



WWF

NEWSLETTER

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MEDITERRANEAN ECHO

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

CIVIL SOCIETY IS CORNERSTONE OF SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

At an unprecedented meeting of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Secretariat in Barcelona, Spain, at the end of June NGOs gathered to discuss the need for civil society to be a stronger voice in policy making and projects on nature and the environment. WWF and a range of environmental civil society groups from across the EU and the Mediterranean – Albania, Croatia, Egypt, France, Italy, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco, Tunisia – discussed the need to strengthen and improve NGO participation in UfM policies and processes. WWF has called for greater UfM attention to the natural and biological assets of the Mediterranean and on the region's struggle with ecological scarcity.

Voicing the concerns of many around the table, Mustapha Derdabi of Morocco's Association for Environmental Protection of Wilaya de Tétouan said "We must take action today if we want to achieve a positive impact on the environment and the security of people's lives tomorrow. The time to invest in our Mediterranean future is now, and it is essential for civil society to be an integral part of that process."

Discussion touched on the political awakening and revolutions that have swept this year across the Middle East and North Africa reviving the attention of institutions on the pivotal role of civil society in bringing about real and far-reaching change. Building the capacity of environmental civil society groups around the Mediterranean is a key need in empowering and encouraging NGO involvement and representation.

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WWF catamaran sails off with the sun

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WWF Solar, a sun-fuelled catamaran, set off in July for a two month journey along the Spanish Mediterranean coast, raising awareness for the need to move towards a 100% renewable world. As an "ambassador in motion" for WWF campaign "Renowatio, muévete con el Sol" (RenoWatio, Move with the Sun) the boat stops

in the main Spanish coastal towns. WWF staff and volunteers highlight the benefits of renewable energy resources, addressing people's doubts and setting the record straight, and involve locals and tourists in workshops and activities.

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WWF MedPAN South Project



EXCHANGE VISITS ACROSS THE MEDITERRANEAN

WWF is promoting a series of exchanges between Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to provide examples of efficient management practices and fruitful relationships with stakeholders and to help managers resolve difficult issues. As part of the the WWF MedPAN South Project, MPA practitioners from Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey recently visited two of the most famous MPAs in the Mediterranean.

The Bonifacio Strait reserve in Corsica hosted Turkish fishermen, diving club owners and tourist boat operators from the MPA of Kaş-Kekova as well as government officials. They discovered how the Corsican reserve works with the local community to ensure that conservation objectives and economic development go hand in hand.

Scandola in Corsica is one of the oldest MPAs in the Mediterranean and is an example for all in terms of participatory management and biodiversity recovery. Professional fishermen and MPA managers from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia spent 3 days at the reserve and were able to share ideas with the management team and local stakeholders.

www.panda.org/msp

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Next diving destination... Albania

The Institute of Nature Conservation in Albania (INCA) is working on an action plan for tourism development in the newly established Sazan-Karaburun MPA with an evaluation of possible diving sites in the area and their development potential. The full report suggesting the location of diving sites based on natural features, economic opportunities

and weather constraints can be found on www.panda.org/msp.

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MedPAN supporting managers of Mediterranean MPAs

The MedPAN organization recently recruited a Scientific Officer, engaged in several key activities in support of MPAs in the Mediterranean. Amongst these is

the development of a database to form the basis of a report on the status of Mediterranean MPAs to be published in 2012. MedPAN also launched a call for small projects this summer to support MPA managers, is organizing an exchange workshop on environmental education in MPAs, is planning a regional training workshop on climate change and MPAs in 2012, and is organizing the 2nd conference of Mediterranean MPAs to be held at the end of 2012.

WWF is actively engaged in the support of MedPAN to ensure the development of the network of MPA managers in the Mediterranean.

www.medpan.org

The sea is not a rubbish bin!

Cartoons are a universal way to communicate. Using this idea, Port-Cros National Park in France developed an inspiring series illustrating responsible behaviour at sea. What worked for Port-Cros can also work elsewhere... and an Implementation Agreement between WWF and Montenegro recently enabled the translation of about 20 cartoons. Implementation Agreements are part of the Capacity Building programme of the MedPAN South project.



