



WWF

NEWSLETTER

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# MEDITERRANEAN ECHO

## Newsletter of the WWF Mediterranean Programme • Issue 12

Generate a sea change in Mediterranean marine management • Build a future for Mediterranean landscapes  
• Secure Mediterranean water resources • Equip Mediterranean ecosystems to adapt to climate change



Many Mediterranean countries including Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Morocco, Portugal and - for the first time, officially - Tunisia joined the event. The success of Earth Hour is greater every year - it is not just a lights off campaign, it is a great opportunity to create a momentum for better energy consumption and reflect on ways and actions to tackle global warming. Here are highlights of some of WWF Mediterranean's activities in over 150 cities.

### Earth Hour celebrated for the first time in Tunisia

The biggest and most symbolic Mediterranean Earth Hour event was held in Tunisia, with President Marzouki switching off the lights in the Avenue Habib Bourguiba in Tunis, the birthplace of the Arab Spring. Other activities took place across 12 Tunisian cities and towns. For the main event in Tunis, café lights were switched off all along the Avenue Habib Bourguiba and giant screens broadcast the celebrations. There were environmental workshops for children, famous DJs and dancers performed throughout the evening, and a 3D projection featuring nature's beauty versus threats to our environment was screened on the main building of the avenue, the 42m-high clock.

[www.facebook.com/WWFTunisie?fref=ts](http://www.facebook.com/WWFTunisie?fref=ts)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qEvvJaVyio&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qEvvJaVyio&feature=youtu.be)





### Bosnia and Herzegovina

Earth Hour was organized for the fifth year in Bosnia and Herzegovina, growing from four cities in 2009 to sixteen cities actively involved in Earth Hour 2013. Lights were switched off on several new major historical landmarks including the Old Bridge in Mostar, the main Cathedral in Sarajevo and most of the major landmarks in Banja Luka. The main celebration was organized in Mostar with special performances on the theme of sustainable development. After the switching off of lights on the Old Bridge and at the Youth Cultural Centre OKC Abrašević (photo above), international students performed songs, sketches and short plays by candlelight, ending the evening with a candle installation. A side event was organized by the Mostar NGO BOEMI with a candlelit reading of poetry inspired by nature.

### Montenegro

This year the Earth Hour campaign in Montenegro made a huge impact, with the largest synchronised educational workshop on climate change ever in Montenegrin schools. The local NGO Green Home organized the Earth Hour campaign for the fifth time. This year, though, for the first time they coordinated activities with the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism which took an active role in organizing events. Leading up to celebrations on 23 March, a major educational workshop on climate change was organised in more than 40 elementary and high schools in 12 cities. More than 1,200 students were involved. On the night, 12 Montenegrin cities participated, with the central event in Podgorica (photo below) and the symbolic turning off of lights on Millennium Bridge.





## Croatia

The “I will if you will” campaign was a great success in Croatia this year, with highlights including the Minister of the Environment and Nature Protection, Mihael Zmajlovic, committing to prepare and serve a meal for the first shift of utility workers in Zagreb if 5 cities in Croatia introduce biodegradable waste boxes or composting places by 1 July. It was aired on all major commercial tv channels in Croatia. You can watch his commitment at <http://bit.ly/XrIYu9>



On the night 48 cities switched off, 10 cities more than last year, and 8 landmarks and 80km of coastline went dark. In Zagreb a theatre event – Art of Laugh – took place, where stand-up comedians performed their Earth Hour comedy routines written especially for the occasion. In Dubrovnik people gathered in the main street within the famous city walls to watch a spectacular fire-magician.

[www.facebook.com/SatzaplanetZemlju](http://www.facebook.com/SatzaplanetZemlju)  
[croatia.panda.org](http://croatia.panda.org)



## Morocco

Activities in Rabat included a ‘Wall of Commitment’ (photo above) for participants to write and display their “I will if you will” promises. The evening included music and discussions around environmental and energy issues.



