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Phyteuma sp., Komovi mountain, Montenegro. Front cover of the new guide on high-mountain plants.
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Posidonia, the WWF Mediterranean newsletter for the community of environmental organizations in the Mediterranean.

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POSIDONIA

PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY IN THE SEBOU RIVER, MOROCCO

CONSERVATION ACTION PLANNING

The Sebou River, one of the most important bodies of water in Morocco, currently includes two national parks, five wetlands classified as Ramsar sites, and 14 wetlands classified as sites of biological and ecological interest at a national level. In order to keep the preservation of Sebou river's freshwater ecosystems high on the political agenda it is fundamental to build a solid scientific knowledge of its biodiversity and socio-economic value. In this framework WWF Mediterranean awarded a small grant to the Moroccan NGO Groupe de Recherche pour la Protection des Oiseaux au Maroc. They

will apply the Conservation Action Planning – CAP – approach developed by the international conservation organization TNC (The Nature Conservancy) and endorsed by WWF, to update information on the river basin's freshwater biodiversity, identify main conservation targets and the threats affecting them as well as develop concrete strategies for promoting their conservation.

A workshop to launch the project was held in April at the Scientific Institute of the University of Rabat. It included a seminar on the CAP method. The WWF Mediterranean/Across The Waters Grants Programme is supported by the Government of Catalonia.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Participants of the CAP workshop
Rabat, Morocco.
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PILOT PROJECT EC'EAU SEBOU

The pilot project Ec'Eau Sebou, launched in January 2007, will test the feasibility and define the utility of implementing the economic elements of the EU Water Framework Directive in the Sebou Basin. As part of the project analyses of trends in water use, cost recovery, cost benefit and cost effectiveness will be carried out. A steering committee for this project has been created and the first workshop was held in April in the Sebou Basin Agency offices in Fes. Organized by WWF Mediterranean and the Sebou River Basin Agency (AHBS),

the workshop brought together stakeholders with an interest in the water sector. Participants discussed the role of the committee, which will guide the project, validate results and support data collection. The next meeting is scheduled for September 2007.

In 2005 WWF Mediterranean signed a Convention of collaboration with AHBS to support Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) in the Sebou basin. Ec'Eau Sebou will provide analyses key to IRBM implementation. The project is funded by the EC in the framework of the EUWI-WFD Joint Process.

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LIVING NERETVA PROJECT

Living Neretva, a WWF project begun in January 2007 in the Neretva basin, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), aims to use EU standards to support the administrative bodies responsible for water and natural resources management of the Neretva basin in BiH. The project will set the ground for both mapping biodiversity values and hotspots in the Neretva basin in accordance with the Habitat Directive, and promoting the equitable use of water resources according to the Water

Framework Directive. A seminar was held last April to build local capacity on the Habitat Directive and Water Framework Directive.

Towards EU Standards in the Neretva River Basin (BiH): Linking Water Management and Biodiversity Conservation was held 12-13 April in Sarajevo. The Living Neretva project is implemented by WWF Mediterranean Programme in collaboration with WWF Norway, and is financed by the Norwegian Government.

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The Living Neretva project team
and colleagues.
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PROTECTED AREAS MANAGEMENT IN MOROCCO

A short informative workshop on protected areas methodology — the Rapid Assessment and Prioritization of Protected Areas Management (RAPPAM) — was held in Rabat, Morocco last February. Participants took part in a debate on the applicability of the RAPPAM methodology in Morocco. Following the first day of presentations, the group decided upon the next activities which will include a larger workshop to train all PAs managers and the selection of PAs for pilot projects. Further discussions since the workshop have led to the preparation of a

project for the application of the RAPPAM methodology in Morocco that will be implemented later in 2007.

The workshop, organized by WWF Mediterranean in collaboration with WWF International and the Protected Areas Service of the Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts et à la Lutte contre la Désertification of Morocco was held in Rabat, Morocco, 21-22 February. Participants included staff from the Moroccan Protected Areas Service and members of Moroccan academic and research institutions: Centre de la Recherche Forestière, Institut Scientifique, Institut Agronomique et Vétérinaire Hassan II. Funded by WWF International.

