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The Hashemite
Kingdom of
Jordan



2021 UfM Ministerial on Environment and Climate Action - Side event
Biological Diversity, Ecosystem Restoration and Food Systems
Protecting and Restoring at the core of the shift towards Green, Blue, Circular Economy
4th of October – HYBRID MEETING

Background/Context:

- According to the most recent Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services by IPBES (2019), around 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction. The Mediterranean basin is recognized as a biodiversity hotspot as a system of great conservation value (IUCN, 2008), with more than 60% of species unique to the Mediterranean. However, almost 2,000 species have been classified as ‘threatened’ on the IUCN red list, 69% of which are animals and 31% are plants whilst 34% of fish species are expected to be lost due to overfishing. The efforts to preserve biodiversity are at the core of the shift towards a green, blue and circular economy at the Euro Mediterranean level. In this respect, food systems, which absorb a large amount of natural resources, are key to preserving biodiversity and restoring ecosystems.
- The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration was launched in June 2021. Healthier ecosystems ensure richer biodiversity, more fertile soils, larger yields of timber and fish, and larger stores of greenhouse gases.

By 2030, the restoration of 350 million hectares of degraded terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems could generate US\$9 trillion in ecosystem services. Restoration could also remove 13 to 26 gigatons of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. The economic benefits of such interventions exceed nine times the cost of investment, whereas inaction is at least three times more costly.
- As stressed at the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Pre-Summit and Summit, food systems transformation is a key entry point to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. While solutions exist, means to implement them including scaled up finance are needed to achieve successful and sustainable results. Regional collaboration is crucial to boost transformative actions towards more sustainable food systems in the Mediterranean, with the engagement of informed citizens and rural communities, for greater resilience to climate change and healthier diets. This entails investments in research and capacity building for more sustainable practices by small producers, entrepreneurs and consumers, adding value to food products and food waste, minimizing the footprint on ecosystems from food production, processing, distribution and waste management systems.



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- The 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Action is expected to step up and accelerate the shift towards a green, circular and socially inclusive economy at the Mediterranean level while providing continuity to the key thematic priorities of the 2014 Ministerial Declaration. The “2030GreenerMed Agenda” (*Towards 2030: Agenda for a Greener Med – Contributing to Achieving the Environmental SDGs in the Mediterranean*) has been agreed as a tool for operational cooperation and maximization of joint efforts among UfM countries and stakeholders. It provides a framework that integrates regional activities and accommodates a number of relevant actions - including ecosystems restoration and more sustainable food systems - that lead to richer biological diversity while at the same time promoting a green, blue, circular and inclusive economy.



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GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF THE EVENT

To share, highlight and promote the high-level political and operational efforts towards conservation of biological diversity and ecosystem restoration, with a special focus on food systems within the wider shift to green, blue, circular economy at Euro-Mediterranean level.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To highlight the critical elements that link biological diversity, ecosystem restoration and sustainable food systems in the Mediterranean region.
2. To showcase regional partnerships and promote collaborative actions shift towards green, blue, circular economy and sustainable recovery, among others.
3. To present key, exemplary actions (initiatives, programs, projects) addressing biodiversity, ecosystem restoration, sustainable consumption and production, pollution prevention and sustainable food systems, among others.

OUTCOMES

Showcasing the actions supporting the UfM Environment Agenda – the so called GreenerMed Agenda, thus shaping the way to 2030 and tapping into all the opportunities for partnerships and reinforced cooperation to achieve the goals on common biodiversity goals of the upcoming Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and a structural swift towards green, blue, circular economy.

FORMAT

The high-level political event will be run in hybrid format with the Host Country, UfM Co-Presidencies, High Level representatives of Governments and international, regional, intergovernmental organizations as well as academia, private sector, civil society organizations. If live participation cannot be guaranteed due to different time zones, pre-recorded videos could be integrated.

IT PLATFORM

Zoom

AGENDA

Moderator - *Dr. Khalida Bouzar, Assistant Administrator and Director, Regional Bureau of Arab States, UNDP*

<p>16:30 – 16:55 (CET)</p>	<p>WELCOME AND OPENING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towards a Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework: critical elements of the new global biodiversity framework <i>HE Dr.Yasmine Fouad, Minister of the Environment, President of the Biodiversity COP 14, Egypt</i> <p>KEYNOTE SPEECHES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Green Deal – Principles and priorities for a renewed partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood <i>HE Mr. Virginius Sinkevicius, EU Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, UfM EU CoPresidency</i> • Sustainable consumption and production and resource efficiency: addressing climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, and promoting long term sustainability <i>HE Mr.Nabil Masarweh, Minister of Environment, Jordan UfM CoPresidency</i> • The UfM Environment and Climate Agenda as strategic tool for cooperation in tune with the 2030 vision <i>HE Amb.Nasser Kamel - UfM Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat</i> • Enhancing cooperation and maximizing efforts in the Mediterranean region <i>HE Mr.Ahmed ABOUL GHEIT, Secretary General of the League of Arab States</i>
<p>16:55 – 17:20 (CET)</p>	<p>BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION AND FOOD SYSTEMS: WHERE DOES THE MEDITERRANEAN STAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformation and systemic thinking: main outcomes of the UN Food System Summit within the ecosystem restoration decade <i>Mr. Jamie Morrison, Director, Food Systems and Food Safety Division, FAO</i> <p><i>Video on Sustainable Food Systems in the Mediterranean</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towards the 22th COP of the Barcelona Convention <i>Ms. Tatiana Hema, Coordinator, UNEP MAP</i> • Engaging society at large through regional partners active at local level

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ms. Elodie Nunes, Executive Secretary, Conference of Peripheral Maritime regions – Mr. Emad Adly, Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED), Director – Prof. Michael Scoullou, Chairman, Mediterranean Information Office on Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE)
17:20 – 17:45 (CET)	<p>EXEMPLARY OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS AT SUPPORT OF THE UFM ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE AGENDA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional projects in place and the perspectives 2021-27 <i>Mr. Philip Mikos, Head of Unit, Cooperation with North of Africa countries, EU</i> • BlueMed and EU Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030 <i>Ms. Sigi Gruber, Active Senior Advisor, Healthy Oceans and Seas, DG Research & Innovation, EU</i> • PRIMA-Boosting Research and Innovation to address the environment and climate challenges and progress on SDGs at Mediterranean level <i>Prof. Angelo Riccaboni, Chair, PRIMA Foundation</i> • Interreg Euro-MED, a greener programme for the Mediterranean <i>Curzio Cervelli, Coordinator; Interreg MED Programme</i> • From ENI to NEXT: new strategic programming for external transnational cooperation in the Mediterranean Sea <i>Ms. Antonella Giglio, Interim Director, Managing Authority of ENI 'Cross Border Cooperation' Mediterranean Programme</i>
17:45 CET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusions <i>Isidro Gonzalez, Deputy Secretary General, UfM Secretariat</i>