of hydrogen into derivative products such as ammonia, methanol and synthetic fuels. Green hydrogen, produced by electrolysis of water using renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power, is a clean alternative to fossil fuels. It is a versatile energy carrier with a wide range of applications, from powering industries and vehicles to storing renewable energy. With zero carbon emissions, green hydrogen is perfectly aligned with global climate goals. In March 2025, the Morocco Offer steering committee selected five national and international investors to develop six major projects in the southern regions of the country. These projects represent a total investment of 319 billion dirhams (approximately 32.6 billion dollars) and will each benefit from a land base of up to 30,000 hectares. The first pilot project for green hydrogen production in Morocco will come on stream in 2026. The platform, to be developed in the Guelmim-Oued Noun region, will produce 10,000 tonnes of green hydrogen per year. The electrolyser will be powered by a hybrid energy plant combining solar and wind power, with a potential capacity of 200 MW. The hydrogen production plant will be connected to a seawater desalination unit planned for installation in Tan-Tan (a city in southern Morocco).					
	ICZM	To ensure adequate protection of Morocco's coastline, two pieces of legislation (legal and regulatory) were adopted in Morocco in 2015 and 2016: Law 81-12 on the coastline and Decree No. 2-15-769, which focused on the composition, the powers and operating procedures of the National Commission and Regional Commissions for Integrated Coastal Management, as well as the procedures for drawing up the National Coastal Plan (NCP) and Regional Coastal Plans (RCP). In accordance with the provisions of this legal framework, the National Coastal Plan (NCP) was adopted by decree in 2022 and the Regional Coastal Plans (RCP) are currently being developed. The NCP is divided into six strategic areas and 20 strategic objectives, namely: - Strategic area 1: establishing coastal governance - Strategic priority 2: Develop spatial planning tools that are compatible with national spatial planning policies and with the objectives and guidelines of the NCP. - Strategic priority 3: Protect and preserve the coastal ecosystem from degradation. - Strategic priority 4: Ensure better use of the coastline. - Strategic priority 5: Improve knowledge to guide decision-making towards sustainable coastal development. - Strategic priority 6: Mobilise and strengthen the capacities of stakeholders to successfully protect and enhance the coastline.	1,6	National			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners
Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (PA OSCE)	Main regional/global conferences and OSCE PA meetings in 2023	- 22-23 May 2023, Baku: The <u>OSCE PA's Conference on "The Role of National Parliaments in Promoting Security and Stability through Green Economy, Connectivity and Sustainable Development in the OSCE Region"</u> in Azerbaijan provided a platform for the parliamentary exchange of best practices and insightful discussions on the crucial role of green concepts, technologies, trade and international co- operation in achieving sustainable development and fostering economic growth. - 5 June 2023, Copenhagen: On <u>World Environment Day, held under the theme of "Solutions to Plastic Pollution"</u>, the leaders of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Economic and Environmental Committee (Second Committee) demanded real action on combating plastic pollution. - 30 June – 04 July 2023, Vancouver: In the <u>Vancouver Declaration adopted at the OSCE PA Annual Session</u>, parliamentarians emphasized the unique role of national parliaments in promoting sustainable development and urged participating States to intensify their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - July 2023, Vienna: Pia Kauma, OSCE PA President participated in <u>OSCE High-Level OSCE Conference on Climate Change</u> and emphasized the need for collective action to tackle climate change effectively. - 12 August 2023, Copenhagen: On the occasion of <u>UN International Youth Day, held under the theme "Green Skills for Youth: Towards a Sustainable World"</u>, OSCE PA leaders called for meaningful youth engagement in shaping a sustainable future. - 11-12 September 2023, Ankarán: In the <u>Conference on Marine Plastic pollution in the Mediterranean Sea</u> of the Vienna Forum for Democracy & Human Rights, an expert from the OSCE PA informed on OSCE initiatives to protect the Mediterranean Sea from plastic waste. - 