## Portugal

In Lisbon this year WWF organized an Earth Hour walk – 1,000 steps for the Planet – along the river Tejo, with a beautiful view of the 25 de Abril Bridge and the Cristo-Rei Statue which were among the most emblematic monuments of the city to be switched off. Around 200 people joined the walk, with the vice president of the municipality of Lisbon switching off the symbolic light at the WWF village to begin the event. People were also able to participate in Earth Hour through an ‘SMS for the Planet’ launched by the mobile operator TMN, joining WWF for the second year. A million TMN clients received an ‘SMS for the Planet’ and in answering the SMS were able to make a donation to WWF’s conservation projects in the country.

This year there was huge support from Portuguese schools – some of them finding extremely humorous ways to get the Earth Hour message across.

[www.facebook.com/pages/WWF-Portugal/108860513111?fref=ts](http://www.facebook.com/pages/WWF-Portugal/108860513111?fref=ts)

[www.wwf.pt/](http://www.wwf.pt/)





### “SOMETHING TRULY EXCEPTIONAL HAS HAPPENED...”

Seventy five per cent of European fish stocks are overexploited and almost one third of fishing jobs in Europe have been lost in the last decade alone – the result of thirty years of mismanagement by fisheries ministers under Europe’s Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). On 6 February the European Parliament (EP) voted for a strong fisheries reform to let our oceans recover and ensure the sustainability of fisheries in the EU. This is a triumph especially in these times of crisis and despite strong opposition from certain politicians with unsustainable industry interests. Everyone wants a strong reform: citizens, industry and fishermen. Members of the EP listened to their constituents and used their newly acquired powers to act and make a difference. It is clear after this vote that it is a political priority to shape-up EU fisheries and provide long-term stability to fishing communities, fishermen and businesses and the marine environment they depend on. The oceans, fish and those who fish sustainably have won half the battle – now it is up to fisheries ministers to vote their position on this basic regulation. We hope national governments will listen to the strong message issued by Parliament, and will sweep away vested interests to ensure a sustainable future for our oceans and Europe’s fisheries.

Roberto Ferrigno, Common Fisheries Policy Project Coordinator, WWF European Policy Office

### “We need a new model of management for fisheries...”

“It is of vital importance that the EU fisheries reform is a strong one, because we don’t have much time,” said Mauricio Pulido, Spanish fisherman, representative of MedArtNet, the association for artisanal fishermen in the Mediterranean. “Fishery resources and the marine environment itself are in a bad state. With the previous fisheries policy being a complete failure, it is important to introduce a new model of management for fisheries. If not, the future of fishing in the short-term looks uncertain”.



The day before the European Parliament vote, Mauricio Pulido, Spanish fisherman, and other MedArtNet representatives and artisanal fisheries associations joined WWF in Strasbourg to meet Members of the European Parliament and explain why ambitious fisheries reform is necessary.

### MPA news

WWF has produced a video that promotes collaboration between fishermen and MPA managers, demonstrating the benefits of resource co-management and participatory decision making. The video is available in English and will be produced in French shortly.

<http://youtu.be/OXqo5bNWlh8>

WWF also worked with IUCN and MedPAN to produce guidelines for MPA managers to understand and address climate change impacts. The report can be downloaded at:

<http://bit.ly/15VvKZ6>

WWF-France has just released an excellent publication on the benefits of underwater trails within MPAs. This is a comprehensive report about the ecological, social and economic benefits of nature-based tourism activities in MPAs. The report can be downloaded at:

<http://bit.ly/YjyqgQ>

[www.panda.org/msp](http://www.panda.org/msp)  
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### Developing MPAs in Libya

A training workshop on engaging stakeholders in MPAs was organized for fifteen Libyans, representatives of the Environmental General Authority, Marine Biological Research Centre and Coast Guard, working for the development of MPAs at Farwa Lagoon, El Kouf, and Ain El Gazhela MPAs, in February in Turkey. Participants learned the principles of participatory planning and communication, and drafted a plan to engage key stakeholders for the future implementation of the three Libyan MPAs. Case studies from Kaş-Kekova and Gökova SEPAs provided an opportunity to learn more about the Turkish experience of the process of engaging stakeholders in the development of management plans.