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PROJECT IN EL KALA

WWF Mediterranean recently began their first forest project in Algeria, connecting conservation work across the cork oak landscapes of the Tunisian and Algerian borders. This project was developed and will be implemented in partnership with El Kala National Park, a biosphere reserve of 80,000ha which is a continuation in Algeria of the Tunisian Kroumirie-Mogod landscape. The park hosts the last remaining population of the Barbary deer in Algeria and includes lakes, cork oak and maritime pine forests, coast and dunes. The project will contribute to building the management capacity of local NGOs and national park staff. It will also develop a model for the sustainable management of a cork oak forest around the

village of Haddada, involving local communities. Meetings were organized in May with the staff of El Kala National Park and NGOs to identify priority training needs. These include environmental education, communication, conservation planning and fund raising.

The Capacity building project on community participation in the management of the El Kala National Park is a two-year project co-funded by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the WWF Mediterranean/ Across The Waters Grants Programme, supported by the Government of Catalonia. The project executant is hosted by the El Kala National Park.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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TOURISM AND AGRICULTURE AT MERJA ZERGA

At the Ramsar site Merja Zerga in Morocco the livelihoods of local communities depend on both tourism and agriculture. The sustainable development of these activities is an important aspect of nature conservation in the area. As part of its current project WWF Mediterranean is supporting local tourist guides in running a well-organized and long-term ecotourism activity, involving the establishment and validation of tourist paths as well as the development of a business plan. They are also working with ORMVAG — the Moroccan regional office responsible for irrigated areas — on sustainable agricultural practices. The project team is concentrating on El Gharb, a fertile and large-flooded plain in northwest Morocco, in order to

minimize pollution. WWF Mediterranean and ORMVAG signed a convention of collaboration in May that will see them combining their resources and expertise to find solutions for a more sustainable use of Moroccan natural resources in a pilot area (El Gharb).

WWF Mediterranean Programme, SEO/Birdlife and Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts et la Lutte contre la Désertification are implementing the second phase of the project Sustainable Use of Natural Resources in the Ramsar site Merja Zerga funded by the Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional (AECI), Azahar programme.

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EU MUST CLOSE TUNA FISHERY

The EU has failed to grasp its final opportunity this year to save bluefin tuna from collapse in the Mediterranean. The European Fisheries Council meeting in Brussels last May was unable to reach agreement on the management of the seriously imperiled bluefin tuna fishery, postponing discussions to its next meeting mid-June. However, this will be too late for tuna, and WWF calls for an immediate closure of the fishery. The EU has failed yet again to impose vital measures to save bluefin tuna in the Mediterranean.

Meanwhile WWF congratulates fishing nation Norway's bold move to ban the fishing of bluefin tuna by its fleets as a last-ditch attempt at conservation, in the light of the critical situation of the stock.

Read more on www.panda.org/mediterranean

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ROLE OF FIRE IN CONSERVATION

Across the world people have altered the way fire is behaving with serious, even irreversible, consequences. Last year many countries experienced their worst fire season in 50 years, and wildfires are becoming more frequent and more intense, putting people and nature at risk. These are the findings of a report from the Global Fire Partnership, demonstrating that fire is truly a global conservation issue. The Partnership is presently working to improve global fire assessment methodology by adding analyses of environmental variables that drive fire ecology. They recommend that countries follow a process which includes evaluating the social, economic

and environmental impacts of fire. Policy makers as well as local communities will be able to make better decisions on how best to manage fire to preserve their natural resources and protect people.

The report, *Fire, Ecosystems and People: Threats and Strategies for Global Biodiversity Conservation*, released last May at the 4th International Wildland Fire Conference, presents a comprehensive study of the changing role of fire around the world. The Global Fire Partnership consists of The Nature Conservancy, University of California, Berkeley's Center for Fire Research and Outreach, IUCN and WWF.

Read more on www.panda.org/mediterranean

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON WHALES

Whales, dolphins and porpoises are facing increasing threats from climate change, according to a new report — *Whales in hot water?* — published by WWF and the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS). Accelerating climate change adds significantly to disturbances from other human activities, such as chemical and noise pollution, collisions with ships and entanglement in fishing nets, which kills some 1,000 cetaceans every day. WWF and WDCS are urging governments to cut CO₂

global emissions by at least 50% by the middle of this century. The latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change showed it was possible to stop global warming if the world's emissions start to decline before 2015.