14-15 September 2023, Prague: At the <u>OSCE Forum on the Economic and Environmental Dimension</u> Irene Charalambides, OSCE PA Vice-President and Special Representative on Fighting Corruption, along with Artur Gerasymov, Vice-Chair of the PA's Second Committee encouraged participants to address challenges such as climate change and corruption. - 30 November 2023, online: At the <u>Second Global Forum of Interparliamentary Cooperation in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals</u>, OSCE PA President Pia Kauma and the PA's Special Representative on Central Asia Farah Karimi highlighted OSCE PA initiatives that seek to promote the inclusion of women and youth in implementation of the SDGs. - 7 December 2023, Portorož: In his address to the <u>23rd Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (COP 23)</u>, OSCE PA Second Committee Chair Azay Guliyev emphasized the importance of parliamentary engagement in achieving a green transition in the Mediterranean. - 13 December 2023, Copenhagen: In a <u>Statement on the outcomes of COP28 in Dubai</u> OSCE PA Special Representative on Climate Change Pons called on parliamentarians worldwide to continue driving the global ambition for climate action.	Cross cutting	Regional Global		

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
	Main regional/global conferences and OSCE PA meetings in 2024	- 22-23 February 2024, Vienna: At the OSCE PA Winter Session the Second Committee held discussions on advancing a common OSCE approach in promoting economic and environmental security. - 21 June 2024, Valletta: At the Chairpersonship's High-Level Conference on Climate Change in Malta the OSCE PA Special Representative on Climate Change Pons highlighted the need for greater investment in the fight against climate change. - 29 June – 3 July 2024, Bucharest: The Bucharest Declaration adopted at the OSCE PA's Annual Session underscored the need for enhanced multilateral diplomacy in addressing challenges related to climate change, energy security, environmental protection and sustainable development in the OSCE region. - 2-4 October 2024, Dublin: Chaired by the PA's Special Representative on Climate Change Pons, the second session of the PA's Autumn Session focused on addressing the climate crisis and the role of MPs in fulfilling global commitments ahead of COP29. - 18 November 2024, Baku: During an OSCE's side-event on "Advancing a Climate- Resilient, Green, and Just Energy Transition" at the COP29 in Azerbaijan, OSCE PA Special Representative on Climate Change Pons, underscored the urgent need to integrate climate resilience into energy policies for a sustainable, clean energy future	Cross cutting	Regional Global			
	Main regional/global conferences and OSCE PA meetings in 2025	- 20-21 February 2025, Vienna: During the OSCE PA Winter Session, discussions in the Second Committee highlighted the growing challenges posed by climate change, migration, energy, resource scarcity and included a Special Debate on climate migration in the OSCE region. - 30 March 2025, Kastoria: Hosted by the Special Representative on South East Europe, Mr. Kyriakos Hadjiyianni, the 3rd Inter-Parliamentary Forum of OSCE PA Delegations from the region in Kastoria, Greece focused on energy security and the green transition. - March 2024 – March 2025: In the context of field visits to Italy (including Lampedusa), Türkiye, Morocco and Spain (including the Canary Islands) the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Migration has emphasizing the benefits of enhanced, co-ordinated, and humane migration governance. - 6 May 2025, Budva: In the 5th International Parliamentary Conference of the Silk Road Group in Montenegro OSCE parliamentarians focussed on sustainable tourism, clean energy and ecological balance.	Cross cutting	Regional Global			
Spain	Participation to the HLPF in New York,	This commitment is evidenced through participation at the highest level in the HLPF in New York, where Spain annually submits the Voluntary National Review. The delegation in 2023 was led by the President of the Government, and in 2024, by the Third Vice President and Minister of Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, Ms. Teresa Ribera, and the Minister of Social Rights, Consumption and Agenda 2030, Mr. Pablo Bustinduy. Spain is currently engaged in the process of	Crosscutting	National Regional			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		reviewing the National Strategy for Sustainable Development, which will provide a framework to develop national actions between now and 2030 in order to continue fulfilling the commitments acquired.					