Mentor training in Turkey

Good communication with stakeholders is essential in the planning and development of an MPA. WWF recently organized a course for mentors in countries participating in the MedPAN South Project to better plan their strategies for engaging local communities in specific decision-making processes. The 3-day session held in Mugla, Turkey, provided the 9 mentors with resources to share at a national level. Mentors are appointed by national MPA authorities in each project country to support each country's network of practitioners.

Underwater photo competition in Algeria

Taza National Park in Algeria, the site of one of the pilot projects of the MedPAN South Project, organized the first underwater photo competition of the Jijelian coast this summer. In collaboration with the rescue, first aid and underwater activities league of Jijel, the competition promoted responsible diving in the area.

The Park took advantage of this event to promote the role of MPAs and the future and role of respectful diving in the soon-to-be-created MPA. The popularity of this event and the quality of the photographs presented will contribute to strengthening the MPA creation dossier, which is to be presented to the Algerian government at the end of 2011.



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DID YOU KNOW...

Did you know that the Hellenic Trench is the most important area for sperm whales in the Mediterranean? That the Corinth Gulf is a setting for the unique phenomenon of symbiosis between three different dolphin species? That the monk seal, *Monachus monachus*, is one of the rarest species on the planet? According to a survey conducted in 2010, the majority of Greek society knows nothing of these charismatic animals – resulting in the grave situation marine mammals now face. WWF Greece, along with partner organizations, is currently working on the project *Thalassa: Learn, Act, Protect* to address the alarming decline in numbers of these species. With high media visibility this summer (television and radio announcements, advertisements in the press, on facebook and youtube) the project is raising awareness of marine biodiversity in Greece. A TV documentary will soon be added to the communication tools of the campaign.

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Exploring and drilling for hydrocarbons must be stopped in unique and fragile Mediterranean deep sea

WWF and Oceana are deeply concerned about recent developments in the exploitation of hydrocarbon resources in the eastern Mediterranean Sea. Particularly alarming is the recent green-lighting by the Cypriot government of drilling for gas in Cyprus' Exclusive Economic Zone by energy company Noble Energy. A large part of the almost 5,500km² area falls within the Eratosthenes Seamount area, a Fisheries

Restricted Area (FRA). FRAs are created to protect deep-sea sensitive habitats – in this case hosting a unique and particularly fragile ecosystem, including rare species of corals – that are extremely vulnerable to external interference. Recent studies on the Eratosthenes Seamount reveal the richness of this area, which serves as a vital stopping point for certain migratory species of whales and cetaceans, including sperm whales, fin whales, striped and bottlenose dolphins.

mediterranean.panda.org

On the Med tuna trail



2011 TAGGING EXPEDITION

The WWF Mediterranean annual blue tuna tagging expedition was very successful again this year. Dr Sergi Tudela, WWF Mediterranean, reports:

“The WWF bluefin tuna tagging team are extremely happy with the outcome of tagging activities this year. We more than doubled the number of tags deployed in 2011, and our findings are robust enough to define some clear residence areas and movement patterns. We even recovered an internal tag after nearly 3 years in the wild – the first of this kind ever recorded in the Mediterranean. We are uncovering quite unexpected patterns for fish tagged in a Moroccan tuna trap and we strengthened our activities in the Adriatic. Actually, the best indicator of the success of this year’s tagging season is that for the first time since we started this project we had to stop the tagging operations because we ran out of tags!”