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## More local involvement in Kaş-Kekova

The Kaş-Kekova Marine Protected Area Management Plan Project was officially closed on 8 January in Ankara, Turkey. More than 50 representatives of Ministries and institutions participated in the meeting and evaluated and finalized the five year action plans. As envisioned by the management plan, local administrators and local people will engage more fully in the management of the Kaş-Kekova MPA in the future.

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## Marine Spatial Planning explained

Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) is a complex process which includes large-scale spatial planning, multi-jurisdictional management and knowledge of legal frameworks. A five-day training workshop to build the capacity of WWF staff and key Mediterranean stakeholders to facilitate MSP processes was organized by WWF Mediterranean, in collaboration with NOAA, in Barcelona in February. It was an opportunity to share experiences and knowledge on MSP developed in the WWF network worldwide. Thirty participants from 26 countries were given a combination of presentations, case studies and interactive exercises to provide an overall understanding of this complex planning process.

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## TAZA NATIONAL PARK MARINE ZONE APPROVED

The proposed management plan for the marine zone of the Taza National Park was approved by the steering committee at the Wilaya de Jijel in October. The Wilaya will now submit the plan to the inter-ministerial committee in charge of its review. The management team is keen to implement planned activities, including the first underwater trail in North Africa. The area is of paramount importance as a spawning ground for major commercial fish species. After intense consultations with local fishermen, the involvement of many national and international experts and exchange visits to other Mediterranean MPAs, the Park reached proposed zoning and regulations for fishing activity that were agreed to by all.

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## MedPAN North Project publications

The MedPAN North project is an independent project operating within the framework of the MedPAN network under the leadership of WWF-France. It started in July 2010 and runs until June 2013, and aims to improve MPA management effectiveness and to contribute to the establishment of a network of MPAs, as part of the international commitments, and particularly the European commitments in this area. The main documents and deliverables of the MedPAN North project are available, in English, Arabic and French on a new MedPAN webpage.

[www.medpan.org/en/mnp\\_publications](http://www.medpan.org/en/mnp_publications)  
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## Marine mammal conservation network in Greece

More than a thousand key stakeholders have participated in the seminars organized by WWF Greece for the Thalassa: "Learn,

Act, Protect" campaign. These have included officials from local and central authorities related to marine environment conservation, staff from the management bodies of Protected Areas and local NGOs, members of the Coast Guard and cadets of the Mercantile and Military Academies of Greece and the Marine Science department of the University of the Aegean. A special seminar was arranged for Greek MEPs in Brussels. As a result of the Thalassa seminars a network of people directly or indirectly involved with the protection of the marine environment, and willing to contribute to marine mammal conservation, is slowly evolving. There is still much to be done and the Thalassa team will keep up the effort.

The Thalassa project is run by WWF Greece, Mom (the Hellenic Society for the Study and Protection of the Mediterranean Monk Seal) together with Pelagos Cetacean Research Institute and Tethys Research Institute. See:

[www.thalassa-project.gr](http://www.thalassa-project.gr)



### LANDMARK ACHIEVEMENT OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA TO ENSURE LONG-TERM HEALTH OF ITS RIVERS

Bosnia and Herzegovina has become the first country in the western Balkan region to commit to incorporating nature conservation into its water legislation. A new law, developed with the support of WWF and local partner CESD, has been officially endorsed by the Parliament of the Federation of BiH. With its adoption the country has committed to ensuring sufficient quantities of healthy water for all users, from humans and industry to fish and other fauna and flora in its rivers and lakes. WWF and partner CESD facilitated the understanding and adoption of the concept of “environmental flow”, already used throughout the world to ensure that both nature and people can benefit equally from the resources rivers provide. An investigation was carried out to understand how this concept could be incorporated into existing legislation. The investigation was monitored and screened by water authorities who, in the process, became the true driving force for change and provided major political support for the adoption of the by-law. With technical assistance they developed and then endorsed a law which will bring enormous benefits to the management of fresh water in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



“This is a landmark achievement which we are very proud to have contributed to. It is a great step for nature conservation to see water authorities open to innovation and keen to align with EU standards”.