	Biodiversity Protected areas	- In May 2023, the “Framework of Actions for Doñana” was updated with the aim of reversing the deterioration of Doñana, due to the intensification of human activity in the recent years. The challenge, is to maintain the balances, promoting a coordinated management of water use, which guarantees in the long term a level of exploitation compatible with the recovery of the aquifers and the needs of the National Park and its environment, and with the maintenance of economic activity at sustainable levels. The publication of this Framework of Actions has been an exercise of responsibility by all the administrations involved, with the collaboration and participation of scientific organizations, water users and civil society in general. - The “Mar Menor” is a coastal lagoon hypersaline of 135 square kilometers of surface, the largest in Spain and the largest in Europe, located in the southeast of the Iberian Peninsula. The lack of land use and planning and severe economic activities, have generated pressures on the Mar Menor and its environment, which have led to the loss of its natural characteristics and cultural values. The Framework of Priority Actions for the Recovery of the Mar Menor has been updated in 2024 to address and intervene in the main causes of eutrophication contributing to the recovery of the natural dynamics of the lagoon, restoration and renaturalization, prioritizing the Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) projects, taking into account the socioeconomic uses and the preservation of the natural heritage. Additionally, in February 2025, Spain approved the legal regulations governing the representative and governing bodies of the Mar Menor, becoming the first ecosystem in Europe to have its own charter of rights - In February 2025, Spain ratified the Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), becoming the first country in Europe to ratify it. The Treaty commits Spain to declaring 30% of the high seas a protected area by 2030.	2,6	National			
	Ecological transition	The ecological transition is already a lever for modernization and economic growth, the development of industrial ecosystems, the creation of sustainable jobs, the strengthening of competitiveness and the reduction of external energy dependence. This transition is an opportunity for the development of territorial cohesion, the improvement of people's health and the environment, and social justice. Spain is committed to a fair and equitable universal access to clean energy, and for this reason, we would like to highlight the following accomplishment in this period: - In September 2024, the National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan (2023-2030) was approved as a national strategic orientation tool that integrates the energy and climate policy with a time horizon to 2030. This planning exercise has facilitated the anticipation and coherence of both sectorial public policies and investment decisions, serving to guide decision making in the face of	1,4,6	National			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		short-term conjunctural scenarios in a coherent manner with the challenges and structural opportunities in the medium and long term, thus taking advantage of the competitive advantages that our country may have. - Moreover, in January 2025 Spain has initiated the procedure for the approval of the National Strategy against Energy Poverty 2025-2030 that will seek energy equity, moving from a context of conjunctural and extraordinary measures to the deployment and consolidation of structural and sustainable measures over time. - In addition, in February 2025, the Social Plan for the Climate was launched through the public consultation process. Aimed to help vulnerable consumers and microenterprises, it will have 9 billion for energy rehabilitation of housing, emission-free heating and cooling and sustainable and affordable mobility.					
	Circular Economy	In November 2024 Spain published a Report for strategic transition to a circular economy , with the goal of providing information and guidance for the elaboration of a high-level national roadmap for Spain's transition to a circular economy, which will allow progress to be made towards the fulfillment of the Objective 5 of the MSSD: Transition towards sustainable, green, blue and circular economy and sustainable finance.	5				
	Sustainable mobility	Finally, Spain is committed with sustainable mobility as an essential aspect in environmental and climate protection policies, guarantees economic and social development and ensures territorial cohesion. With the aim of redirecting mobility towards more sustainable modes of transport, since 2024 the Sustainable Mobility Law Project is being processed, to includes innovative solutions to promote inclusive, accessible and sustainable mobility. The Law Project is based on four pillars: social right to mobility; measures for healthy and sustainable mobility, innovation in digitalization and rigor in decision making. This Law Project aim to contribute to the Objective 3: Plan and manage sustainable and resilient Mediterranean cities	3				
Tunisia	National strategy for the ecological transition	In 2023, Tunisia adopted an ambitious National Ecological Transition Strategy that seeks to reduce the exacerbated threats to its natural resources (soil, water, forests, coastline, mineral resources, etc.), which are particularly scarce and vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The Strategy is based on promoting human well-being through the achievement of social equity and intra- and intergenerational justice, within the framework of sustainable development, while involving all socio-economic, public, private and associative actors in its implementation. This strategy addresses the endogenous shortcomings observed in Tunisia in terms of environmental management and natural resource governance. It also takes into account global exogenous threats and the effects of the triple global environmental crisis linked to the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.	Crosscutting	National			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		The Strategy is based on founding principles: - Promotion of human well-being in all its aspects: economic, social, cultural, material and immaterial - Achievement of social equity and intra- and intergenerational justice - Consideration of all components of the natural and artificial environment as the foundation of life and well-being - Continuous and progressive pursuit of sustainability in all its dimensions and pursuit of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - Promotion of the entire national heritage: natural, cultural and civilizational - Participation of all public and private socio-economic actors. The Strategy includes 5 Axis: - Axis 1: Governance and financing: Establish institutional and territorial governance and provide financing systems. - Axis 2: Climate change: Strengthen the adaptation and resilience capacities of sectors, environments and populations. - Axis 3: Sustainable management of resources and ecosystems: Rationalise the management of natural resources and ecosystems (terrestrial and marine). - Axis 4: Sustainable production and consumption and the fight against pollution: Lay the foundations for a green, blue and circular economy by developing sustainable consumption and production patterns and eradicating pollution hotspots. - Axis 5: Science, knowledge and cultural heritage for ecological transition: Develop environmental culture, science, knowledge and human resource skills in the field of ecological transition (environmental protection, sustainable development, adaptation to climate change).					