See the WWF Columbus blog: <http://wwf-columbus.org/>

Footage of tagging tuna: www.youtube.com/user/rmenendez1?feature=watch

For more see our report on Mediterranean bluefin tuna tagging at wwf.panda.org

A range of media joined the team on board the WWF France vessel Columbus – including Associated Press Television News (APTN), top Croatian news magazine Globus, Spanish press agency EFE and Emna Ben Jemaa. She is a star of Tunisia’s twitterati – one of the best connected activists during the jasmine revolution – who also writes for Afrique Magazine, hosts a national talk show on Express FM, and was just voted one of the most influential people on the continent by New African. See her video diary for a quick sense of what tagging’s all about:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfg72RdyNZc&feature=share>

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The challenge of saving Europe’s fisheries

WWF urges the European Parliament and Member States to step up to the challenge of saving Europe’s seas and fishing industries following the release of the European Commission’s proposal for a reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) in July.

“There is growing alarm among civil society, businesses and consumers about the disastrous management of Europe’s fisheries” Tony Long, Director of WWF’s European Policy Office, said. “While the European Commission’s proposal contains some potentially good elements, too much is being left to chance. Ministers and MEPs must demonstrate the political courage to invest in sustainable fisheries management now or be prepared to carry the responsibility for ravaged stocks in the near future.”

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WWF echoes call to honor deep-sea commitments

In spite of successive UN resolutions calling for urgent action to protect vulnerable deep-sea ecosystems, several countries continue to allow their vessels to fish the deep ocean in international waters using bottom trawl gear, according to the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC).

A DSCC report was released ahead of a debate on deep-sea fisheries at the UN in New York in September. It highlights a series of failures to implement key provisions of the UN resolutions, including completion of proper impact assessments before fishing begins and establishing regulations to ensure the long-term sustainability of deep-sea species.

mediterranean.panda.org

MONITORING WATER RESOURCES IN MOROCCO

An information day for civil society organizations and key stakeholders in the water sector took place in July in Oued Guigou, 70km south west of Fez in Morocco.

WWF Mediterranean and the Sebou Basin Agency took participants into the field for a demonstration of new methods of ecological monitoring of surface water, towards assessing and monitoring the ecological status of surface waters in the Sebou Basin. It was an opportunity to share new methods of water analysis recently identified at European level within a Moroccan context.

The notion of “good ecological status” specified by the Water Framework Directive as a quality indicator is still completely unknown in Morocco, despite its importance for ecosystems and people. Through the project ECOL’Eau Sebou WWF Mediterranean and the Sebou Basin Agency will establish a monitoring protocol appropriate to Morocco, developed through a participatory approach.



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World Environment Day



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Algeria: 3 new Ramsar sites for World Environment Day

The Government of Algeria designated three new Wetlands of International Importance on the occasion of World Environment Day in June, renewing its commitment to ensure the conservation and wise use of these Ramsar Sites. Algeria now has 50 sites on the Ramsar List, totalling 2,991,013ha.

Oum Lâagareb Ramsar Site (729ha) is one of the largest remaining floodplain peatlands in the region, and supports plant and animal communities which are particularly rare in Algeria. The site is threatened by excessive water-pumping by the local community for irrigation.

Lac du barrage de Boughezoul (9,058ha) is the largest artificial lake on the Hauts Plateaux, on the northern edge of the Sahara Desert. Internationally important numbers of migrating and wintering waterbirds use the permanent and seasonal wetlands, including globally threatened species.

Ile de Rachgoun Ramsar Site (66ha) is a Mediterranean volcanic island 4km off the Algerian coast with a semi-arid climate. It is unique in Algeria for supporting critically endangered species – the Mediterranean monk seal, whales, and sea turtles. The island’s fragile ecosystem is immensely vulnerable and highly threatened.

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Measuring the quality of water

For World Environment Day in Bosnia and Herzegovina WWF and environmental NGO Eko-Most from Mostar organized cleaning up activities along the Neretva river and at the Hutovo Blato wetland. More than 60 volunteers joined the working party, followed by a special workshop demonstrating how to measure the water quality at the beach and fishing area on Krupa river, one of the most popular bathing sites in the area of Mostar.

Croatian school wins contest

“European Schools for a Living Planet” is an international initiative led by WWF and the Erste Foundation. In June 30 school classes from Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Moldavia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and the Ukraine responded to WWF’s call to stand up for Europe’s environment and future. A Croatian primary school was among the four winners.