Read more on www.panda.org/mediterranean. The International Whaling Commission's 59th annual meeting was held in Anchorage, USA, 28-31 May.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Physeter catodon, Sperm whale. Researchers taking identification pictures of a whale about to dive close to a WWF boat. Norway.
© WWF-Canon / M. LINDHARD

GLOBAL PUSH TO TACKLE WILDLIFE CRIME

There is a huge and escalating demand in European Union Member States for exotic pets, tropical timber and other wildlife products sourced outside its borders. The EC has unveiled an action plan to improve wildlife trade enforcement within the EU and in countries where the trade originates. The plan builds on existing initiatives to combat increasing illegal wildlife trade, and demonstrates the EU's commitment to enforce CITES,

an international agreement that regulates global wildlife trade.

The wildlife trade monitoring network TRAFFIC, a joint programme of WWF and IUCN, works to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature. TRAFFIC has just released a report, *Opportunity or threat: The role of the European Union in the global wildlife trade*, the first ever analysis of the volume and scope of wildlife trade products imported into the EU. Read more on www.panda.org/mediterranean.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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PLANT GUIDES FOR MONTENEGRO

A new collection of plant guides and postcards for Montenegro, designed by NGO Natura, have been published within the framework of a project to protect the flora of the Komovi, Bjelasica, and Sinjavina mountains. Plant biodiversity in this area is rich in endemic and rare species, but highly threatened by destructive human activities. The guides and postcards will acquaint local people and tourists with the values of the various plant species and promote the

sustainable management of forests. Natura is hopeful that some of the plants detailed in the guides will be included on Montenegro's list of endangered species and thus attain some degree of protection.

Three guides have been published in cooperation with the Natural History Museum and the Institute for the Protection of Nature of Montenegro: *High Mountain Plants, Trees and Shrubs, and Medicinal Plants and Forest Fruits*. This project is supported by WWF Mediterranean/Across The Waters Grants Programme through the financial assistance of the Gsell Foundation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Participants of the exchange between Lebanon and Morocco visiting cedar forests.
© AFDC

EXCHANGE - FIGHTING FOREST FIRES

Fires are an important consideration within the management of Mediterranean forest ecosystems. In May five participants from various institutions based in the cork landscapes of the Rif, in Morocco, visited Lebanon to learn from the experience of local NGO AFDC with local communities and fighting forest fire. Participants took part in field excursions to the Civil Defense Center in Ain Zhalta to learn about Lebanese organization during forest fire fighting operations, to Arz el Shouf natural reserve to talk about cedar conservation programmes in the area, and to the Forest Guards Centre in Beiteddine to see the role of

forest guards in forest conservation. Finally the group visited an area of 900ha of forest affected by a fire in October 2006. Upon their return to Morocco, the participants will apply their experience in a local and regional context with the support of WWF.

Participants in the exchange included la Commune Rurale de Dardara, Association Locale de Taria, Protection Civile de Chefchaouen, Service Provincial des Eaux et Forêts de Chefchaouen, and WWF Mediterranean, who were hosted by the Lebanese NGO Association for Forests, Development and Conservation (AFDC). This exchange was part of the WWF Mediterranean/Across The Waters Exchange Programme, supported by Fundación IPADE and the Government of Catalonia.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

WORKSHOP IN MONTENEGRO

In April a five-day workshop on *Sustainable Tourism Indicators and Destination Management* took place in Kolasi, near the Biogradska Gora National Park. Organized by the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in collaboration with the Government of Montenegro, the workshop provided more than 70 participants with practical approaches and management techniques. The group took part in field exercises and working groups led by UNWTO experts with national and local stakeholders. WWF Mediterranean participated actively in the preparation and facilitation of

the working groups. Biogradska Gora National Park was used as an example of a pilot destination to demonstrate the application of indicators — essential instruments in tourism planning, management and monitoring. A report of the workshop and some recommendations will be presented soon to the Government of Montenegro.

The UNWTO Department for Sustainable Development of Tourism has a range of technical guidelines and manuals for sustainable tourism policies.
www.unwto.org

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Meeting with local rafting tour operators on the Tara River, Montenegro during the UNWTO workshop.
© UNWTO/ G. VERECZI

SEMINAR ON BEST PRACTICES IN NORTH AFRICA

Experts in the development of sustainable tourism gathered at a seminar held last May in Valsain, Spain, to share experiences and initiatives related to North Africa. The participants, from government institutions and NGOs in Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Tunisia, and Spain, analysed the key points for implementing projects that will promote sustainable tourism in the region. The recommendations of the meeting highlight the importance of

interregional cooperation and collaboration and can be used by governments and institutions to achieve a common end — a tourist sector in Northern Africa, determined by criteria of sustainability and responsibility.