	National blue economy strategy	The challenges faced by the Tunisian economy over the last decade have highlighted the urgent need for a sustainable and resilient development model. The country's strategic response, articulated in the 'Tunisia 2035 Vision' and the 'National Development Plan 2023-2025', emphasizes a green and blue economy, focusing on sectors such as tourism, fisheries, aquaculture and maritime transport as key drivers of recovery and long-term sustainable development. Vision of the National blue economy strategy: The common and shared vision of the blue economy is an economy that creates wealth and jobs, ensuring both the environmental balance of natural capital and the social inclusion of the populations concerned. The blue economy therefore promotes economic growth, social inclusion and the preservation or improvement of livelihoods, while ensuring the environmental sustainability of the sea and coastal areas. It must also offer the best conditions for	5	National			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		greater resilience and adaptation to climate change. It will also promote the articulation and coordination of different sectoral strategies. This vision will address three major challenges: - The creation of wealth with socio-economic benefits for current and future generations. - The preservation of natural capital through the protection and restoration of biological diversity and marine ecosystems. - Adaptation and resilience to the growing impacts of climate change. Three strategic objectives will enable this vision: - Promoting economic growth in traditional and new maritime activities. - Social inclusion and gender equality through the creation of sustainable jobs and the preservation and improvement of livelihoods. - Sustaining natural resources and ecosystem services. Six strategic priorities have been identified to help achieve the objectives: - Establishing institutional governance involving all stakeholders. - Ensuring the coordination and consistency of public policies, strategies, and sectoral plans and programmes. - Promote appropriate and innovative resources and financing mechanisms for blue economy programmes and projects: public and private investment, public-private partnerships, and the issuance of blue bonds. - Promote job creation, poverty reduction, and the inclusion of gender and vulnerable groups. - Develop knowledge of marine and coastal capital, both natural and cultural. - Increase resilience to climate change by strengthening mitigation and adaptation measures.					
	National Implementation Plan for the Regional Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031)	In 2023, Tunisia developed its National Implementation Plan for the Regional Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Marine Pollution from Ships, with financial support from the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) and in consultation with stakeholders. This Plan is part of the Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031) and contributes to the achievement of the following global and thematic Mediterranean strategies: - The Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) (2016-2025). - The United Nations Environment Programme Medium-Term Strategy / Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) (2022-2027). - The Ecosystem Approach and its roadmap. - The Mediterranean Strategy for the Management of Ballast Water from Ships.	1	National Region			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		- The Regional Plan on Marine Waste Management in the Mediterranean adopted under Article 15 of the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities.					
