



NEWS, July 2023

Making the Mediterranean Green Transition Happen by Protecting, Restoring and Valorising the Natural Environment and Heritage

Launching the Natural Heritage Mission

9th June
2023

Barcelona
& Online

94
participants

The Natural Heritage Mission launched its activities and was introduced to a wide audience through the hybrid event **“Making the Mediterranean Green transition happen by protecting, restoring and valorising the natural environment and heritage”**, organized on the 9th of June 2023 in Barcelona, labelled by the EU Green Week initiative.

The event was the opportunity for the **community of practice** established by the Natural Heritage Mission to meet for the first time and set the ground for its 7-year journey of collaboration. The event was hosted by **CREAF and MedCities**, Natural Heritage Mission partners, in collaboration with the **Institute of Catalan Studies** in Barcelona. The main audience involved were the **Associated partners** of the Mission, 67 organizations in total, as well as other stakeholders interested in the Mission's objectives.

The event began with the greetings of the hosts: Joan Pino, Director of CREAM and Josep Canals, Secretary General of MedCities. Mr. Pino highlighted the importance of sharing knowledge and transposing it towards policy makers to build resilience towards global change in the Mediterranean region. Mr. Canals stressed that this Mission is an opportunity for local administration actors to work together, this being the key for policy implementation, especially in terms of reversing the impacts of human action on nature.





As Natural Heritage Mission is labelled by Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and funded by the Interreg Euro-MED programme, the floor was given to representatives from these initiatives. Ms. Cristina Cardenete, representing UfM, referred to UfM's long experience of collaboration with a broad spectrum of entities in the Mediterranean region and its intention to support the Programme's approach to contribute to a more resilient society through the exchange of mutually relevant information.

In addition, Mr. Christoph Maier, project officer of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme's Joint Secretariat, discussed on how the Programme is embracing many governance activities related to nature, covering the very broad and diverse conditions in the Mediterranean region.

Afterwards, the partners of the Mission's projects* took the floor and gave an overview of the Mission's objectives and activities. The presentation was structured following some main questions: '**WHY** this Mission exists/was conceived?', '**WHAT** is its main purpose/scope?', '**WHO** is taking part in the Mission?' and '**HOW** its objectives will be achieved?'

WHY? The Mediterranean basin is a biodiversity hotspot and the increasing impacts of climate change in the area make the need to address fragmented approaches and increase collaboration a necessity. This is also a prerequisite to support the transition towards a climate-neutral and resilient society and to ensure the sustainable growth and the well-being of all Mediterranean citizens.

WHAT? The Natural Heritage Mission involves two governance projects working together, the Thematic Community and Institutional Dialogue projects. The two projects, which complement each other, are joining forces both to amplify and increase the impact of the results, and transfer them into public policies. This will be achieved through the creation of a community of practice aiming to evolve, grow and finally lead to the establishment of the Mediterranean Resilience Network. Through various activities, the Mission4Nature will engage stakeholders across the Mediterranean and beyond.

WHO? Mission4Nature is composed by 16 Project Partners and 67 Associated Partners, representing a diverse mix of organizations, covering a wide range of disciplines and expertise. Moreover, the Associated Partners have a main role in the Mission, by being supporters, advisors or end-users of the best tools, solutions and policies presented.

***The Thematic Community and Institutional Dialogue projects are the two Interreg Euro-MED governance projects dealing with the topic of "Protecting, restoring and valorising the natural environment and heritage" in the Mediterranean (Natural Heritage Mission).**





HOW? Mission4Nature's specific activities include thematic working groups, institutional dialogue events, awareness campaigns, mentoring programs, and policy papers, among others.

After the presentation of the Mission, an open discussion took place. Participants underlined the importance of using a user-driven approach, beginning from the needs of the territories and matching them with available knowledge and solutions. A tailored method for the transferring of these solutions is needed. Finally, the Mission's partners mentioned the call they plan to announce, inviting stakeholders from the whole region to share good practices, aiming to develop an online tool gathering the existing knowledge.

What is happening this year?

- Announcement and establishment of the Mission's Working Groups (September-October 2023).
- Awareness campaign 2023 on coastal erosion (see more details [here](#)).
- First Annual Institutional Dialogue event (Slovenia, 23-24 November 2023), back-to-back with the Interreg Euro-MED Programme's annual event.