Francesca Antonelli, Head of the Freshwater Programme, WWF Mediterranean.

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### 15,000 signatures to preserve Hutovo Blato in Bosnia and Herzegovina

On the occasion of World Wetlands Day, on 2 February, WWF organized a special event in Hutovo Blato, a Ramsar site in Bosnia and Herzegovina. WWF presented a petition for the preservation of Hutovo Blato Nature Park, which was launched in collaboration with other NGOs four months ago, and has so far been signed by more than 15,000 people. The WWF petition and event generated much media interest. The campaign will continue until Earth Day on 22 April when the petition, together with a list of urgent measures will be presented to the Government of the Herzegovina-Neretva county and other stakeholders.

<http://panda.org/helphutovoblato>



© HUTOVO BLATO NATURE PARK



### Help preserve natural beauty in Europe

One of the richest wetlands in Bosnia and Herzegovina is under threat. Help us get the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to save one of the most valuable habitats for people and nature in the western Balkans.

Sign the petition at

<http://panda.org/helphutovoblato>



## Drava-Mura confluence will remain unspoilt

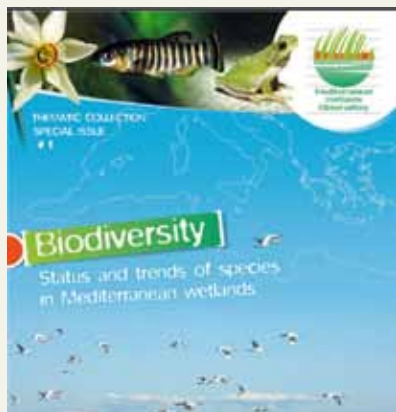
A highly controversial river regulation project that would have turned the Drava-Mura confluence on the Hungarian-Croatian border into little more than a lifeless canal, has been rejected by the Croatian Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection. This important step comes after four years of campaigning against the project by WWF, EuroNatur and the Drava League. The demise of the project would in effect protect the core zone of the recently designated Croatian-Hungarian part of the future five-country UNESCO Biosphere reserve “Mura-Drava-Danube”. The Mura-Drava confluence has some of Europe’s best preserved wetlands and is home to endangered species such as the white-tailed eagle, black stork and otter. All species rely on the natural shifting of the riverbeds as well as on habitats such as floodplain forests, sand and gravel banks.

[mediterranean.panda.org](http://mediterranean.panda.org)

## Thematic issues in Mediterranean wetlands

WWF Mediterranean is a founding partner of the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory. Recently the state of biodiversity in the fragile habitats of Mediterranean wetlands was evaluated. Results are summarized in several reports, and can be downloaded at

<http://medwetlands-obs.org/en/content/thematic-collection>



## New Mediterranean Ramsar sites

### THE LAC DE TUNIS IN TUNISIA

An inspiring freshwater habitat conservation result from Tunisia: on 23 January the government of Tunisia celebrated the 90th birthday of Dr Luc Hoffmann, one of the founders of the Ramsar Convention and co-founder of WWF, by designating an important new Wetland of International Importance, the Complexe Lac de Tunis (2,243ha). Designated with support from WWF International, WWF Mediterranean and WWF Tunis Office, the new protected wetland is a coastal lagoon surrounded by intertidal marshes close to the city of Tunis. As a central wetland in the Gulf of Tunis it is a good nesting ground for several waterbirds and a wintering area for migrating species such as the great crested grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*), the northern shoveler (*Anas clypeata*), and over 6% of the wintering population of greater flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*).