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Update from Bosnia and Herzegovina

The “Living Neretva” and “Europe’s Living Heart” projects, running since 2006, held their last workshops in June. Supporting the implementation of the European environmental ecological network Natura 2000 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, “Europe’s Living Heart” has in the last four years catalogued the most important species, natural and semi-natural habitats in the country. A publication – an atlas of habitats and species under the Habitat Directive (HD) for BiH – and an interactive map, showing all the HD habitats and species for BiH, are now available. These will assist experts and NGOs as well as government institutions in the implementation of the European ecological network Natura 2000 in the accession process.

Innovative approaches are also being developed in the Hutovo Blato Nature Park where in June WWF presented the first PES study (Payment for Ecosystem Services) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and organised an event to introduce this rather new concept. The study demonstrates that beyond supporting the biodiversity richness of the Nature Park, the waters of Hutovo Blato also offer a range of economically important services from supporting agriculture and fisheries to mitigation of natural hazards such as floods.



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Ancient forests, new achievements

Since 2006 WWF has been developing a special programme on the ancient forests of the Mediterranean and mountainous regions of France. It includes public awareness activities, scientific studies and protection of the biological and cultural values associated with ancient forests. After several studies and intensive participatory work with partners – NGOs, scientists, managers – a methodology is now available to assess and map forest age from historical sources and undertake field inventories and analysis. WWF and partners have been involved at Bois de Païolive (Ardèche), Les Maures (Var) and Mont Ventoux (Vaucluse) to better account for ancient forest values in forest management and protect ancient forest hotspots.

<http://forets-anciennes-de-mediterranee.wikispaces.com/Accueil>

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WWF ALERTS PAPER INDUSTRY

Globally, paper consumption is on the rise. Without higher standards of environmental performance this will have a dramatic impact on the planet. Poor practices such as reckless logging and expansion of pulpwood plantations damage fragile ecosystems and escalate social conflict. WWF recently launched an alert to the paper sector in Portugal following the news that the area of FSC-certified plantations in the country has decreased this year by about 40% – from 182,000ha in January to the current 108,000ha. Meanwhile statistics show continued growth in Portuguese imports of wood for pulp: from 150,000 tonnes in 2008 to 550,000 tonnes in 2010. Dependence on imported timber weakens the Portuguese paper industry, exposing it to questions about the origin of wood, a crucial issue in the most demanding markets.

WWF holds that growth in strategic investment that will increase the area of certification of forest plantations and reverse the trend of lack of national raw material is essential. Towards this end they have created a tool – Check Your Paper – an online database to help paper buyers find products with the lowest environmental impact. The tool rates the environmental quality of the paper-making process for a given product and allows pulp and paper manufacturers to voluntarily rate and post their products' environmental impacts online.

checkyourpaper.panda.org/
gftn.panda.org/
www.wwf.pt

WWF GFTN Iberian grows

The GFTN Iberian (Global Forest & Trade Network) is an alliance of WWF and about 20 Portuguese and Spanish companies committed to stopping deforestation and improving forest management.

Three important companies joined the GFTN Iberian recently: Grupo Piedade, a world leader in the production of cork stoppers; Certisado, the certification group of the Association of Forest Producers of the Sado region; and Trefinos, a Spanish company dedicated to the production of cork stoppers for champagne and sparkling wines. These companies commit to the purchase and distribution of forest products certified by the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council).

According to Rui Barreira, coordinator of GFTN in Portugal "What WWF aims to do with this project is to show that it is possible to have economic returns while preserving the biodiversity of the world's most valuable forests."

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Recognising the value of our forests

WWF is working with Coca-Cola in the Tejo-Sado Basin in Portugal to develop a Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) project. The cork oak forests of the Basin are of high conservation value. The project will allow WWF to work on the montado ecosystem and on the services it provides, such as carbon storage and regulation of the water cycle of this highly important aquifer.

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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.

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Stay tuned for our next newsletter

For more information
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