	Sustainable blue tourism	Sustainable blue tourism (MSSD new flagship initiative) In Tunisia, the first pilot site supported by the blue tourism initiative is the island of Djerba: The objective is to promote the sustainable management of natural coastal areas in mature seaside destinations, reconciling site preservation and tourism development by supporting the implementation of visitor management plans and field activities in Ramsar sites and accompanying the transition of the hotel sector to improve its biodiversity performance.	5	National			
		Co-Evolve 4GB: Co-evolution of human coastal activities and Mediterranean natural systems for sustainable tourism and blue growth in the Mediterranean. Results: (i) An integrated analysis of threats and factors conducive to sustainable coastal tourism, (ii) a toolkit with indicators for analysing the level of sustainability of tourism. (iii) Two training cycles for local partners and stakeholders to create monitoring systems, guidelines for developing sustainable tourism policies and products, and strategic planning. (iv) Improvement and promotion of sustainable maritime tourism in various pilot areas in Tunisia (Sousse-Monastir and Djerba)	5	National Regional	EU		
	Sustainable Cities and blue economy	BEST TAG - The blue economy for sustainable cities in Taranto and Gabès. The BEST TAG project creates a link between the cities of Taranto, Italy, and Gabès, Tunisia. Both cities are located on the Mediterranean coast and will collaborate to decide on strategies and actions aimed at improving the sustainability of urban areas and integrating national urban policies into integrated urban planning geared towards the blue economy, taking into account and responding to the expectations of their communities.	3,5	National Regional	EU		
	Sustainable Cities	ASIMA TUNIS: Strategic Planning and Multi-Level Governance for a Resilient Metropolitan City. Strategic Planning and Multi-Level Governance for a Resilient Metropolis is a project implemented by MedCities, the Barcelona Metropolitan Area and the Municipality of Tunis, which aims to strengthen territorial planning in the city of Tunis within its metropolitan context. The project supports the Municipality of Tunis in developing a participatory City Strategy that integrates multi-partner and multi-stakeholder consultation mechanisms and aims to make the Greater Tunis area more inclusive and resilient from an environmental, urban and social perspective.	3	National Regional	EU		
		AUTREMENT - For sustainable and participatory mobility in Kairouan and Mahdia The Objective of the project is to promote sustainable urban development in Kairouan and Mahdia (Tunisia) and thereby improve the quality of life of their inhabitants and their economic and tourist appeal.	3	National Regional			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
		The AUTREMENT project is part of the Strasbourg-Kairouan decentralised cooperation programme, with the aim of promoting sustainable urban development in Kairouan and Mahdia, thereby improving the quality of life of their inhabitants and their economic and tourist appeal. The development of active mobility, mainly cycling, through the implementation of dedicated facilities, and the strengthening of citizen participation in local governance, are the cornerstones around which the project will be structured.					
	Climate change	- International investment conference for the implementation of the Nationally Determined Contribution (Tunisia's NDC - May 2023). With a view to continuing its efforts to implement Tunisia's National Determined Contribution, the Ministry of the Environment organised an International Investment Conference for the implementation of Tunisia's NDC on 25 and 26 May 2023 in Tunis, in collaboration with the NDC Partnership Alliance and with the support of the UNDP and GIZ. - In the updated NDC, Tunisia has announced its goal of reducing its carbon intensity by 45% in 2030 compared to 2010 levels. This target represents a more ambitious goal, as Tunisia's first NDC, submitted in September 2015, aimed to reduce its carbon intensity by 41% between 2010 and 2030. - Tunisia's Fourth National Communication under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (December 2023)	4	National Regional			
	National Strategy for Carbon Neutrality and Climate Change Resilience	In its National Strategy for Carbon Neutrality and Climate Change Resilience Tunisia has the ambitious goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. Thus, the BaC scenario implies a sharp decline in net national GHG emissions (emissions minus removals), from 35 MtCO ₂ e in 2020 to zero in 2050.	4	National Regional			
	Energy Transition	Key initiatives in the energy sector include: - Alliance of Municipalities for Energy Transition (ACTE) programme - Energy Transition in Public Institutions programme (TEEP-2021-2025) - programme to promote solar PV for electricity production connected to the LV electricity grid (Prosol-Elec - annual programme) with annual electricity consumption greater than or equal to 1,800 kWh/year - Prosol-Elec economic programme (2022-2025) - Sunref Tunisia programme (2020-2024) - 'Energy Transition Objectives OTE- 2018-2024' programme - 'Power Tunisia' programme (2022-2027)	4	National			

MCSD Member	Activities and initiatives	Short description	MSSD Objectives	Geographic Scope	Funding sources	Partners	
	Climate Change and circular economy	The main objective of the project on Climate Protection through the Circular Economy in Tunisia are: - To improve the capacities of national and local actors to integrate aspects related to the circular economy (CE) and climate change (CC) into solid waste management, while promoting job creation and gender equality - Jointly implemented by the Ministry of the Environment, ANGED and GIZ, the project will adopt different approaches - Improve the strategic framework for the implementation of a circular economy that creates jobs, respects the climate and is gender-sensitive - Strengthen institutional capacities at national and local level - Promote and develop partnership models for increased private sector participation in this area - Raise awareness of CC and CE among policy makers, civil society actors and the education system.	4,5	National			
	First Biennial Transparency Report (December 2024)	Tunisia's first Biennial Transparency Report illustrates its commitment to transparency and climate action. Although challenges remain, the progress made provides a solid foundation for accelerating efforts towards a low-carbon and resilient future. The reported results highlight Tunisia's efforts to align its climate policies with the objectives of the Paris Agreement.	4	National			