The seminar was organized by Fundación IPADE, the Azahar Programme of the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI), the National Parks Department of the Spanish Environment Ministry, the CENEAM, and the Tourism Department.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Civil society input to ENPI. A joint website on the programming of European Community (EC) assistance to Eastern European, South Caucasus and South Mediterranean countries was launched mid-March by Aprodev, Eurostep, WomNet and WWF. It is a tool for civil society actors to follow the discussions on the programming of EC assistance under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) for the period 2007-2013. Countries concerned are Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Russia, Syria, Tunisia, and Ukraine. Civil Society actors from these countries are invited to send any document/information that they would want to see on their country page to:

info@enpi-programming.eu

International Forum: Counteract Drought, Take Action.

Organized by the Spanish Ministry of the Environment
Seville, Spain, 17 – 20 June, 2007.

http://www.forosequia.com/web_en

Environmental Education Congress: Learning in a Changing World

Durban, South Africa, 2-6 July, 2007.

<http://www.weec2007.com>

Smart Gear 2007 Competition entries due July 31

www.smartgear.org

World Water Week

Stockholm, Sweden, 12-18 August 2007.

<http://www.worldwaterweek.org>

Conference on restoration and management of coastal dunes.

Santander, Spain, 3-5 October 2007.

www.iccd07.com

RESOURCES

The Illegal Logging Government Barometer, a WWF report, assesses the efforts of European governments to implement the EU's Action Plan on Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade which encourages voluntary partnerships between EU countries and timber-producing countries to reduce illegal logging.

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New web pages for WWF cork oak landscapes programme

Did you know that amphoras sealed with cork were found at Pompeii? The new pages introduce the amazing natural, social and economic heritage of the cork oak landscapes of the Mediterranean.

www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/europe/what_we_do/mediterranean/about/forests/cork/index.cfm

La restauration des paysages forestiers premiers enseignements après cinq ans de mise en oeuvre. The French pdf version of the FLR lessons learnt, compiled from the 2006 FLR study tour in Spain and Portugal is available at <https://intranet.panda.org/documents/document.cfm?uFolderID=7911&uDocID=99001>

The Tunisian Ministry of Education website has recently posted information on the Environmental Education programme developed and implemented in 11 schools in the Kroumerie, as part of a WWF/IPADE project to promote environmental education related to forests. See <http://www.edunet.tn/envir-jendouba/index.html> (in Arabic).

A CD has also been produced.

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RESOURCES

IUCN's Database for North African Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, created by the Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation, has a description of each species with information on the plant's morphology, biology and ecology, and includes information on how that plant is used in North Africa.

<http://iucn.org/places/medoffice/nabp/database/>

New Handbook of Best Practices for Conservation in Mallorca, for German tourists in Mallorca, has been published by the NGO GOB with the support of various German civic groups.

<http://www.gobmallorca.com/>

New Global Bioenergy Partnership Website Launched. The site provides information on the Partnership, which was created in May 2006 to promote the use of bioenergy. It also offers links and features news and a regularly updated list of events.

<http://www.globalbioenergy.org/>

New RCE in Barcelona. A Regional Centre for Expertise (RCE) in Education for Sustainable Development recognized by the University of the United Nations as part of the global network of RCEs.

www.rce-barcelona.net

Ecolo-plateforme du Maroc du Nord a new group of associations working on the environment in Northern Morocco.

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INSTRAW Gender Training Wiki

The first "wiki" specifically devoted to gender issues for all NGOs, popular Organizations, research institutions and UN agencies. Organizations around the globe can publicise their training courses, publications and other capacity-building materials, in English and Spanish and soon in French:

http://www.un-instraw.org/wiki/training/index.php/Main_Page

Pay: Establishing payments for watershed services. IUCN, 2006. A guide for the creation of mechanisms and tools that relate development to conservation, agricultural and industrial production, and the increasing urbanization of landscapes.

Institut National des Plantes Médicinales et Aromatiques, Morocco website: www.usmba.ac.ma/inpma/index.htm



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