Watch a short video by WWF-Tunisia, showing people from the Gahr-el-Melh village wishing Happy Birthday to Luc Hoffmann at <http://bit.ly/14d7JNco>

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### RIBEIRA DO VASCÃO IN PORTUGAL

The Ribeira do Vascão in the Guadiana valley, Portugal, has recently become a Ramsar site. Between Alentejo and Algarve this is the largest watercourse in the country without dams or water reservoirs. It is a habitat for endangered species including the saramugo (*Anaocypris hispanica*), European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) and sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*) and provides important ecosystem services. WWF has been working in Ribeira do Vascão since 2008 with the support of Coca-Cola Portugal, and has developed restoration field activities in an area of around 6ha, with over 2,000 plants of native species such as oaks, junipers and willows planted. The vegetation on the banks of watercourses has high levels of biodiversity, protects stream banks from erosion and acts as a filter, helping to improve water quality.

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## CrisisWatch online

CrisisWatch, WWF's monthly bulletin reporting on the broader environmental dimensions of Europe's economic crisis, is now available online.

**[www.wwf.gr/crisis-watch/](http://www.wwf.gr/crisis-watch/)** presents monthly newsbites in html format and all previous issues in pdf. The site includes WWF's proposals for a sustainable way out of the economic crisis. Why CrisisWatch? Because the policy responses to the economic crisis undermine the EU's role as a global green leader. Because consumers and business attitudes are influencing Europe's ecological footprint. Because natural resources and biodiversity hotspots are now more threatened by overexploitation than ever before. Because the crisis should serve as an opportunity for a major shift towards ecologically and economically sustainable policies. CrisisWatch is WWF's eye on the environmental implications of the crisis.

**CrisisWatch is jointly coordinated by Theodota Nantsou of WWF Greece ([tnantsou@wwf.gr](mailto:tnantsou@wwf.gr)) and Isabella Pratesi of WWF Italy ([i.pratesi@wwf.it](mailto:i.pratesi@wwf.it)). Both welcome your comments and feedback, as well as any news on the crisis.**

## Reducing energy use in the EU

WWF has launched a new report – 'Putting the EU on Track for 100% Renewable Energy' – which shows where Europe needs to be by 2030 in order to reach a fully renewable energy system by 2050. By 2030, the EU could reduce its energy use by more than a third and generate almost half of the remainder from renewables.

More at <http://bit.ly/133T9dh>

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## WWF and partners produce a Solar Atlas

As climate change threatens humans and the environment, it is more important than ever to work for the efficient and wide-scale adoption of well sited, responsibly and effectively operated renewable energy generation facilities.

Environmental protection and renewable energy can and must develop in parallel. Today, solar photovoltaic electricity, or PV, provides 0.1 % of total global electricity generation. Now a well-established, commercially available and reliable technology, it has significant potential for long-term growth in nearly all world regions. In Morocco, for example, less than one-fifth of one per cent (0.17 %) of the land would need to host solar PV generation in order to meet 100 % of the country's projected electricity needs by 2050.

More at <http://bit.ly/133T9dh>

## Morocco, a regional hub for renewable energy

A new project in Morocco is working to raise awareness regarding the benefits of solar (and renewable) energy. WWF Mediterranean will lead eleven partner organizations to promote a regional change towards solar energy through national and regional solar energy workshops and education programmes. Priority countries are Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon. The 3-year project, called SHAAMS - Strategic Hubs for the Analysis and Acceleration of the Mediterranean Solar Sector ("shams" is the Arabic word for "sun"), will focus on policy support activities throughout the region and on fostering market support structures and new procedures for the development of a reliable market for solar energy.

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### Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

[mediterranean.panda.org](http://mediterranean.panda.org)

Stay tuned for our next newsletter

For more information  
[croberts@wwfmedpo.org](mailto:croberts@wwfmedpo.org)